

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

**Religious Studies 451.07 L01
Narrative Hindu Literature**

**Fall 2011
TR 11:00am-12:15pm
SS 1332**

Instructor: Elizabeth Rohlman
E-mail: elizabeth.rohlman@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30-4:30pm and by appointment

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

Course Description and Goals:

This seminar is an in-depth exploration of the narrative literatures of classical Hinduism. Focusing on the genres of *katha* (fable), *itihasa* (epic), and *purana* (myth), we will examine the ways in which narrative conveys religious and moral value. The interpretation of narrative through the lenses of both classical Indian and contemporary western literary theories will be a central concern of the class. By the end of this course, students will develop a familiarity with the literary corpus of classical Hindu narrative and a detailed understanding of a few seminal narrative texts. In addition, students will be well-versed in the critical questions and issues pertaining to the role of narrative literature in religious culture.

Required Textbooks:

- 1) Umberto Eco. *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*. Harvard University Press, 1998.
ISBN: 978-0-674-81050
- 2) Patrick Olivelle, translator. *Pancatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom*. Oxford World's Classics, 2002. ISBN: 978-0192839886
- 3) Edwin F. Bryant, translator. *Krishna: The Beautiful Legend of God* (Srimad Bhagavata Purana Book X). Penguin Classics, 2004. ISBN: 978-0140447996
- 4) *The Mahabharata*; John D. Smith, translator; Penguin Classics, 2009
ISBN: 9780140446814
- 5) W. J. Johnson, translator. *The Sautikaparvan of the Mahabharata: The Massacre at Night*. Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0199549764

All required textbooks will also be available on reserve in Taylor Library.
On occasion, links to additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements:

Participation: Regular class attendance and thorough, thoughtful reading of assigned texts are essential to a successful seminar. Participation grades are will be determined by three factors, totalling 30% of the final grade:

- (1) The quality of each student's daily preparedness and contributions to regular class discussions: 10%
- (2) Leading class discussion: 10%
Each student will sign up for two weeks during which they will help to lead the seminar discussion. For each class meeting, one student will write a reflection on the day's assigned reading and one student will write a response to the reflection. Both the reflection and response will be posted on the Blackboard discussion thread prior to class, and both should be written with the goal of raising questions and topics for discussion.
- (3) One-page reflection papers: 10%
On four occasions throughout the semester, I will ask you to write a one-page reflection paper based on the readings and discussion that takes place in a given week. Each reflection paper will be announced on a Thursday at the end of class and will be due the following Tuesday at the start of class.

Exams: Students will write two take-home exams. Each exam will be a 4-page close reading and analysis of a selection from an assigned text. Instruction on how to write a close reading and analysis will be provided in class. Exam 1 is due on **Friday, October 14 by 4pm.** Exam 2 is due on **Tuesday, November 22 by 4pm.** Exams are to be submitted electronically, as email attachments in word format (.doc or .docx).

Paper: Students will write a 10 to 12 page research paper. The research paper is a project in which students will engage throughout the semester. To this end, students will submit a preliminary paper proposal in class on **Thursday, October 20** and a revised paper proposal in class on **Tuesday, November 15.** While neither proposal will be graded, failure to submit either proposal will result in reduction of a full grade (eg. A will become a B) on the final paper. The final research paper is due **Friday, December 9 by 4pm.**

All written work will be assessed on the basis of both content and presentation. Poor quality writing (e.g., excessive grammatical errors) or careless presentation (e.g., excessive typos) will result in lower grades. With respect to this policy, students should note the University's policy on Writing Across the Curriculum, section E.2 of the 2011-2012 calendar:

“Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their University courses and, where appropriate, members of faculty can and should use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.”

Grading:

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Participation: 30%
 Exams: 20% each (40% combined)
 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.” In particular, note the University’s definition of plagiarism (section K.2.1 of the University Calendar). Ignorance of proper citation practices does not excuse plagiarism. All instances of plagiarism in this class will be handled as per the University’s policies on academic misconduct.

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>.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Syllabus:

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