RELI 2693 – Hinduism
Religious Studies Program
Spring 2013

Dr. Derek Maher
Class Meeting Time: Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 – 10:45
Class location: Brewster D-307
Office: Austin 325 C
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Assistant: Mrs. Susan Adams: 328-6193
Office hours: Tues. 12:30 - 2:00 and Thurs. 12:30 – 4:00

Course Description:
Hinduism is the most significant unifying force in Indian tradition. In this course, we will explore this religion from its controversial origins to its modern manifestations. We will examine the various strata of sacred texts that mark its evolution, including the Vedas, the Upanishads, the epics, the devotional sources, philosophical literature, and the tantras. We will also examine the various modes of religious expression embedded in these sources, such as those related to ritual life, soteriology, mysticism, gnosis, and social organization. Finally, we will explore the ways in which art and architecture intersect with the religion. By way of these inquiries, the student should be able to:
- Identify Hindu beliefs, practices, myths, rituals, traditions, history, and art
- Compare and contrast the assumptions, beliefs, and outlooks of different Hindu traditions and the practices that result from those assumptions.

Students in this course will also:
- Become familiar with various methodologies employed in the academic study of religion
- Cultivate critical thinking and reading comprehension skills
- Learn to communicate more effectively, verbally and in writing.

These objectives will be attained through lectures, classroom discussions, and assignments. Challenging readings from a variety of disciplines will supplement these strategies.

Grading:
- two exams with essays and short answers (25% each= 125 points each) (February 12 and March 7)
- two quizzes (5% each = 25 points each) (January 31 and March 28)
- 2 research papers (10% each = 50 points each)
  - The first paper will be on a narrative about a god or goddess (due March 19)
  - The second paper will be on a particular Hindu religious practice (due April 16)
- final exam (20% = 100 points) (May 2)

  A (100-93%) 500-465; A- (down to 90%) 464-450; B+ (down to 87%) 449-435; B (down to 83%) 434-415; B- (down to 80%) 414-400; C+ (down to 77%) 399-385; C (down to 73%) 384-365; C- (down to 70%) 364-350; D+ (down to 67%) 349-335; D (down to 63%) 334-315; D- (down to 60%) 314-300; F (below 60%) 299-0.

Required Readings:
Additional readings will be available on the course Blackboard website. 
http://ecu.blackboard.com/ Students are responsible for checking their email address linked to Blackboard system so that they are assured of remaining up-to-date with reading assignments, exam dates, and any other information relating to the course.

**Exams:**
Exams will consist of essays and short questions. Generally, I will provide several essay questions from which the student may select two to answer. Short questions may be multiple choice, true and false, and simple identification. Check the ECU catalog in order to determine the date and time of the final exam. **Students who maintain at least a 94% average throughout the semester will be exempt from the final.**

**Quizzes:**
Quizzes will be brief and focused on a narrow body of information. For example, one quiz will be on mapping the Hindu world. There is a series of maps on the Blackboard webpage. Students are expected to become familiar with these maps on their own time.

**Classroom Participation and Attendance:**
Students are expected to attend all classes, read all assignments on time, and demonstrate that they are capable of being fully involved in all class discussions.

An absence for a legitimate university-sanctioned reason will be excused, and students will be able to make up the work. Students should consult the following site to become familiar with the relevant ECU policies: http://core.ecu.edu/psyc/wuenschk/docs00/University-Excused-Absence.htm

Quizzes, exams, and other assignments may be made-up only if the absence is officially excused by the University or is medically related (See Student Health for a note). **Documentation is required.**

Students who must be absent—excused or not—are responsible for obtaining notes from a peer. After they have done so, they may ask me for further clarification, but they should not ask me first.

**Unexcused absences will result in grade reduction.** After the 2nd unexcused absence, 3% will be deducted from the final grade. Each additional absence will result in a deduction of a further 3%. Please plan on attending our class regularly.

**Research Paper Standards:**
A research paper is a particular form of writing that articulates and then argues for a thesis. A thesis is a clear and unambiguous statement that a research paper proves; it has the form, “I will argue that X is true.” For example:

- This paper will demonstrate that in terms of the doctrines and religious practices he taught, the Buddha is best understood as an Upaniṣadic figure.
- The dialog between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavad Gita can be seen as an effort to restore religious norms to those articulated in the Vedas, norms that had been threatened and upset by the emergence of asceticism, yoga, and other ideologies in the Upaniṣads.

