

Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2022

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area South Asia Studies
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Near Eastern Languages/Culture - D0554
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 3671
Course Title Religions of India
Transcript Abbreviation Religions of India
Course Description History and structure of South Asian religions with attention to myth, ritual, art, philosophy, and social stratification.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites Prereq: English 1110 or equiv.
Exclusions Not open to students with credit for CompStd 3671 or RelStds 3671.
Electronically Enforced No

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings Crosslisted in RelStds

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 38.0201
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

Historical and Cultural Studies

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- n/a

Content Topic List

- India
- South Asia
- Religion
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Buddhism
- Religious studies
- Comparative religion

Sought Concurrence

No

Attachments

- Religions of India syllabus.pdf: Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Blacker,Noah)
- GE Cultural Studies - RS3671.pdf: GE Rationale Form
(GEC Model Curriculum Compliance Stmt. Owner: Blacker,Noah)

Comments

- Updated Subject/CIP code. *(by Blacker,Noah on 01/10/2022 01:39 PM)*
- Subject/CIP code needs to be same for cross-listed courses. Please consult with other unit and decide what number accurately reflects the course and is best for both units. *(by Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal on 01/10/2022 01:09 PM)*

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Blacker,Noah	01/03/2022 12:28 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Levi,Scott Cameron	01/03/2022 01:05 PM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal	01/10/2022 01:09 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Blacker,Noah	01/10/2022 01:39 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Levi,Scott Cameron	01/19/2022 08:52 AM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal	01/25/2022 12:42 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Cody,Emily Kathryn Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin,Deborah Kay Hilty,Michael Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Steele,Rachel Lea	01/25/2022 12:42 PM	ASCCAO Approval

**RELSTDS/ SASIA 3671
RELIGIONS OF INDIA**

Classroom: TBA
Meeting Time: TBA

Dr. Hugh B. Urban
Department of Comparative Studies
431 Hagerty Hall
phone: 292-9855
email: urban.41@osu.edu
office hours: by appointment

Purpose and Outline of the Course

India has given birth to four of the world's major religious traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism), as well as to unique forms of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, and numerous indigenous religions. Today, India is the world's largest democracy with tremendous religious, cultural, linguistic, and political diversity, which has also at times given rise to conflict and violence. Since end of the nineteenth century, the religions of India have also had a major influence on American culture, philosophy and spirituality. There are now over two million Hindus in the U.S. (making it our fourth largest religion), along with numerous Indian-inspired new religious movements, such as ISKCON (Hare Krishna), and Indian-inspired practices such as yoga and mindfulness.

This course provides an introduction to the major religions of India with particular focus on their broader place in South Asian culture and history. We pay special attention to the complex intersections between Indian religions and various forms of art, architecture, music, dance, and (in the modern period) film, television, and comic books. In the last portion of the class, we also examine a series of contemporary religious issues both in India and in the United States, where South Asian religions have become an important presence in the American spiritual, cultural, and political landscape.

In addition to films and guest lectures, this course will include several field trips to Indian religious communities in central Ohio. Students will be required to write three short papers and a field observation paper based on a visit to an Indian religious community in the Columbus area. The mid-term and final exams will take the format of an in-class debate, in which groups of students will represent different Indian religious traditions and argue the pros and cons of their philosophical positions and belief systems.

**GENERAL EDUCATION
GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The course fulfills the General Education requirement for “**Cultural Studies**”

Goal: Successful students will evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas to develop capacities for aesthetic and cultural response, judgment, interpretation, and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Successful students are able to analyze and interpret selected major forms of human thought, culture, ideas or expression.
2. Successful students are able to describe and analyze selected cultural phenomena and ideas across time using a diverse range of primary and secondary sources and an explicit focus on different theories and methodologies.
3. Successful students are able to use appropriate sources and methods to construct an integrated and comparative perspective of cultural periods, events or ideas that influence human perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors.
4. Successful students are able to evaluate social and ethical implications in cultural studies.

