Course Description:

This course will be an introduction to the major schools of Indian philosophy after the Second Century, with an emphasis on the Hindu Nyaya and Advaita Vedanta and the Buddhist Madhyamika schools. Since these schools arose in the context of religious debate, the course will also address the basic religious tenets of Nondualist Vedanta, Theistic Vedanta, Samkhya/Yoga, Jainism, and Buddhism. The course will emphasize situating and understanding Indian philosophical positions within their argumentative context; hence there will be a focus on the dialectical and analytical strands of classical Indian philosophy.

Approximately the first five weeks of the course will introduce ancient and classical Indian religion through selections from the Rg Veda, selections the Brihadaranyaka, Chandogya, and Katha Upanishads, and selected chapters of the Bhagavad-Gita. This portion also will include a brief consideration of geographical and cultural influences on the Indian subcontinent. Classical Samkhya and Yoga will be introduced through a reading of short selections from the Samkhya-karika and the Yogasutra. Jainism will be introduced through brief selections from Jain scriptures and from Vadi Devasuri. We will consider the philosophical question of the cognitive and epistemological value of religious experiences.

We will then devote approximately two weeks to each of the following three schools: Advaita Vedanta, Nyaya-Vaisesika, and Madhyamika. Advaita or “Nondual” Vedanta maintains that all distinctness is ultimately unreal; a product of avidya or ignorance. Their classical opponents have been the Nyaya or realist school of theistic Vedanta. The Madhyamika are a Buddhist school who maintain that all phenomena are empty of inherent existence. We will focus on the epistemology (theory of knowledge and justification) and ontology (theory of ultimate reality) developed by each school. We will briefly consider two other classical schools, Charvaka (skeptical materialists) and Yogachara (Buddhist Idealists).

The course will conclude with a brief look at three significant recent Indian figures: S. Vivekananda, S. Nirgasadatta, and U. Krishnamurti. We will consider if and how these figures continue classical Indian philosophical projects.

Course Objectives:

i. Increased understanding of, and familiarity with, the major Indian philosophical and religious traditions.
ii. Enhanced recognition and understanding of cultural differences between India and western societies and their roots in the Indian intellectual heritage.
iii. Improved critical reading, reasoning, and writing abilities.
iv. Exposure to provocative and sophisticated texts from a rich intellectual tradition.

Course Policies and Procedures:

Attendance: Attendance in lectures is expected. Since testable material is regularly introduced in lectures, it is impossible to miss class frequently and still do well in the course.

Late Papers: Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the class period in which they are due for full credit. Late papers must be turned-in by the start of the next class meeting; after that they will not be accepted. All accepted late papers are penalized a flat 10%.

Make-up Work: I am willing to re-schedule assignments for individuals who have a legitimate reason for doing so. If you know you are going to miss an exam date, you must notify me at least two class days in
advance in order to receive a make-up. Unless you have made a prior arrangement with me, missed exams
may be made up only in case of a documented emergency.

Disabilities Policy: If you have a specific disability that qualifies you for academic accommodations, please
notify me and provide certification from Disability Services (Office of Special Students Services). The
Office of Special Students Services is located in the Student Center, Room 270, Phone 460-7212.

Academic Dishonesty Policy: Academic dishonesty includes cheating on tests and homework as well as
plagiarism. If you engage in academic dishonesty, I will notify you that you will receive an ‘F’ in the
course. Upon being notified, you have five days to submit a written request to the department chairperson
for a hearing on the matter, if you wish to have one. If no hearing request is made, or if the decision from
the hearing goes against you, you will receive a course grade of ‘F’. Please see the Student Academic
Conduct Policy of the University for details.

Procedures for Assessment of Student Performance: Given that you adhere to the course policies, your
grade will be determined on the basis of graded assignments as specified below:

Evaluation:

i. Four papers: 13% each
ii. Three in-class quizzes: 6% each
iii. In-class final exam: 20%
iv. Attendance and participation 10%
The papers are to be typewritten essays in response to questions that I will hand out. You will
have one week to prepare your papers.
The quizzes will be short-answer and will test knowledge of important concepts and
positions.
The final will be an essay exam. You will be given a list of possible questions in advance.

