

**INTERNATIONAL STUDIES 501**  
**Winter 2008**  
**Introduction to South Asia**  
**TR 9:30-11:18**

**Instructor:** Sai Bhatawadekar  
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**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 South Asian geography, history, and politics, 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.

We will start with South Asian geography and a brief overview of South Asian history. Within South Asian history, catering to the focus of International Studies Program, the course will emphasize the colonial period, independence struggle, partition, and India-Pakistan relations. We will then discuss South Asian religions, specifically Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, as religious philosophies and practices, but also as cultural and political connections among South Asian countries. We will then discuss South Asia's emerging role in global political, economic, and cultural scene, and finally, we will briefly sample South Asian prose, poetry, and cinema.

Given this initial and overall description, the course is intended to be flexible to student research and interest in specific topics related to South Asia. This course is designed as a collaborative learning experience, which will involve not only reading books, articles, audio-visual material, and web resources, but also student presentations, guest lectures, discussions and debates, and creative cultural events.

Please come and see me if you'd like to discuss how and whether this course fulfills GEC requirements.

**Goals/Rationale:**

Diversity: International Issues courses help students become educated, productive, and principled citizens of their nation and the world

Courses in social science help students understand human behavior and cognition, and the structures of human societies, cultures and institutions.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.
2. Students comprehend human differences and similarities in various psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts.
3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

### **Books and Movies (Required and suggested. We will distribute the buying and reading of the material among us on the first day of classes.):**

Bose, Sugata and Ayesha Jalal. Modern South Asia: History, Culture, and Political Economy. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Ganguly, Sumit. South Asia. New York: New York University Press, 2006.

Hagerty, Devin T., ed. South Asia in World Politics. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.

Mittal, Sushil and Gene Thursby, eds. Religions of South Asia: An Introduction. London: Routledge, 2006.

Hosseini, Khaled. The Kite Runner. New York: Riverhead Books, 2003.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. Interpreter of Maladies. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

Or

Lahiri, Jhumpa. Namesake. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

Gandhi. Dir. Richard Attenborough. Perf. Ben Kingsley. Columbia Pictures, 1982.

Lagaan. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker. Perf. Aamir Khan. Aamir Khan Productions, 2001.

Or

Bombay. Dir. Mani Ratnam. Perf. Arvind Swami, Manisha Koirala. A.B.C.L., Madras Talkies, 1995.

Documentaries, articles, and web based audio-visual material will be used in class to supplement the reading. Suggestions for other books, articles, and movies according to student interest will also be welcome. Required and suggested reading and viewing will be used for presentations, discussions, and reviews.

**Graded Assignments:**

|               |     |   |
|---------------|-----|---|
| Newscast      | 15% | summary with handout of South Asian news              |
| Presentations | 30% | with power-point/ handouts on particular day's topics |
| Midterm       | 25% | in house  |
| Final Paper   | 30% | take home   |

**Grade explanation:****Newscast**

We will assign one person each day to report of current and important South Asian news. You may choose various sources (such as the South Asia section of [bbc.com](http://bbc.com)) to keep yourselves informed. You are expected to bring a short handout with bullet-points summarizing the news. A short discussion will follow.

**Presentation:**

Two or more students will be assigned each day to present on the topics to be discussed on that day. Those of you assigned will be required to prepare a handout on that day's assigned readings, which should include a short summary of the readings, opinion statements, discussion questions, and other material they have looked up on that topic. You are encouraged to supplement your handout with audio-visual or web based material you may have consulted. You are also welcome to present on topics directly related but outside of the day's readings, but if you wish to do so, discuss them with me first.

**Midterm:**

Midterm will be in-house. Review session will help students prepare. Midterm will contain short questions (no multiple-choice).

**Final Paper:**

Final paper should be 7-10 pages in length. You should choose a topic of your interest related to the areas and issues discussed in class. You should first discuss the topic and the argument format with the instructor (me!). Discussing work-in-progress and discussing drafts is very welcome and encouraged.

**Assignment Make-Up Policy:**

If for any family, medical, or personal emergency you find it necessary to miss a scheduled examination or assignment, you must contact the instructor as soon as possible. If you are unable to do that, please leave a message with the staff of the Undergraduate International Studies Program (292-9657). Please note that scheduling conflicts with other University activities—such as band, sports, ROTC, etc.—or outside work is generally not a valid excuse for missing any scheduled assignment.

**Academic Misconduct:**

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 ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info\\_for\\_students/csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp)).

**Disability Services:**

**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/>.**

**Schedule:**

This schedule is flexible and subject to change depending upon the progress and the interests of the class.

| Week | Day    | Topic   | Newscast Volunteer | Presentation Volunteer |
|------|--------|---|--------------------|------------------------|
|      |        |   |                    |                        |
| 1    | Jan 3  | Introduction<br>Student survey of interest  |                    |                        |
| 2    | Jan 8  | South Asian Geography<br>Countries, landscape, cities<br>Overview of Benazir Bhutto                           |                    |                        |
|      | Jan 10 | South Asian History<br>Ancient South Asia<br>Reading: <u>Modern South Asia</u>                                |                    |                        |
| 3    | Jan 15 | South Asian History<br>Mughal period<br>Reading: <u>Modern South Asia</u>                                     |                    |                        |
|      | Jan 17 | South Asian History<br>Colonial Period<br>Reading: <u>Modern South Asia</u>                                   |                    |                        |
| 4    | Jan 22 | South Asian History<br>Independence Movement<br>Reading: <u>Modern South Asia</u><br>Movie: <u>Gandhi</u>     |                    |                        |
|      | Jan 24 | South Asian History<br>Independence Movement<br>Reading: <u>Modern South Asia</u><br>Movie: <u>Gandhi</u>     |                    |                        |
| 5    | Jan 29 | South Asian Politics and<br>International Relations<br>Post 1950-present<br>Reading: <u>Modern South Asia</u> |                    |                        |
|      | Jan 31 | Review  |                    |                        |
| 6    | Feb 5  | Midterm   |                    |                        |
|      | Feb 7  | Movie   |                    |                        |

