

# Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

## Interdisciplinary Approaches to South Asia

NELC 5241

### Instructor

**Instructor email:**

**Instructor's office:**

**Office Hours:**

**Course website:**

**Instructor's Mailbox:**

### Course Description

This course is designed (for students in any field) as a multi-disciplinary introduction to South Asia, primarily focusing on India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan, but also referring to Afghanistan, Tibet, and Maldives in geographical, political, cultural, and religious context and connections. The course presents an overview of research methods to study South Asian and its international relations, and its role in the global economy. The course also introduces students to the diversity of South Asian culture, including South Asian religions, society, art, literature, and cinema.

### Required texts

1. Emerson, Robert, Rachael Fretz and Linda Shaw (2011). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. University of Chicago Press.
2. Cohen, Lawrence (1999). *No Aging in India: Alzheimer's, the Bad Family and Other Modern Thing*. University of California Press.
3. Geertz, Clifford (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
4. Gayatri, Reddy (2005). *With Respect to Sex*. University of Chicago Press

### Suggested reading

5. Chatterjee, Partha (2006). *The Politics of the Governed*. Columbia University Press.
6. Clark, Deces (2011). *A companion to the anthropology of India*. Wiley Blackwell.
7. Schwarz, Henry (1997). *Writing Cultural History in Colonial and Postcolonial India*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

### Readings of interest for student final projects

8. Dhingra, Pawan (2012). *Life behind the Lobby: Indian American Motel Owners and the American Dream*. Stanford University Press.
9. Lamb, Sarah (2009). *Aging and the Indian Diaspora: Cosmopolitan Families in India and Abroad*. Indiana University Press.

10. Sandhya, Shukla (2003). *India Abroad: Diasporic Cultures of Postwar America and England*. Princeton University Press.
11. Shankar, Shalini (2008). *Desi Land: Teen Culture, Class, and Success in Silicon Valley*. Duke University Press.

### **Where required texts are available**

The required texts can be bought online. Chapters from various books and journal articles will be made available on Canvas.

### **Assignment format and schedule**

Weekly summary of readings 50% of total grade

Students will be required to write a summary for readings each week. The summaries should be 500-1000 words long and should present the main arguments of the reading in a cohesive manner. The goal of the summaries will be to ensure that students get the point of the readings and also develop their writing skills.

Weekly discussion questions 25% of total grade

I will teach this class like a seminar. This will mean we will not have lectures and class will be guided by student discussion questions. Every student will bring two questions per class period based on the readings for the day. The questions should provide grounds for a critique of the arguments that the reading is presenting and should pave ground for further discussion. Bring a typed copy of your questions to class every class period. The questions will be circulated among all students so everyone can respond to your questions.

Final paper project 25% of total grade

The final paper will be a two-part project involving an abstract submission and a final paper. The final paper should be 7-10 pages and should be a discussion of two-three themes from this class and how these themes connect to your own research projects.

Abstract for final paper 5% of total grade due on 3/9

Final paper 20% of final grade due on 4/28

### **Grading scale**

Grading scale: A (93-100) A- (90-92) B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B- (80-82) C+ (77-79) C (73-76) C- (70-72) D+ (67-69) D (60-66) E (below 60)

### **Attendance policy**

If you miss more than one in the course of the semester for any reasons other than medical or family emergencies (for which you can provide written proof), your grade will go down one letter.

## **Weekly schedule**

### **Topic: Understanding ethnography**

#### **Week 1**

Hammersley, Martyn and Paul Atkinson (2001). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*.  
Chapter 1,2,3

#### **Week 2**

Strathern, Marilyn (1991) *Partial Connections*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1-55.

Oldenberg, Veena Talwar (2002) *Dowry Murder: The imperial origins of a cultural crime*.  
Oxford University Press. 1-39

#### **Diaspora**

#### **Week 3, Week 4**

#### **Diaspora**

Prashad, Vijay (2007) *The Karma of Brown Folk*

#### **Week 5: Politics**

Witsoe, Jeffrey (2009). Territorial Democracy: Caste, Dominance and Electoral Practice in  
Postcolonial India. In *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. 32 (1). 64-83.\*

#### **Week 6-7 Family**

Required text: *No Aging in India*

#### **Week 8 Gender**

Sunder-Rajan, Rajeshwari (2003). *The scandal of the State*. Duke University Press. 1-40,  
147-212.\*

Mehta, Rama (1975). *Divorced Hindu Women*. Vikas Publishing House. 1-119.\*

#### **Week 9 Gender**

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty (1988). *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*.  
Routledge: New York and London. 179-269\*

### **Week 10 Sexuality**

Required texts: *With Respect to Sex*. Chapters 1-3

### **Week 11 Caste and class**

Ray, Raka and Seemin Qayum (2009). *Cultures of Servitude: Modernity, Domesticity  
and Class in India*. Stanford University Press. 1-65, 145-167.\*

Dirks, Nicholas (2001). *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the making of Modern India*.  
Princeton University Press. 1-61, 125-198, 255-297.\*

### **Week 12: Religion**

Hansen, Thomas Blom (1999). *The Saffron Wave. Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in  
Modern India*, Princeton University Press. 1-90.

### **Week 13 Review**

### **Week 14: The new economy and the environment**

Baviskar, Amita (2004). *In the Belly of the River*. Oxford University Press, Delhi.

### **Week 15: From rural to urban: The face of new India**

Roy, Ananya and Ahiwa Ong (2011). *Wordling Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of  
Being Global*. Wiley Blackwell. 259-336.\*

Concluding remarks and tying loose ends together

### **Week 16 Final project due**

\*Will be posted on Canvas

**Academic misconduct statement:** It is the  
responsibility of the Committee on Academic  
Misconduct to investigate or establish  
procedures for the investigation of all reported

cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

**Disability statement:** Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

#### Assignment schedule

Week	Reading summary due	Discussion question due	Other deadlines
------	---------------------	-------------------------	-----------------

2	January 19 <sup>th</sup>	January 19 <sup>th</sup>	
3	January 26 <sup>th</sup>	January 26 <sup>th</sup>	
4	February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	
5	February 9 <sup>th</sup>	February 9 <sup>th</sup>	
6	February 16 <sup>th</sup>	February 16 <sup>th</sup>	
7	February 23 <sup>rd</sup>	February 23 <sup>rd</sup>	
8	March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	
9	March 9 <sup>th</sup>	March 9 <sup>th</sup>	Abstract due
11	March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	
12	March 30 <sup>th</sup>	March 30 <sup>th</sup>	
13	April 6 <sup>th</sup>	April 6 <sup>th</sup>	
14	April 13 <sup>th</sup>	April 13 <sup>th</sup>	
15	April 20 <sup>th</sup>	April 20 <sup>th</sup>	
			April 28 <sup>th</sup>