Texts:

i. S. Radhakrishnan and C. Moore, etc., *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*.

ii. S. Phillips, *Classical Indian Metaphysics*

iii. Required reserve readings. These are available at three locations:

1. **Online** at [http://library.southalabama.edu/](http://library.southalabama.edu/) Note that you need to have
Acrobat Reader to look at or print the document online.
   a. Click on "Course Reserve"
   b. From the pull-down menus pick "Loomis" (Instructor) and "354: PHL" (Course). Then click "Search".
   c. Click on the title you want.
   d. Click on the link (you must be logged-in) to get the document.

2. **Library reserve.** You can read or photocopy the documents in the library
   when it is open.

3. **Philosophy Department main office** (HUMB 124). There is a copy available
   for overnight checkout for photocopying (this is legal as long as you make only
   one copy for yourself for your use in our class).
I use these reserve readings instead of more textbooks in order to *save you money*. So
please play along by finding a way to get the readings before we use them in class.
**Syllabus** Dates and readings are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.  
SB = *Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, R = Reserve reading, CIM = *Classical Indian Metaphysics*  

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic, Assignments, and Reading</th>
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| 1/11 | Ancient Indian civilization. Geography of Indian subcontinent.  
SB: *Rg Veda*: selections from *Indra, to Agni, to Soma, Hymn of Creation*. pp. 4-11, 16-36.  
R: Flood, “Dharma” from *An Introduction to Hinduism*. |
| 1/18 | Upanishadic views of Brahman, Vedanta, Upanishadic Theism.  
R: Flood, “Narrative Traditions and Early Vaisnavism”. |
| 1/25 | Upanishadic Theism, cont. Classical Samkhya, Yoga.  
SB: Selections from the *Samkhya-Karika* and the *Yogasutra*. pp. 426-45, 454-85.  
R: W. Wainwright, “Do Religious Experiences have Cognitive Value?”  
R: Flood, “Yoga and Renunciation.”  
**Quiz #1 1/29.**  
**Essay Assignment #1 handed out 1/29.** |
| 2/1 | Jainism and Carvaka  
SB: Selections from *Tattvarthadhigama Sutra*, selection from Mallisena’s *Syadvadamanjari*. pp. 252-71.  
**Essay #1 due 2/6** |
| 2/8 | Buddhism. Theravada and Mahayana  
SB: Selected sermons, pp. 272-92  
R: Hopkins, selections “The Selfless, Dependent Arising, Four Noble Truths.” |
| 2/15 | Early Madhymika: Nagarjuna’s revolution.  
R: Nagarjuna, *Vigrahavyavartani: Averting the Arguments*.  
**Essay #2 handed out 2/19** |
| 2/22 | Nyaya-Vaisesika.  
CIM: Chapter 2  
**Essay #2 due 2/26**  
2/24 Mardi Gras Holiday no class |
| 3/1 | Nyaya-Vaisesika, cont.  
**Quiz #2 3/5** |
Week of:                      Topic, Assignments, and Reading

3/8                          Advaita Vedanta.
                               SB: Sankara’s commentary on the Vedanta Sutras. pp. 509-42.
                               R: Sriharsa, Khandanakhandakhadya, selections, pp. 3-75.
                               Essay #3 handed out 3/12

3/15                         SPRING BREAK WEEK

3/22                         Advaita’s Response to Nyaya
                               R: Sriharsa, Khandanakhandakhadya, selections, pp. 3-75 (cont.).
                               CIM: Chapter 3
                               Essay #3 due 3/26
                               ☐ Course Drop Deadline 3/27 ☐

3/29                         Advaita Vedanta, cont. Gangesha and Navya Nyaya
                               CIM: Chapter 4

4/5                          Buddhist Idealism and Later Madhyamika.
                               R: Hopkins, Cittamatra.
                               R: Chandrakirti: selections from Prasanapada.

4/12                         Madhyamika, cont.
                               Quiz #3 4/14

                               SB: Selection from Radhakrishnan’s An Idealist View of Life, 611-37.
                               Essay #4 handed out 4/23

                               R: Selection from Nirgasadatta’s I Am That.
                               R: Selection form U. Krishnamurti’s Mind is a Myth.
                               Essay #4 due 4/30

Final exam Thursday 5/7, 10:30-12:30