A thesis must be controversial enough to raise interesting questions, a test that is failed by the statement, “ECU students are human beings.” However, it does not need to be something utterly revolutionary. A thesis is a statement about which the author could be wrong. A matter of taste, such as the statement, “Jimi Hendrix is the greatest guitarist in history,” does not count as a thesis. Also off limits would be an argument in favor of some normative posture, such as, “People throughout the world should practice democracy.”

In preparation for writing papers, each student will submit a two-page proposal for their paper on a date to be specified. The final papers should be 7 pages (excluding
Authors must employ a standardized style for footnotes and bibliography, such as the MLA or Chicago style. A paradigm, along with other helpful information relevant to writing papers is available on-line at: http://www.ecu.edu/cs-lib/Reference/refdesk/style.cfm.

Both the ideas and the quoted words of others must be footnoted properly. Failure to do so could constitute plagiarism or some other form of academic dishonesty; the penalty for such offenses can include expulsion from ECU. While it is fine for you to share resources and references with your peers, each person must do their own work. If you are uncertain as to whether you might be crossing the line between helpfulness and cheating, please consult with me. On-line resources, such as web pages, can be extremely unreliable when it comes to religion. If you have doubts as to the authenticity of your sources, please ask for my advice. If you use material from the web, the particular URL of a referenced idea or passage must be footnoted just like any other source. Students may employ web page resources, but they should be used sparingly. In no case should they constitute more than 25% of the sources employed.

Based on the writing displayed in the paper or project proposal, some students will be directed to take a draft of their paper to the Writing Center. The final version of the paper will not be accepted and graded without a note from the Writing Center.

One of the most powerful resources available for the study of religion is the ATLA (American Theological Library Association) Religion Database. This valuable tool provides information from 1949 on many topics in religious studies and includes: more than one million bibliographic records covering the research literature of religion in 35 languages, more than 350,000 article citations from 600 journals, more than 200,000 essay citations from 15,500 multi-author works, and over 360,000 book review citations. In order to foster research skills, each student is required to use two resources found through the ATLA system. Please mark those resources in your bibliography by placing the acronym “ATLA” beside those sources. Access it at the bottom of this page: http://media.lib.ecu.edu/erdbs/index.cfm?letter=A

The theme of your paper should not be a mere repetition of the content of lectures or assigned class readings. While you may reference something like the eightfold path, please do not merely repeat in your paper our classroom discussion of that material.

Checklist for your paper:
- Arial font, 12 point, double space
- Page numbers
- Proper length as assigned (excludes title page and bibliography page)
- Include a properly formatted bibliography
- Use books and legitimate academic sources (articles, anthologies, etc), not web pages.
- NOTHING FROM WIKIPEDIA OR OTHER SUCH SOURCES!

Late papers will be severely penalized (10% per day). No late paper will be accepted without prior clearance.
Academic Integrity and Classroom Decorum: Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education and East Carolina University; therefore, we will not tolerate acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize, or falsify. All students are expected to comply with the principles of Academic Integrity embodied in the ECU Honor Code. Since violations can result in expulsion from the University, suspension, or a grade of "F" for the course, students should become familiar with what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, falsification, and other violations. Note also that according to ECU policy mere attempts to plagiarize, cheat, or falsify qualify as violations. Consult the ECU Clue Book for details: http://core.ecu.edu/econ/zinng/Academic%20Integrity.htm

All university classrooms ought to be environments in which the free exchange of information and viewpoints is undertaken in an open, respectful, and civil atmosphere. This is particularly important in classes that touch on religion, since discussions of religion can raise controversial issues or concern deeply held personal opinions. It is natural and appropriate that people can disagree on various topics of discussion, and it is fine to explore these differences in a civil tone. Disruptive students will be asked to leave class and appropriate disciplinary measures will be pursued.

In order to minimize distractions in class, students may not consult, display, or use cell phones, pagers, iPads, or other such devices in class. Especially, during exams all such devices will be confiscated. Computers can be powerful classroom tools, enabling students to take notes, look up information relevant to class discussions, and the like. However, they should not be used to check email, instant message friends, or goof around while others are trying to get the most out of the learning environment. I reserve the right to rescind permission to use computers in my class if it becomes disruptive to me or others.