|    |        |  |  |  |
|----|--------|--|--|--|
| 7  | Feb 12 | South Asian Religions<br>Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism<br>Reading: <u>Religions of South Asia</u>                               |  |  |
|    | Feb 14 | South Asian Religions<br>Buddhism, Jainism, other<br>Reading: <u>Religions of South Asia</u>                               |  |  |
| 8  | Feb 19 | South Asia in International<br>Relations and World Politics<br>Reading: <u>South Asia and South Asia in World Politics</u> |  |  |
|    | Feb 21 | Emerging role of South Asia<br>in Global Economy<br>Reading: <u>South Asia and South Asia in World Politics</u>            |  |  |
| 9  | Feb 26 | South Asian Literature and<br>Cinema in the Context of<br>Globalization<br>Reading: <u>Kite Runner or Namesake</u>         |  |  |
|    | Feb 28 | South Asian Literature and<br>Cinema in the Context of<br>Globalization<br>Movie: <u>Kite Runner or Namesake</u>           |  |  |
| 10 | Mar 4  | Remaining Reading and<br>Discussion, Review,<br>Questions.   |  |  |
|    | Mar 6  | Summary of Course Content<br>Concluding Remarks<br>Paper Due.  |  |  |

## Sample Lesson Plans and Comments

International Studies 501  
Winter 2008  
Instructor: Dr. Sai Bhatawadekar

Lesson 1  
January 3, 2008

- Introduction.
- What comes to your mind when you hear “South Asia”?
- What connects people to one another as South Asians?
- What separates South Asians from one another?
  - Possibly in groups of two or three first brainstorm
  - Each group reports
  - Instructor categorizes responses on the board under different titles (history, cinema, global economy, religion etc.)
  - Remarks about the interconnectedness of all categories and the interdisciplinary nature of the course.
- Following discussion on what students expect from the course, what particular areas/ aspects of South Asia each of them is interested in for future presentation topics.
- Coming presentations of South Asian geography: physical geography,
- What is the most important piece of news that came out of South Asia in the last two weeks?
  - Ask a bit about what students know about Benazir Bhutto and Pakistani politics.
  - How is that going to affect world/American politics?
  - Why does Bhutto’s death feature so prominently in US news coverage at this point?
  - Ask for a presentation for Tuesday Jan 8, 2008 on Benazir Bhutto and Pakistani politics.
- Discuss the news cast feature on the distribution of grades in the syllabus.
- Discuss the syllabus. Ask for suggestions and comments.
- Show books and suggested readings.
- Done!
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Lesson 2  
January 8, 2008

- Newscast
- Discussion
  
- Benazir Bhutto presentation
- Have one or more students write down salient points on the board, in addition to the handout.
- Comments, questions, discussion:
  - How has oxford and Harvard education helped her in her career?
  - What is her role in the eyes of American politics as far as ensuring democracy is concerned?
  - Debate on party leadership remaining in the hands of one family.
  - Controversy concerning fraud and money laundering charges on herself and family
  - Why is benazir's death important for American politics?
  - Comparison of Indira Gandhi and Benazir.
    - Both daughters of their politician fathers
    - Both assassinated
    - The sons of both are forced into politics more or less against their wish.
    - Both women prime ministers of rapidly emerging south asian countries.
    - Benazir corruption charges. Indira lost elections after declared emergency.
  
- Presentation on South Asian Geography
  - Questions and comments.

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**Comments:**

- Student presentation on Geography was not sufficient.
- Gave more instructions on how to add to the information they had.
- Asked them to present a second part of their presentation the next time.



Lesson 3  
January 10, 2008

- Newscast
- Discussion
- Geography presentation continued.
  - Audio-visual powerpoint presentation
  - If the presenters don't, give an overview of South Asian geography, that will establish a continuity and diversity of landscape from west to east and north to south
- Questions after photos of south asia:
  - What impression did these photos make on you?
  - Were there things you expected, were there things you didn't expect?
  - Did they conform to the stereotypical images of India and south asia that you encounter?
  - What was surprising?
  - Have they inspired you to do something now? E.g. travel to specific parts, why?
- Tie this discussion to the introduction of Modern South Asia, in which the authors talk about stereotypical images of India and the dichotomy in the images of India – mystery spirituality/ irrationality, grandeur / poverty, religious strife / other-worldly meditation, violence / Buddha and Gandhi – is symptomatic of problems comprehending the complexity of India. (2-3)
- show half of documentary: Ancient India (download from OSU library)
- student presentation on ancient south asia from Modern South Asia.

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**Comments:**

- consult southasianmedia.net
- students were indeed surprised by the images. They had images of stereotypes – huts, poverty etc. They said the natural beauty was striking; they would like to travel there sometime. They were surprised with the diversity of climate.
- Make a handout / questionnaire of basic summary questions of ancient India information for them to fill out at the beginning of class, together as a class, or in groups, with the power-point presentation they heard last time.

