

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

**Religious Studies 451.07 L01
*Narrative Hindu Literature***

**Winter 2009
MW 1:00-2:15pm**

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

Required Textbooks:

- 1) Edwin F. Bryant, translator. *Krishna: The Beautiful Legend of God* (Srimad Bhagavata Purana Book X). Penguin Classics, 2004. ISBN: 978-0140447996
- 2) Umberto Eco. *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*. Harvard University Press, 1998. ISBN: 978-0-674-81050
- 3) W. J Johnson, translator. *The Sautikaparvan of the Mahabharata: The Massacre at Night*. Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0199549764
- 4) R.K Narayan. *The Ramayana: A Shortened Modern Prose Version of the Indian Epic*. Penguin Classics, 2006. ISBN: 9778-0143039679
- 5) Patrick Olivelle, translator. *Pancatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom*. Oxford World's Classics, 2002. ISBN: 978-0192839886

Suggested Textbook:

Cornelia Dimmitt & J.A.B. van Buitenen, editors and translators. *Classical Hindu Mythology: A Reader in the Sanskrit Puranas*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978. ISBN: 0-87722-122-7

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.

Course Requirements:

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

In addition, each student will sign up for two dates on which they will help to lead the seminar discussion. 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. Both students will collaborate in creating a presentation and plan for discussion for the chosen class. Each student's reflection, response, and in-class presentation will determine one quarter of the participation grade for the course.

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, February 13**. Exam 2 is due on **Friday, April 3**. Exams are to be submitted in the Department of Religious Studies' drop box, SS 1301.

*There will be no Registrar scheduled final exam for this course.

Paper: Students will submit a 12 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, students will submit a preliminary paper proposal on **Wednesday, February 25** and a revised paper proposal on **Wednesday, March 25**. While neither proposal will be graded, failure to submit either proposal will result in a reduced grade on the final paper. The final research paper is due at the last class meeting on **Wednesday, April 15**.

Grading:

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Participation: 20%
Exams: 25% each (50% 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."

Syllabus:

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