Please do not come to class late or leave early. Students may be counted absent if they are not in class during any part of the class period.

University Resources:
The Writing Center offers students in-person and on-line assistance in learning writing skills. Contact the Writing Center for hours and locations at Bate (GCB) 2026 (328-2820). http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/writing/writingcenter/index.cfm

In addition to providing students with personal counseling, the Counseling and Student Development Center in Wright Building 316 (328-6661) offers various resources to assist students in their academic development. These include training in time management, test taking, overcoming test anxiety, and academic motivation. http://www.ecu.edu/studentlife/counselingcenter/

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 (252) 737-1016.

Meeting With Me:
I have 5 hours of scheduled office hours a week. Aside from those hours, I can often be found in my office. If the times I have indicated are not practical, students are encouraged to see me before or after class. If students need to meet at another time, I am sure I can be accommodating. I encourage all students to come and see me as they begin to formulate their research papers. This will insure that the selected paper topic is appropriate and relevant.

Library:
All students at ECU should become proficient in using library resources. The Joyner Library at ECU (accessible on-line at http://www.lib.ecu.edu/) has many valuable
resources on Hinduism. There are hundreds of books on religion in the stacks of Joyner Library. See the following website for help in navigating your way around the Library. Books on Philosophy, Psychology, and Religion have call numbers beginning with the letter B. Books on Hinduism have call numbers beginning with BL1100-1225. Navigate your way around the library with the following source: http://geography.miningco.com/library/congress/blb.htm

Additionally, you can find information on religious traditions in books in other sections of the library, including anthropology, art, geography, history, literature, philosophy, and psychology. You may also explore the film and music resources the library collects. One of the best resources available is the library’s collection of journals. Not only does the library have numerous religion journals in paper and bound forms, but it is also possible to access a very large number of journals on-line. (http://media.lib.ecu.edu/erdbs/) The library staff can be extremely helpful in learning to use all of these resources. Don’t be shy about asking for their help.

As a student of East Carolina University, you also have free use of the Library system at University of North Carolina — Chapel Hill (www.lib.unc.edu). Moreover, you can access just about any book, journal or other resource in the world through the Inter-Library Loan. Many resources can be obtained within a matter of days. Often, journal articles can be delivered electronically within a day or two. The Joyner Library has a special office for Inter-Library Loan services, located to the left of the front desk. You can access these resources on-line at: http://jill.lib.ecu.edu/illiad/logon.html

OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

January 15 – Introduction of Course, Syllabus Review

January 17 – What is Hinduism?
- Flood, Preface through p. 22

January 22 – Orientation to the subcontinent
- Smith, “Orientalism and Hinduism”
- Flood, p. 23-35
- Mapping exercise

January 24 and 29 – Indo-European Mythology, Linguistics, and Archeology
- Dumezil, Destiny of a King, 1-27

January 31 Counter-Arguments to the Indo-European Hypothesis
- David Frawley, “The Myth of the Aryan Invasion of India”
- MAP QUIZ

February 5 and 7 – Indus Valley Civilization
- Flood, 127-174

February 12 – EXAM I

February 14 and 19 – The Vedic Vision of Reality
- Flood, 35-50
- O’Flaherty, Rig Veda, selections
Living Hinduisms, “On Caste”

**February 21 and 26 – Upaniṣadic Religiosity**
- Flood, 51-102

**February 28 and March 5 – Mythology and Epics**
- Flood, 103-127
- Sarma, Mahābhārata
- Sarma, Ramayana

**March 7 – EXAM II**

**March 10-17 SPRING BREAK!**

**March 19 and 21 – Bhagavad Gita**
- First paper due on March 19
- Flood, 128-147

**March 26 and 28 – Vedanta and Philosophy**
- Flood, 224-249
- O'Flaherty, 91-131
- Quiz II (March 28)

**April 2 and 4 – Saivism, the Goddess, and Tantra**
- Flood, 148-197
- O’Flaherty, 131-138

**April 9 – Women in India**

**April 11 - Gandhi**
- TBA

**April 16 and 18 – Art and Architecture**
- Movie at http://www.akshardham.com/
- Second paper due on April 16

**April 23 and 25 – Contemporary Expression of Hinduism**
- Flood, 250-273

**READING DAY – May 1**

**FINAL EXAM May 2 – 8:00 - 10:30**