

The University of Calgary  
Faculty of Humanities  
Department of Religious Studies

May 4, 2007

**Religious Studies 303-20**

**Spring 2007**

**Introduction to Hinduism**

**SH 157**

**TR 10:00-13:00**

Instructor:

Dr. Tinu Ruparell

Office:

SS1320

Office Hours:

T 14:00 - 15:00 and by appointment

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course website

<http://web.mac.com/ruparell>

**Required Texts:**

Rodrigues, Hillary. *Introducing Hinduism*. London: Routledge. 2006

*The Bhagavad Gita* – This text is widely available in varying translations.

I suggest the Oxford classics version translated by W. Johnson, or for an online resource, the Prasad Translation available here:

<http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/gita.htm>,

and a downloadable PDF of the Prasad translation here:

<http://web.mac.com/ruparell> - click course>303>Bhagavad Gita

(I do not suggest that students use the ISKON version, *The Bhagavad Gita As It Is*.)

Additionally, some handouts are required and will be made available at student expense through the Department of Religious Studies

**Course Description:**

This course will serve as an introduction to Hindu beliefs and practices through an examination of key social and religious questions as they have been asked and responded to by those who call themselves ‘Hindu.’ As we will see, the terms ‘Hindu’ or even ‘Hindu tradition’ are very contested and thus we will first consider the question of Hinduism’s definition, origins and study before briefly looking at its very long history of development and in particular its dynamic and ‘centreless’ structure. We will then consider the idea of *varnashramadharma* as an introduction to Hindu social and ethical systems/structures and then look at how these structures have been criticised both internally and externally. In the second half of the course we will consider two classical Indian philosophical schools – Sankhya and Advaita – to see how these play out in a reading of the Bhagavad Gita, culminating in a consideration of Bhakti traditions and, circumstances permitting, a visit to a local Hindu temple.

**Core Competencies:**

Active participants in this course will further their knowledge of ‘Hinduism’, its basic tenets and some of the varieties of its practice and belief systems. Students will gain a basic understanding of the terms and categories used by Hindus to respond to fundamental religious questions as a foundation for reading certain primary texts to which students will gain an introduction. Skills acquired in this course will include critical thinking in methods of studying religion, written expression, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, and critical analysis of philosophical and theological systems. Knowledge acquired in this course will help students reflect more clearly and critically on the nature of religion in society and their own religious narratives.

**Course Requirements:**

ASSESSMENT	DATE	WEIGHT
In-class exam 1 – in class essays and short answers	29 May 2007	40%
In class exam 2 – in class essays and short answers	21 June 2007	20%
Final registrar scheduled exam – two essay questions	TBA	40%

**Grading:**

A+ 96 –100%	A 90-95%	A- 85-89%
B+ 80-84%	B 75-79%	B- 70-74%
C+ 65-69%	C 60-64%	C- 55-59%
D+ 53-54%	D 50-52%	F < 50%

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme:

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

**NB. POLICY WITH REGARDING MISSED/LATE ASSESSMENTS**

**Assessment dates are firm. Without acceptable documentation (i.e. medical certificate, police report, bereavement notice, confirmation of religious observance, or court summons) or without PRIOR arrangement with the instructor, missed assessments will be awarded an ‘F’. NO accommodation will be afforded for missed assessments due to previously booked vacations. Please ensure that you adjust your schedule to attend classes and assessments.**

**This policy is intended to encourage diligence and integrity among students as well as to uphold principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class.**

**Excuses other than those listed above will receive little attention.**

**Academic Honesty:**

*Plagiarism is not tolerated at the University of Calgary and has serious consequences. Your essays/presentations must be your own work and inadequate referencing may be seen as plagiarism. Please see the relevant sections on Academic Misconduct in the University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.*

**Syllabus:**

A complete syllabus will be made available in the first week of class.

Recording of lectures: Recording any part of any lectures in any form must first be approved by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only. See current Calendar, Tape recording of Lectures.

Academic Accommodation: If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Once registered, please discuss any upcoming tests/examinations with the instructor two weeks before the scheduled date.

Withdrawing from courses:

Please note the information regarding withdrawals and fee refunds in the Academic Schedule of the current University Calendar.

Gnosis:

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: [gnosis@ucalgary.ca](mailto:gnosis@ucalgary.ca) or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.