

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

**Religious Studies 373.03 L01 Winter 2009
Popular Hinduism
MWF 11-11:50 am**

Instructor: Elizabeth Rohlman
E-mail: elizabeth.rohlman@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11-1 and by appointment

Office: Social Science 1304
Phone: (403) 220-3287

Teaching Assistant: Kendra Marks, kdbmarks@gmail.com

Course Description and Goals:

This course is an introduction to the contemporary practices of Hinduism in South Asia and in the diaspora. We will examine the diversity of popular Hindu practices with special attention to differences defined by region, language, caste, and gender. Focusing on recent ethnographic research, we will consider the ways in which contemporary Hindus make sense of the world and their lives within it. Topics covered will include the structure of social and family life, the organization of sacred space and time, and the changing forces of modernity in Hindu life. By the end of the course, students will develop general knowledge of the contemporary landscape of Hindu traditions and an understanding of the place of ethnographic research in the study of religion.

Required Textbooks:

- 1) Eck, Diana. *Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*. Third Edition. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. ISBN: 0-231-11265-3
- 2) Fuller, C.J. *The Camphor Flame: Popular Hinduism and Society in India*. Revised and Expanded Edition. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004. ISBN: 0-691-12048-X
- 3) Sax, William S. *Mountain Goddess: Gender and Politics in a Himalayan Pilgrimage*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. ISBN: 0-19-506979-X
- 4) Wiser, William and Charlotte Wiser. *Behind Mud Walls: Seventy-five Years in a North Indian Village*. Updated and Expanded Edition. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. ISBN: 978-0-520-22710

** On occasion, additional readings will be available on Blackboard.

Course Requirements:

Participation: Regular class attendance and thorough, thoughtful reading of assigned texts are mandatory. Participation grades will be determined by the quality of each student's contributions to regular class discussions.

Course Requirements (continued):

Map Quiz: Because a major theme of this course is the regional variation of Hindu practice, it is essential that students be familiar with the basic geography of the Indian subcontinent. Students will take a map quiz on **Monday, January 26**. On this quiz, students will be required to identify some or all of the following geographical regions and features:

- 1) Rivers: Ganges, Yamuna, Kaveri, Narmada
- 2) Mountain Ranges: Himalayas and Vindhyas
- 3) Regions/States: Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Bengal, Uttar Pradesh (UP), Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir)
- 4) Countries: Pakistan, China, Nepal, Sri Lanka
- 5) Cities: Delhi, Madras/Chennai, Calcutta/Kolkatta, Benares/Varanasi, Bombay/Mumbai

Exams: Students will write a mid-term exam on **Wednesday, March 4** and a registrar-scheduled final exam. Exams will test students' understanding of assigned readings, mastery of key concepts and vocabulary, and ability to analyze these readings and concepts with respect to their historical and cultural contexts.

Paper: Students will submit an 8-10 page research paper at the end of the term. The research paper is a project in which students will engage throughout the semester. To this end, instruction on research proposals, research methods and resources will be discussed in class throughout the term. **The research paper is due at the last class meeting.**

Grading:

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Map Quiz:	10%
Participation:	15%
Mid-term Exam:	20%
Final Exam:	25%
Paper:	30%

A final letter grade will be assigned based on the following department-approved scale:

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%

Academic Honesty:

Students should familiarize themselves with University policy regarding "Intellectual Honesty" and "Integrity in Scholarly Activity."

Syllabus:

A complete syllabus, including a schedule of readings and exam dates, will be distributed on the first day of class.