We meet the outcomes by:

- Examining primary and secondary sources on a wide range of Indian religious traditions, with special attention to their historical development and cultural impact
- Employing a range of methodological approaches in order to understand the role of these movements in modern historical, social, and cultural contexts
- Critically analyzing the influence of these religious traditions on South Asian art, literature, music, drama, and film
- Reflecting on the ways in which the study of these traditions deepens our understanding of global history and the complex religious and cultural fabric of the contemporary United States
- Critically reflecting on the social and ethical implications of studying the religions of India, particularly in relation to the history of colonialism, imperialism, and modern politics

READINGS

Required Texts

(Available at the OSU Book Store and on reserve at the Main Library)

Sushil Mittal, ed., *Religions of India* (Routledge, 2017)

Diana Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in Hinduism* (Columbia University Press, 1998)

Sources of Indian Tradition, volume 1 (Columbia University Press, 1988)

David Kinsley, *The Sword and the Flute: Kālī and Kṛṣṇa* (University of California Press, 1977)

Additional short Readings

There will also be additional articles posted on our Carmen web-site (www.carmen.osu.edu)

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

Evaluations in this course will be based on five things:

1. Class Participation (20% of final grade). This means attendance to all classes and active participation in class discussions. More than two absences will result in a lower grade (-2 points per additional absence)
2. Discussion questions based on the readings (10% of grade). Students will post one discussion a week on Carmen, which will be used to structure our conversations in class.
3. Three short papers, 3-5 pages each (30%). These papers will be comparative and will examine the complex relations between specific Indian religions and various aspects of Indian culture, such as art, architecture, literature, films, and social norms.
4. One field observation paper, 3-5 pages (10%), based on a visit to an Indian religious community in Ohio. This should include a thoughtful discussion of this community's role in the broader landscape of American culture and its religious diversity.
5. Mid-term and final in-class debates (30%)

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-87	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	E	0-59

STUDENT RIGHTS AND CONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of 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. For additional information, see <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so

that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

SYLLABUS

Week	Topic, Readings, Assignments	Discussion Topics
I	<p>Introduction: Why Study the Religions of India?</p> <p>Read: Mittal, pp.1-24 (all readings should be done before class)</p> <p>Film: "The Soul of India" (all films will be watched during class)</p>	<p>How is religion related to specific cultural forms, such as art, architecture, literature, and film?</p> <p>Why have religions of India had such an impact on American culture, especially on music and art?</p>
II	<p>The Indus Valley Civilization; The Vedas and the Foundations of Later Hindu Traditions</p> <p>Read: Mittal, pp.24-36; <i>Sources</i>, pp.3-26</p> <p>Film: "The Indus Valley Civilization"</p>	<p>What can we learn from the archeological fragments left by the Indus Valley Civilization?</p> <p>How are narrative, ritual, philosophy, and social structure all intertwined in the corpus of the Vedas?</p>
III	<p>The Origins of the Jain Tradition</p> <p>Read: Mittal, 83-106; <i>Sources</i>, 43-89; "Jainism: Fasting" (on Carmen)</p> <p>Film: National Geographic episodes on Jainism</p>	<p>How is Jainism related to but critically different from the religious and social ideology of the Hindu Vedas? How are these differences reflected in other aspects of culture, such as art, architecture, literature?</p>
IV	<p>The Origins of the Buddhist Tradition</p> <p>Read: Mittal, 107-138 <i>Sources</i>, pp.93-189</p> <p>Film: "India and Buddhism"</p>	<p>What did early Buddhism share with Jainism, while also diverging in key religious, social, and cultural aspects? Why did Buddhism reject aspects of Vedic religion and social structure?</p>
	<p><i>Note: First Paper Due.</i> Sample topic: Compare the role of social class and gender in the Vedas with their role in early Buddhism or Jainism. How are religious ideals and social norms entwined in each of these traditions?</p>	
V	<p>The Hindu Epics and Puranas: Myth, Narrative, and Iconography</p> <p>Read: <i>Sources</i>, pp.203-296; Kinsley, <i>The Sword and the Flute</i>, chapters 1-2</p> <p>Film clips: scenes from The Mahabharata TV series</p>	<p>How do the Hindu epics and mythological texts use narrative to express religious ideas, forms of worship, and social norms?</p> <p>Why are these narratives still so popular in Indian film and television today?</p>
VI	<p>Hindu Tantra and Goddess Worship</p> <p>Read: Kinsley, <i>The Sword and the Flute</i>, chapters 3-4; Urban, "Womb of Tantra" (on Carmen)</p> <p>Film: "Shakti"</p>	<p>Why did new forms of Hindu worship and iconography emerge in the late Gupta and post-Gupta era? Why were powerful goddesses popular in this period, and how does</p>

