

## Philosophies of India: Knowledge, Reality, and the Self

**[NOTE: Most course policies (attendance, late work, etc.) have been removed from this version of the syllabus.]**

**Spring 2015**

**Phil/Rel: 4910, CRN: 26314/26439, 3 credit hours**

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**Course Catalog Description:** A seminar or tutorial for the intensive consideration of one philosophical problem, movement, or figure. On demand. [See the Detailed Course Description below for more specific information.]

**Course Student Learning Outcomes:** As with any philosophy course, students should expect to grapple with difficult texts in order to understand and evaluate the ideas and arguments in those texts. Students will develop their abilities to read carefully, analyze arguments, and think critically about difficult ideas. More specifically, students will be able to engage in educated discussions about some of the major ideas that developed in the philosophical traditions of India, including developing their own informed opinions about these ideas and how they might relate these ideas to their own thinking.

**Course Materials/Resources:** Please obtain the following two textbooks: Sarma, Deepak. *Classical Indian Philosophy: A Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011. (ISBN: 978-0231133999); Siderits, Mark. *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2007. (ISBN: 978-0-87220-873-5). Additional readings will be available on the Blackboard/Learn page for this course, which can be accessed at [www.utc.edu/learn](http://www.utc.edu/learn).

**Course Assessments and Requirements:** Your grade will be based on three reading reaction papers, two exams, one final paper, and attendance/participation (which will include one reading quiz or participation assignment per week). I will give more specific instructions on all of these assignments in class.

**Detailed Course Description:** This course will introduce students to the vast and fascinating philosophical traditions of India. We'll start with some of the earliest philosophical texts in India, the Vedas and Upaniṣads, as well as one of the most influential, the *Bhagavad Gītā*. These texts form the background for what later came to be called the "orthodox" (or "*āstika*" – lit. "it exists") schools of Hindu philosophy. The philosophical landscape of ancient India also included a number of "heterodox" ("*nāstika*" – lit. "it doesn't exist") schools, including Buddhism, Cārvāka, and Jainism. We'll look at a few texts from each of these schools, and then we'll turn to what I call The Big Debate in classical Indian philosophy: Is there a self? The philosophical debate on this issue kept classical Indian philosophers busy for well over one thousand years. This debate will provide a thread running through the remainder of the course. Next, we'll turn to the six orthodox *darśanas* (schools – lit. "views"). While these schools are all what we would now call Hindu schools, they are far from uniform, ranging from the die-hard

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realism of Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā to the monistic idealism of Advaita Vedānta. While representatives of these schools debated each other, their real competition came from the schools we will cover next: the sophisticated developments in Indian Buddhist philosophy, which included Abhidharma, Yogācāra, and Madhyamaka. We'll then look at how philosophers in classical India thought about some issues in metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. Lastly, we'll look at some more recent developments in Indian philosophy including Gandhi, Ambedkar, postcolonialism, and feminist philosophers.

**Assignments:**

Assignments	Due dates	Possible Points
Reading reaction papers		30
Exams		50
Final paper		50
Attendance	Every class	20
Participation (includes reading quizzes and in-class participation assignments)	Weekly	50
		<i>Total 200</i>

**Tentative Schedule of Classes:**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topics, Readings, and Assignments</i>
	<b><i>Introduction to Indian philosophy: What is philosophy? Is there philosophy in India?</i></b>
<u>Week 1</u> Jan. 5-9	<p><u>Mon. Jan. 5:</u> Introduction, syllabus, etc.</p> <p><u>Wed. Jan. 7:</u> Please read Sarma and Siderits. Readings: Sarma, <i>Classical Indian Philosophy: A Reader</i> (hereafter: Sarma): Introduction (p. xv-xxii); Siderits, <i>Buddhism as Philosophy</i> (hereafter: Siderits), Ch. 1: Buddhism as Philosophy? (p.1-14)</p> <p><u>Fri. Jan. 9:</u> Please read Krishna. Reading: Blackboard/Learn: Krishna, "Indian Philosophy: A Counter-Perspective." Be ready for a quiz and/or participation assignment. Film in class: <i>The Story of India, Episode Two</i>.</p> <p><u>Optional reading:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Halbfass, "<i>Darśana, Ānvīkṣikī, Philosophy</i>"</p>
	<b><i>Orthodox Beginnings: Vedas, Upaniṣads, and Bhagavad Gītā</i></b>
<u>Week 2</u> Jan. 12-16	<p>(Note: The remainder of the syllabus will list all readings for the week together. Generally students should be sure to have completed the first reading for Monday and the remaining readings for Wednesday. Be ready for a participation activity on Friday.)</p> <p><u>Readings:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Vedas and Upaniṣads (selections); <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i> (selections)</p>
	<b><i>Heterodox Schools: Buddhism, Cārvāka, and Jainism</i></b>
<u>Week 3</u> Jan. 21-23	<p><b><i>NO CLASS: Mon. Jan. 19 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)</i></b></p> <p><i>Early Buddhism</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u> Sarma, Ch. 2 (p. 14-19); Siderits, Ch. 2: Early Buddhism: Basic Teachings (p.15-31)</p>

