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## **REL 368**

### **Religion in South Asia: Selected Topics (Religion in Nepal)**

Wednesday 18:00-20:45

Library 574

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** Selected aspects of religion in South Asia. Possible topics include ritual, myth, festivals and pilgrimage in Jainism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or other religions of the Indian sub-continent.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course explores the contemporary society and culture of Nepal's Kathmandu, Valley. REL 368 is designed as a writing intensive workshop in which you bring in your own "raw materials" to be crafted and refined by your engagement with the theories and data discussed in the course. As a member of the workshop you will also be responsible for evaluating and critiquing each other's written work and oral presentations.

#### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- ◆ demonstrate in writing a working knowledge of selected elements of South Asian religion as they are manifested in particular traditions and cultures;
- ◆ classify and describe how selected topics in South Asian religion are shaped by contemporary social institutions;
- ◆ make critical comparisons among religious traditions, experiences, and practices across culture, time, ethnicity, race, and gender;
- ◆ formulate the relationship between religion and other elements of society, such as the connection between religion and power, the role of religious movements as forces of personal and social transformation, and as social justice;
- ◆ demonstrate a working knowledge of, and the ability to apply to, religious phenomena, various theories, methodological perspectives, and experiential approaches to religious studies.

TEACHING METHODS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR ACHIEVING LEARNING  
OUTCOMES:

This course is designed as a seminar and writing workshop. Student participation is essential, and while the professor will lead discussion and occasionally lecture, student-led discussion will drive the course. Students will also engage in library research, as well as study the craft of writing academic research papers.

Student participation is graded on the classroom assessment evaluation designed by Kathleen Tunney, of the Southern Illinois University department of Social Work (<http://www.siu.edu/~deder/partrub.html>). Library research and writing is evaluated through the completion of a writing portfolio whose pedagogy is based on the writing and pedagogy program developed by Joe Williams (The University of Chicago) and Greg Colomb (University of Illinois). (CF. Booth, Wayne, Greg Colomb and Joe Williams. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995). Two written exams evaluate the students' ability to classify and describe topics in South Asia, as well as make critical comparisons between religion and other elements of society. A final research paper will evaluate how the student formulates relationships between religion and other social formations, as well as his or her ability to apply various theories and methodological perspectives in religious studies.

EVALUATION AND GRADING:

(100 points possible)\*

Student Participation, group work and class.....	10%
(For details of rubric used, see <a href="http://www.siu.edu/~deder/partrub.html">http://www.siu.edu/~deder/partrub.html</a> )	
Portfolio . . . . .	25%
(Writing exercises, Topic, Annotated bibliography, XYZ problem, Claim, Introduction, Conclusion, Evidence (Sub-claims), Warrant, Qualification) (CF. <i>Craft of Research</i> , 1995)	
Exams . . . . .	30%
Student Draft.....	5%
Student Draft Comments.....	5%
Final Research Pap.....	25%

**Note:** Group work and oral exams cannot be made-up. Written exams cannot be made up unless a written excuse is given before the date of the exam. All late papers in relation to the portfolio will be penalized one half letter grade for each day late. No late assignments will be taken for topic, sources, question, claim, outline, draft introductory paragraph, student draft and student draft comments.

\*The standards for grading are those described in the Undergraduate Bulletin, pp. 37-40, and at <http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/0001/uncgGradingSys.html>.

REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS/REFERENCES:

*Required reading will vary by selected topic. For instance, if I were to teach a course on contemporary religion in Nepal, I would use the following texts (these correspond to the topical outline below).*

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*.

New York: Routledge, 1999. (While older than five years, this is the best book available)  
Parish, Steven. *Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. (While older than five years, this is the best book available)  
Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

**ACADEMIC HONOR CODE:** Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to UNCG *Undergraduate Bulletin*. If the student has any questions, they should speak with me or consult the ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY <http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html>.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Attendance will be taken every class, and grades may be lowered due to absences. After four absences, your grade will be lowered by one half letter for each absence (e.g., from A to A-, A- to B+, etc.). Tardiness of more than ten minutes will be considered an absence. Final grades will be raised by one half letter for those with perfect attendance. Absences will only be excused with a written document—this includes doctors' appointments and funerals. You may miss up to six classes; after that your grade will be dropped by one half letter.