		this reflect human gender roles?
VII	<p>Buddhist Tantra: Vajrayana Buddhism</p> <p>Read: <i>Sources</i>, pp.188-198</p> <p>Film: "The Book of the Dead"</p>	Why did Buddhism also develop complex forms of ritual, iconography, and philosophical speculation at this time? Why was this form of Buddhism closely tied to kingship and political power in India and other parts of Asia?
	<p>MID-TERM IN CLASS DEBATE: Students will work in groups of 3-5 each representing a specific religious group covered so far to debate key questions of religion, society, and culture.</p>	
VIII	<p>Zoroastrianism in India</p> <p>Read: Mittal, pp.165-186</p> <p>Film: "The Parsis"</p>	What was the role of Zoroastrianism in Persian history, culture, and politics, and why did it spread to India? What unique aspects Zoroastrian beliefs and social organization have helped the tradition survive but also limited its growth?
	<p><i>Note: Second Paper Due:</i> Sample topic: Compare the role of politics and kingship in two of the following traditions: the Hindu Epics, the Puranas, Buddhist Tantra, Zoroastrianism. How are religion and politics entwined in narrative and history in these two cases?</p>	
IX	<p>Judaism and Christianity in India</p> <p>Read: Mittal, pp.207-232</p> <p>Film clip: St. Thomas Christians in India</p>	How and why did unique forms of Judaism and Christianity spread to India, and what has been their role in Indian culture, art, architecture, and literature?
X	<p>Islam in India: The Mughal Empire and the Spread of Sufism</p> <p>Read: Mittal, pp.233-288; <i>Sources</i>, pp.381-446</p> <p>Film: "The Taj Mahal"</p>	How did the dominance of the Mughal Empire impact religion, art, architecture, and literature in India from the 16 th to 19 th centuries? Why was Sufism an important form of Islam in India, both religiously and culturally?
XI	<p>The Sants and the Sikh Tradition</p> <p>Read: Mittal, pp. 139-162; <i>Sources</i>, pp.493-509</p> <p>Film: Sikhs in the military</p>	How and why did Sikhism emerge during the Mughal period? Why did the Sikhs adopt new attitudes toward gender and social class? Why did the Sikhs turn to a martial ideal of self-defense, and why

