

**University of Calgary
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Religious Studies**

June 27, 2006

**Religious Studies 325 L60 – Female Saints & Sacred Figures in Eastern Religions
Course Outline, Summer 2006**

Instructor	Yumi Onozawa
Class Time	MW 11:00-13:45
Office / Hours	SS 1323 / MW 10:00-10:50
Email	onozaway@ucalgary.ca
Phone	220-7906

Required Text Books

1. Pintchman, Tracy, ed. *Seeking Mahadevi: Constructing the Identities of the Hindu Great Goddess*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. (Available at University Bookstore)
2. RELS 325 Course Pack – containing five individual articles. (Available at Bound and Copied at Student Centre)

Course Description

This course will focus on female saints and sacred figures in Eastern Religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism. Additionally, it focuses on religious traditions of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese people. Through individual articles and by watching visual presentations (films and photos) that discuss the saints and figures, we will investigate and evaluate their importance within each religious and cultural background. Often saintly figures have strong spiritual connection with female sacred figures (i.e. goddess) through being possessed by them. In this role, they may also often be referred to as shaman and because of their possessed divine nature they are sometimes worshipped as the goddess herself. Therefore, we will examine the religious phenomenon called “possession” as a bridge between living beings and divinity and study female saints with this aspect.

Core Competencies

Students will be able to:

- obtain comprehensive knowledge about female saints and sacred figures.
- examine them by employing various academic perspectives such as textual, philosophical, doctrinal, historical, anthropological, sociological, etc.
- cultivate critical thinking through class discussions and assignments.
- develop the skill and technique appropriate for academic writing through written assignments.

Course Requirements (Total 100%)

1. Exams

- a. Exam #1, **July 24th** 11:00-12:15 (20 percent of the total grade)
- b. Exam #2 (final exam), **Registrar’s office scheduled TBA** (20 percent)

Both exams will contain 3 parts: 1) 20 fill-in-the-blanks, 2) 6 short answer questions, and 3) a short essay. Students are required to be familiar with contents of weekly reading materials, films, lectures, and class discussions.

The request of re-scheduling exam dates will not be accepted except for the following reasons: 1) severe medical condition of students or their close relatives and 2) attending funeral of family or relatives. In either case, the student must provide a doctor's note with the date of your absence from an exam, a death certification, or a newspaper obituary.

2. Term Paper

a. Term paper, due on **August 14th** (40 percent)

The paper should consist of 8-10 typed pages (double spaced: approx. 2500 words). The topic of term paper must be on female saints and sacred figures in Eastern Religions (Therefore, you cannot choose figures in Western Religions, such as Virgin Mary). Submit a printed copy (Submissions by e-mail will not be accepted). Late submission of any written assignments (both research paper and article review) will lose one letter grade for each day (e.g. A → A- for one day late submission). If students cannot hand in any assignment(s) on the due date, they should bring it to the Department of Religious Studies (SS 1301) and have it date-stamped.

b. Paper presentation on **August 16th** (5 percent)

Each student will give a 10 minute oral presentation based on his/her term paper on the last class of this course. This assignment is set up for sharing his/her knowledge with his/her classmates. The attendance will be taken during presentations. Students **MUST** attend at all presentations. If they miss any presentations of classmates, their presentation will not be graded and receive 0 for the grade.

Term paper will be evaluated according to three components:

- mechanics (an introduction with clearly stated topic and method, properly constructed sentences and paragraphs, footnotes or endnotes, citations, and bibliography),
- organization (use of appropriate sources, both direct and indirect reference, and the logical development of arguments), and
- comprehensive and critical analysis (presentation of comprehensive understanding of the topic, critical evaluation, and original thinking). (N.B. This is not a research paper. Your critical analysis will be evaluated).

3. Article Review, due on **July 19th** (15 percent)

Students are required to compose an article review (4-5 pages, approx. 1000 words. double spaced, and printed) on an article "Worship of the Goddess in Hinduism" by Sarah Caldwell (available on the web, www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/i_es/i_es_caldw_goddess.htm). Students are strongly recommended to use weekly reading(s) and visual presentations for reference and/or their counter-arguments.

An article review should include:

- a brief summary of the article, an assessment of the author's research (e.g. How deep is the research on the topic? Did the author make insightful points on the topic? Who is the author?),
- an analysis of a method that the author used (e.g. How does the article create its argument(s)? Is it appropriate for interpreting his/her topic? How is it different from and/or similar to the one that is employed for weekly readings?),
- the strength and weakness of the article, and
- an over-all evaluation (e.g. Would you recommend the article to others? Why or why not?).

As for the writing guide for an article review, visit U of C library website>Reference Sources>Writing Guides>Book Reviews.

Grading

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

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

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

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 current University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation:

If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and you 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.

Gnosis:

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

Weekly Subjects and Readings

Keep up to the assigned readings in order to understand lectures and/or films and to contribute to the class discussions. You can arrange to view any films that you missed by contacting Media Library (MacKimmie Library Tower, Lower Level, 220-3087).

(P: Pintchman, CP: Course Pack)

Date	Major Topic(s)	Reading(s)	Film	Exam/Assignment
July 5	-Introduction and Review of Hindu Goddesses		<i>Sectarian Hinduism: Goddess and Her Worship</i>	
July 10	-“Goddesses and the Goddess in Hinduism”	P. Ch. 9		
July 12	-“Mahadevi as Mother”	P. Ch. 2		
July 17	-“Waves of Beauty, Rivers of Blood”	P. Ch. 5	<i>Ball of Fire: Angry Goddess</i>	
July 19	-“Reconstructing the Split Goddess as Shakti in a Tamil Village” -“Perfecting the Mother’s Silence”	P. Ch. 7/8		Article Review Due
July 24	Korean Shamanism: Initiation “Kut”	CP		Exam #1
July 26	Korean Shamanism	CP	<i>Initiation ‘Kut’ for a Korean Shaman</i>	
July 31	-Female Bodhisattva “Kuan-yin, the Chinese Goddess of Mercy”	CP		
Aug. 2	-Divinity in Tibetan Buddhism <i>Dakini’s Warm Breath</i> , Ch.2	CP		
Aug. 9	-Goddess of Chinese Folk Religion: “Mazu: Becoming the Empress of Heaven”	CP	<i>Taiwan Mazu Po</i>	
Aug. 14	-Sun Goddess in Japan “The Significance of Amaterasu in Japanese Religious History”	CP		Term Paper Due
Aug. 16	-Presentation			Presentation

Exam #2 will be scheduled by the Registrar’s office.