

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Religious Studies 603.04

Bhagavadgita

Winter Time-Intensive Graduate Seminar

Professor Arindam Chakrabarti, University of Hawaii

M – F, March 10 – 14, 9:00 – 4:00

Course Overview:

This course is an intensive study of the *Bhagavadgita*. Each day of class will be broken up in the following way. First, an hour-long morning lecture (9:00 – 10:00). Second, a two hour textual "close-up" reading, with special verses of the *Gita* and their alternative commentaries (10:30 – 12:30). Third, an 80 – 90 minute discussion section, led by students or instructor, about philosophical issues arising from the morning sessions (2:30 – 4:00).

Required Readings (available from Perlea Ashton in RELS department):

The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War, trans. Barbara Stoler Miller (Bantam, 1986).

Yogananda, Paramahansa. *The Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita: An Introduction to India's Universal Science of God-Realization* (Self Realization Publications, 2007).

Course Requirements:

Preparation for and Participation in Class 25%

Leading Seminar Discussion on one afternoon 25%

One or two students will be assigned to lead discussion in some of the afternoon sessions. You are required to email Professor Chakrabarti an outline of your plan the evening before the seminar that you are assigned to lead.

Final Paper (12-15 pages, due April 18) 50%

The topic of the final paper needs to be approved by Professor Chakrabarti, who will provide more information regarding appropriate topics and research expectations in class.

Submit your final essay in paper and electronic form by the due date of April 18 to Dr. Chris Framarin, who will convey the papers to Professor Chakrabarti.

Grading:

Each component will be assigned a letter grade according to the FGS grading scheme.

A+	4.0	A+	4.0 - Outstanding
A	4.0	A	4.0 - Excellent
A-	3.7	A-	3.7 - Very good performance
B+	3.3	B+	3.3 - Good performance
B	3.0	B	3.0 - Satisfactory performance
B-	2.7	B-	2.7 - Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.3	C+	2.3 - Unsatisfactory (Note: All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements)
C	2.0	C	2.0
C-	1.7	C-	1.7
D+	1.3	D+	1.3
D	1.0	D	1.0
F	0	F	0

Academic Honesty:

Students should be familiar with University regulations regarding academic integrity. See relevant pages in the current University Calendar.

Course Schedule:

Monday, March 10

What is a Moral Dilemma? The Larger Context of the Mahabharata

Watch "The Game of Dice"

Arguments against Fighting

Arguments for Fighting

Why the battle-context of the Mahabharata does not bear comparison with the war in Iraq

Must all moral dilemmas have a clear-cut resolution?

Gita Chapter 1

Matilal's Introduction to *Moral Dilemmas in the Mahabharata*

Tuesday, March 11

Deeds and Their Doers: Karma and Atman (Chapters 2 and 3)

The Character of an Ideal Doer: Firm in Wisdom.

The Gita's Virtue Ethics

Buddhi-Yoga

Wednesday, March 12

God and His incarnation

Four Varnas: Theory of Agency without Attachment.

Action, Inaction, and Prohibited Action.

Ritual Reinterpreted: Knowledge and Work as Sacrifice

Chapters 4 – 9.

Aristotelean "Mean" or Doctrine of Moderation in the Gita. Empathy or Social Work?

Thursday, March 13

The Three Yogas: Knowledge, Work, and Devotion

Para and Apara prakrti and the Supreme Person

Reverence, Awe, and Love in Chapters 10 – 12.

The Field and the Knower of the Field, Chapter 13.

Friday, March 14

Metaphysics and the Ethics of the Three Affective Strands: Delight, Dynamism, Delusion or Pleasure, Pain, Inertia.

The "Most Secret" Last Word: Desireless Action or Absolute Surrender to God?

Chapters 14 – 18, A Causal Theory of Actions, and the Ideal Agent.