		are they still renowned as India's best soldiers?
XII	<p>Indian Traditions in the Modern World: Images, Temples, and Pilgrimage</p> <p>Read: Eck, <i>Darsan</i></p> <p>Film: "Puja"</p>	How are images (<i>murtis</i>) used in different forms of worship in India today? What is the significance of the temple (<i>mandir</i>) and why does pilgrimage remain an important part of religious (and nationalist) practice?
	<p><i>Note: Third Paper Due:</i> Compare the role (or non-role) of images in Indian forms of Christianity, Judaism or Islam with their role in popular Hinduism today? What is the theological status of images? If they are used in worship, how and why? If not, why not?</p>	
XIII	<p>Religion and Politics in Modern India, I: From the British Raj to Indian Independence</p> <p>Chatterjee, <i>The Nation and its Fragments</i> (on Carmen) Larson, <i>India's Agony over Religion</i> (on Carmen)</p>	What complex impacts did British colonial rule have on Indian religious and cultural life from the 18 th to the 20 th centuries? What roles did religion play in the struggle for Independence and the partition of India and Pakistan?
XIV	<p>Religion and Politics in Modern India, II: Nationalism, Separatism, and Violence</p> <p>Read: Tambiah, <i>Leveling Crowds</i> (on Carmen)</p> <p>Film clip: The destruction of the Babri Masjid</p>	Why has religion remained closely intertwined with both politics in post-Independence India? How is it entangled with forms of nationalism, separatist movements, and ethnic violence?
XV	<p>Indian Religions in Contemporary America</p> <p>Read: Selections from Tweed, <i>Asian Religions in America</i> (on Carmen)</p> <p>Film: "Hare Krishnas: Hiders or Seekers?"</p>	Why have the religions of India had such a profound impact on American culture since the 19 th century, and particularly since the 1960s? What is the role of South Asian religious communities in the broader landscape of American culture in places like central Ohio?
	FINAL IN-CLASS DEBATE	
	<p><i>Note: Field Observation Paper due.</i> Based on a visit to an Indian religious community in central Ohio, the paper should contain a "thick description" of the religious space and any forms of worship observed. The paper should discuss the place of this community in the landscape of American cultural and religious diversity. The paper should also reflect on the social and ethical challenges involved in studying other cultures and religions, particularly in an age of widespread xenophobia and racism.</p>	

INDIAN AND RELATED RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN THE COLUMBUS AREA

Bharatiya Hindu Temple
3671 Hyatts Road
Powell, OH
<http://www.columbushindutemple.org/>
740-369-0717

Krishna House
379 W. 8th Ave
Columbus, OH
421-1661

Guru Nanak Religious Society
3745 Business Park Drive
Columbus OH 43204
Ph 614-276-9797
<http://www.gnrscolumbusohio.com/>

Sri Saibaba Temple Society of Ohio
2596 Lewis Center Road
Lewis Center, OH
Phone: 614-799-8411
<http://www.srisaimandir.org/>

Shambhala Meditation Center
4495 Indianola Ave.
Columbus, OH 43214

Noor Islamic Cultural Center
5001 Wilcox Road
Dublin, OH 43016

Jain Center of Central Ohio
2770 Sawbury Blvd
Columbus, OH 43235
<http://www.jcoco.org/>

Ahmadiyya Mosque
3360 Toy Road
Groveport, OH
492-1806

Yellow Springs Dharma Center
502 Livermore St.
Yellow Springs, OH
937-767-9919

Islamic Center
1428 E. Broad St.
Columbus, OH 43201
253-3251

Columbus Sufi Circle
<http://columbussuficircle.blogspot.com/>

Zen Columbus Sangha
Meditation sessions at First Unitarian
Universalist Church
93 W. Weisheimer
Columbus, OH 43214
Web-site:
<http://worldwidehideout.com/zen/index2.html>

Course Subject & Number: _____

Expected Learning Outcome 2.3: Successful students are able to critically evaluate and responsibly use information from the social and behavioral sciences. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

GE Rationale: Foundations: Historical or Cultural Studies (3 credits)

Requesting a GE category for a course implies that the course fulfills the expected learning outcomes (ELOs) of that GE category. To help the reviewing panel evaluate the appropriateness of your course for the Foundations: Historical and Cultural Studies, please answer the following questions for each ELO. Note that for this Foundation, a course need satisfy **either** the ELOs for Historical Studies **or** the ELOs for Cultural Studies.

A. Foundations

Please explain in 50-500 words why or how this course is introductory or foundational in the study of History **or** Cultures.