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	<u>Optional readings:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Selections from the Nikāyas
<u>Week 4</u> Jan. 26-30	<i>Cārvāka and Jainism</i> <u>Readings:</u> Sarma, Chs. 1 and 5 (p. 3-13, 50-59, 81-89)  <u>Optional readings:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Hecht, <i>Doubt: A History</i> (excerpt); Gokhale, “The Cārvāka Theory of Pramāṇas: A Restatement”; Mills, “Jayarāṣi’s Delightful Destruction of Epistemology”; Dundas, <i>The Jains</i> (excerpt)  <b>Friday Jan. 30: Reading Reaction Paper 1 due in class</b> <b><i>The Big Debate: Self or Non-Self?</i></b>
<u>Week 5</u> Feb. 2-6	<u>Readings:</u> Siderits, Ch. 3: Non-Self: Empty Persons (p. 32-68); Uddyotakara’s <i>Nyāyavārttika</i> (read selections in Siderits, p. 97-104)  <u>Optional reading:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Albahari, “Nirvāṇa and Ownerless Consciousness”  <b><i>The Six Orthodox Darśanas</i></b>
<u>Week 6</u> Feb. 9-13	<i>Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika</i> <u>Readings:</u> Sarma, Ch. 6 (p. 93-114, 136-140) and Siderits, Ch. 5: A Nyāya Interlude (p. 85-97); Sarma, Ch. 7 (p. 141-143, 159-166) <u>Optional reading:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Ganeri, “A Return to the Self: Indians and Greeks on Life as Art and Philosophical Therapy”
<u>Week 7</u> Feb. 16-20	<b>Monday, Feb. 16: Exam 1 in class</b> <i>Sāṃkhya and Yoga</i> <u>Readings:</u> Sarma, Chs. 8 and 9 (p. 167-194) Film in class: <i>Who Owns Yoga?</i>
<u>Week 8</u> Feb. 23-27	<i>Yoga, continued.</i> <i>Mīmāṃsā</i> <u>Readings:</u> Sarma, Ch. 10 (p. 195-202) and Blackboard/Learn: Bilimoria, “On the Very Idea of Authorless Revelation”
<u>Week 9</u> March 2-6	<i>Advaita Vedānta (Nondualist Vedānta)</i> <u>Readings:</u> Sarma, Ch. 11 (p.203-213) and Blackboard/Learn: Deutsch, <i>Advaita Vedānta: A Philosophical Reconstruction</i> (excerpt)
March 9-13	<b>NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK</b>
	<b><i>Orthodox Wrap Up; Buddhist philosophy: Abhidharma and Mahāyāna</i></b>
<u>Week 10</u> March 16-20	<i>Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Mādhava Vedānta (Qualified Nondualist and Dualist Vedānta)</i> <u>Readings:</u> Sarma, Chs. 12 and 13 (p. 214-233)  <b>Reading Reaction Paper 2 due in class on Wednesday, March 18</b>  <i>Abhidharma: Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, and Theravāda</i> <u>Readings:</u> Siderits, Ch. 6: Abhidharma: The Metaphysics of Empty Persons (p. 105-137)
<u>Week 11</u> March 23-27	<i>Mahāyāna: Yogācāra and Madhyamaka</i> <u>Readings:</u> Siderits, Ch. 7: The Rise of Mahāyāna (p. 138-145); Sarma, Ch. 3 (p. 20-39); Sarma, Ch. 4 (p. 40-49)  <u>Optional readings:</u> Siderits, Ch. 8: Yogācāra: Impressions-Only (p. 146-179); Hall, “The Meaning of <i>Vijñapti</i> in Vasubandhu’s Concept of Mind”
<u>Week 12</u> March 30 -April 3	<i>Madhyamaka, continued</i> <u>Reading:</u> Siderits, Ch. 9: Madhyamaka: The Doctrine of Emptiness (p. 180-207)  <u>Optional readings:</u> Garfield, “Epochē and Śūnyatā: Skepticism East and West”; Flintoff, “Pyrrho and India”; Kuzminski, “Pyrrhonism and the Madhyamaka”; Taber, “On

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	Nāgārjuna's So-Called Fallacies”
	<b><i>Issues in Metaphysics and Epistemology</i></b>
<u>Week 13</u> April 6-10	<u>Readings:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Chakrabarti, “From the Fabric to the Weaver”; Blackboard/Learn: Hayes, “Principled Atheism in the Buddhist Scholastic Tradition”; Siderits, Ch. 10: The School of Dinnāga: Buddhist Epistemology (p. 208-230)  <u>Optional readings:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Matilal, <i>Perception</i> (excerpts); Potter, “Does Indian Epistemology Concern Justified True Belief?”; Siderits, Ch. 4: Buddhist Ethics (p. 69-84)
	<b><i>Recent developments: 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries; Course wrap-up</i></b>
<u>Week 14</u> April 13-17	<b><i>Reading Reaction Paper 3 due in class Mon. April 13</i></b> <u>Readings:</u> Blackboard/Learn: Ambedkar, “Selected Writings”; Gandhi, “Ahimsā or the Way of Non-Violence”; Tsomo, “Buddhist Feminist Reflections”; Chakrabarty, “Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History” (Note: Please read the very short Ambedkar reading for Monday, Gandhi and Tsomo for Wednesday, and Chakrabarty for Friday).  <u>Optional readings:</u> Nanda, “The Science Wars in India”; Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”
<u>Week 15</u> April 20	<b><i>Mon. April 20: Exam 2</i></b>
<u>Finals week</u> April 22-28	<b><i>Final paper due Mon. April 27</i></b>