**FINAL EXAMINATION:** There is no final exam, but the final paper is due the final day of class at 4:59PM.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- ◆ Reading— You must come to class with material carefully read. Not coming to class prepared counts as an absence. Each class period, I may give a quiz. If you fail the quiz, it counts as an absence.
- ◆ No Cellular Phones!— Cellular phones must be turned off in the classroom. If your phone rings, I will only deduct one half letter from your final grade. If you talk on the phone, I reserve the right to fail you. Turn them off before you enter the classroom!
- ◆ No Chatter— If I am lecturing, or if a student "has the floor," other talking is highly distracting. If you have something to add to the conversation, please raise your hand and I will call upon you in turn. If you have something to say which is not related to the class, please wait until the period is over.
- ◆ No Hats, Sunglasses or Roller Skates— It is not appropriate to wear hats, sunglasses or roller skates in the classroom. Please take them off before you enter. If you do not, you will be asked to leave.
- ◆ No Eating in Class— It is not appropriate to eat in the classroom. Please eat outside of the class period.

**TOPICAL OUTLINE/CALENDAR:**

**Week #1**

**CLASS TOPIC: Introduction to Class and Maobodi**  
"Dark Days in Shangri-La"

**CLASS TOPIC: The Idea of the Mystical**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 7-35

#### **Week #2**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: Disciplining Religion**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999. King, 35-61

##### **WRITING Topic I**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: Sacred Texts and World Religions**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 62-82

#### **Week #3**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: Orientalism**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 82-96

##### **Writing Topic II**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: The Modern Myth of Hinduism**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 96-118

#### **Week #4**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: Politics of Representation**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 118-143

##### **WRITING Annotated bibliography**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: Orientalism and Buddhism**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 143-161

#### **Week #5**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: More mysticism**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 161-187

##### **WRITING XYZ I**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: Beyond Orientalism?**

King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*. New York: Routledge, 1999., 187-219

#### **Week #6**

##### **CLASS TOPIC: A Hindu City and Its Sacred Moral Order**

Parish, Steven. *Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994., 1-71

##### **WRITING XYZ II**

Parish, Steven. *Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994., -125

**Week #7**

**CLASS TOPIC: Moral Knowing**

Parish, Steven. *Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994., 125-188

**WRITING Claim (I argue that)**

Parish, Steven. *Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994., 188-233

**Week #8**

**CLASS TOPIC: Moral Knowing and Knowing an Exam**

Parish, Steven. *Moral Knowing in a Hindu Sacred City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994., 233-277

**WRITING Introduction I**

Exam #1

**Week #9**

**Student Meetings!**

**Portfolios Due**

**Week #10**

**Modernity**

**Introduction**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 1-39

**WRITING Introduction II**

**CLASS TOPIC: Class and Consumerism I**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 39-61

**Week #11**

**CLASS TOPIC: Class and Consumerism II**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 61-87

**WRITING Evidence and subclaims**

**CLASS TOPIC: Class and Consumerism III**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 87-117

**Week #12**

**CLASS TOPIC: Class and Consumerism IV**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003. 117-151

**WRITING Conclusion**

**CLASS TOPIC: Media and Consumption I**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 151-183

**Week #13**

**CLASS TOPIC: Media and Consumption**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 117-209

**WRITING Qualifications**

**CLASS TOPIC: Youth and the Experience of Modernity**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 209-232

**Week #14**

**CLASS TOPIC: Conclusion!**

Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, 249-267 and paper TBA

**WRITING What is a warrant?**

**Exam#2**

**Week #15**

**STUDENT DRAFTS**

**Student Meetings!**

**Portfolios and Student responses**

**Student Meetings!**

**Portfolios and Student responses**

**FINAL PAPER DUE Final day of class at 4:59PM**