RS 3671 is an introduction to the major religious traditions of India, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, as well as uniquely South Asian forms of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, and indigenous religions. Organized historically, the course begins with the Indus Valley Civilization (2500-2000 BCE) and ends with the spread of South Asian religions to North America. Throughout, the course pays close attention to the complex relationship between religion and culture, with special focus on the intersections between religious practice, art, literature, dramatic performance, and (in the modern era) television, film, and comic books. For most of Indian history, the categories of "religion" and "culture" are not even clearly separable; the term normally translated as "religion" in Sanskrit, Hindi, Bangla and other languages is "dharma," which also encompasses aspects of social duty, law, morality, and just "the way things are or should be." So the study of the religions of India is inextricable from the study of culture.

The course is foundational for more advanced courses in the Religious Studies and Comparative Studies majors and minors, the South Asian Studies minor, and many other programs across the college of Arts and Sciences such as History, International Studies, History of Art, Anthropology, NELC and others. It introduces students to foundational concepts and approaches that are used at advanced levels in many disciplines, such as the interpretation of texts, analysis of visual and material culture, performance theory, and the intersections between religion, class, gender, and race.

Course Subject & Number: _____

Cultural Studies (B) Goal: Successful students will evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas to develop capacities for aesthetic and cultural response, judgment, interpretation, and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcome 1.1B: Successful students are able to analyze and interpret selected major forms of human thought, culture, ideas or expression. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and identify the *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

RS 3671 requires students to analyze and interpret a range of forms of human thought, culture, ideas, and expression. The course begins with the Indus Valley Civilization, which left behind many images, archaeological remains, and other forms of material culture that scholars continue to analyze and debate to this day. We then move on to examine the Vedas -- the oldest known sacred texts of India and the foundation for later Hinduism -- examining not only their religious content but their discussions of social class, gender, politics, and other aspects of culture. We take a similar approach to the sacred texts of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and other traditions, while also comparing textual materials to artistic evidence, temple architecture, dramatic performance, music, and other forms of cultural production.

Each week, students post discussion questions based on the readings, which we use to structure our conversations in class. In their questions, students are required to address the relationships between religion and culture -- for example, to interrogate the influence of different religious ideas on the role of images in Hindu, Buddhist, or Jain worship, or to examine the role of music in Sikhism or in Indian folk religions.

Students will write three short papers, which will also require them to analyze the relations between religion and culture in specific cases. For example, they might be asked to compare the role of dramatic performance in early Hindu traditions with the kinds of performances that we see today in Bollywood films (many of which have religious themes). Or they might be asked to discuss the role of poetry and song in the Hindu Bhakti and Sikh traditions with their role in later folk movements such as the Bauls of Bengal.

Finally, students will be required to do at least one field observation paper based on a visit to an Indian-based religious community in Ohio. Here they will be asked to discuss the relations between religion and culture as expressed in things such as architecture, art, dress, social and gender roles, ritual performance, and language. We frequently do trips to the Bharatiya Hindu Temple in Powell, the Guru Nanak Society, the Jain Temple, and other sites, which offer rich opportunities to examine all of these connections.

Expected Learning Outcome 1.2B: Successful students are able to describe and analyze selected cultural phenomena and ideas across time using a diverse range of primary and secondary sources and an explicit focus on different theories and methodologies. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

As mentioned above, RS 3671 is organized historically, beginning in 2500 BCE and moving to the present, so there is ample opportunity to analyze the ways in which cultural phenomena and ideas change across time. It also examines a range of primary and secondary sources: these include the sacred texts of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and other traditions drawn from multiple languages, including Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi, Persian, Punjabi, Bangla, and others. It also engages with scholarly approaches from multiple fields, including Religious Studies, Anthropology, Art History, and Comparative Literature.

In their short paper assignments, for example, students may be asked to compare the changing role of Hindu ritual in early texts with its expression in popular Hinduism in India today or in North American Hindu temples. Or they might be asked to compare different methodological approaches to the study of South Asian religions -- for example to compare the Religious Studies approach of Diana Eck with that of a scholar coming from Anthropology and Political Science, such as Partha Chatterjee.

In place of a mid-term and final exam, this class has two in-class debates, in which students work in groups, each representing a specific Indian religious tradition. Debate has long been a basic part of the ways in which South Asian religions groups have interacted with one another, and we will mirror that in our mid-term and final debates. Students will be required to use a variety of primary and secondary sources in order to represent their tradition and argue against others. For example, a group representing a form of Buddhism would need to be able to use Buddhist texts and secondary literature in order to argue against a group representing Jainism or a group representing the Sikhs or Islam in India, etc. They would also need to be specific about which particular form, sect, historical period of each they are representing, which would mean having a firm grasp of both primary and secondary sources.

Course Subject & Number: _____

Expected Learning Outcome 1.3B: Successful students are able to use appropriate sources and methods to construct an integrated and comparative perspective of cultural periods, events or ideas that influence human perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

RS 3671 includes many activities that ask students to construct an integrated and comparative perspective of culture, periods, events or ideas that influence human perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors. For example, we spend a large portion of the middle of the semester examining the rise of the Mughal empire and the ways in which that influenced many forms of religious life and culture from the 16th to the 19th centuries. This includes not only its impact on forms of Islam such as Sufism but also its impact on the Sikh, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions, as well as on many new forms of art, architecture, music, and cuisine. Similarly, when we get to the British colonial period from the 18th to the 20th centuries, we engage in comparative and integrated analysis of many different forms of religious and culture life during under the Raj.

In their written papers, for example, students may be asked to examine a specific piece of architecture -- the Taj Mahal is an obvious example -- and discuss the complex religious, political, cultural and aesthetic influence that led to its creation. Or they might be asked to compare two or three different religious responses to the British empire in the 19th century -- for example, comparing the rise of Hindu Nationalism or to new waves of Christian conversion in different parts of India during this period.

The field observation paper is also an opportunity for students to develop an integrated and comparative perspective of cultural periods and events. Specifically, they are asked to discuss the ways in which South Asian religious traditions have adapted to the contemporary North American context -- for example, how do they deal with phenomena such as racism and xenophobia, different cultural values, gender roles, and so on? How do the experiences of Hindu, Sikh, or Jain religious communities in Ohio compare with those in different parts of India?

Expected Learning Outcome 1.4B: Successful students are able to evaluate social and ethical implications in cultural studies. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met.

RS 3671 directly engages the social and ethical implications in cultural studies and asks students to grapple with these issues in a deep and complex way. The study of all other cultures and religions involves complex social and ethical implications, and this is even more true when studying a culture that has a history of colonialism and imperial rule. Historically, the study of Indian religions by British and European Orientalist scholars went hand in hand with the political domination of most of South Asia from the 18th century onward. Today, there is an intense debate over the representation of South Asian religions in American, British, and European scholarship. Many American scholars, in particular, have been accused of perpetuating a kind of neo-Orientalist view of South Asian religions that continues to exoticize and distort them. Throughout the course, and particularly in the last few weeks of the semester, students will be asked to grapple with these issues head-on by engaging in complex, respectful, yet critical debate on specific examples of the representation of South Asian religions in modern scholarship.

All of the assignments will require students to reflect on the social and ethical implications in cultural studies. The three papers will each ask students not only to show a mastery of the material but also to reflect critically on how Indian religions are represented in scholarship and in popular culture. For example, how does the representation of Hinduism in a particular text read in class compare with its representation in American film or television? Why were specific American scholars criticized for their interpretation of particular Indian religions, and what does this teach us about the complex political of cross-cultural study?

The field observation paper is also an important place for students to reflect back on their own study of other cultures and the ways in which they react and represent a different religious tradition. For example, how did their trip to the Sikh Gurdwara change their own understanding of religious diversity in Ohio? What larger insights did their visit give them into the social and ethical challenges involved in studying other cultures and the value of this sort of cross-cultural study?

GE Rationale: Foundations: Writing and Information Literacy (3 credits)

Requesting a GE category for a course implies that the course fulfills **all** expected learning outcomes (ELOs) of that GE category. To help the reviewing panel evaluate the appropriateness of your course for the Foundations: Writing and Information Literacy, please answer the following questions for each ELO.