

Indian Culture and Society
Ramapo College of New Jersey

Instructor Information	
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Course Information	
INTD-302	
Credit Hours	4
Semester / Year	Spring, 2014
Class Meeting Date/Time	Roughly M-F 9 to 1 PM for 4 weeks; see schedule below
Prerequisites	CRWT-102 (Critical Reading and Writing II)
Fulfills	General Education: International Issues

Course Description

This course is an introduction to contemporary Indian life and culture. It provides a scaffold for the subsequent courses on sustainable development and social movements that comprise of the India Study Abroad semester program. The course will also serve as a springboard for many field study project ideas. Through a combination of readings, lectures, films, field study experiences, reflection journals, and assignments, students will gain foundational knowledge about contemporary India and its complex and often contradictory contexts. At the same time, the course will explore the ways in which contemporary India's strengths and weaknesses are rooted in its extensive, complicated history.

Any course on Indian culture must be premised on both its contemporary image and the historical precedents that influence and impact India's current social, political, and economic realities. Through this course, students will explore the key facets of modern Indian life and culture – social structures, economic issues, geographic constraints, and religious and philosophical traditions. By studying the political, social, cultural and religious history (from pre-colonial to postcolonial times) and the varied geography of the subcontinent, students will gain a framework for understanding Indian civilization and Be able to relate this knowledge to the political, social and economic challenges in modern Indian society.

Introduction to the local language, Kannada will be a key component of this course. While urban India is largely conversant in English, rural life is quite different, with most villagers speaking only their local or regional language. Students will be able to have more meaningful experiences in rural Karnataka by gaining some basic knowledge of conversational Kannada. There will be 5 formal hours of language instruction during the first course, followed by practice sessions on the Fireflies campus and through trips to local markets and villages.

Journal Assignment Guidelines

This assignment is worth 30% of your grade for this course. Journals will be **due by 11:55pm every Friday** for a total of three grades during the first course

The purpose of these journals is to reflect on your academic learning and experiences while in India. You can use these journal entries to help you write your final essay for this course.

In your journal entries, you should:

1. Discuss the readings and lectures

Summarize the main ideas of at least one of the readings or of the lecture for that day. You might consider including a relevant or illustrative quote and comment on that quote.

2. Describe experiences on field trips or anywhere outside of the classroom

Give a careful, concrete description of an experience that you have had in India. Try to describe the events and people you observe as clearly as possible and avoid using your own cultural assumptions to interpret or judge them.

3. Make every effort to integrate concepts from readings, lectures and films with your experiences outside the classroom.

You can take an academic concept and then use your description of an event to illuminate or illustrate that concept or describe an event first and then try to apply a concept to understand, interpret, or make sense out of that event.

Journal grades will be based on your effort to understand the academic material, your ability to thoughtfully reflect on your experiences, and on the clarity of your writing.

You must write **5 journals entries per week minimum**. Each entry should be **300 words long**, minimum.

Give page numbers for all quotes using in-text citations. Proofread for spelling, grammar and clarity. Please use double-spacing and 12-point font. Please save in Microsoft Word.

If Ramapo faculty are in India, you may print out and hand in journals on paper. Otherwise, email your journal on the due date to the Ramapo professor. If the internet is not working at Fireflies, please submit your journal to Fiona who will deliver it to the faculty.

General Education Program Course

This course meets the requirements of the General Education: International Issues category since it focuses on Indian culture and history, studied within the context of contemporary India. In essence, being part of the India Study Abroad semester program in India, this course is international in content, context, and delivery.

Course Goals

- A) Provide an overview of key social structures in contemporary India
- B) Provide students with tools for understanding contemporary India

C) Provide a structured way for students to reflect on their experiences in India

Measureable Student Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the complexity of contemporary Indian lived experiences
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the interconnectedness yet distinct differences between urban and rural India
3. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the impact of pre-colonial and colonial history of India on contemporary Indian life and culture
4. Demonstrate the ability to appreciate the complexity of multiple realities, perspectives, and identities in India
5. Demonstrate “perspective consciousness” and a basic understanding of cultural relativism
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the implicit biases derived from personal experiences that one brings to an understanding of “the other”
7. Demonstrate basic skills required to interact with villagers in their local language, Kannada

	<u>Final Paper</u>	<u>Journals</u>	<u>CEC</u>	<u>Participation</u>
Outcome #1	X	X	X	X
Outcome #2	X	X	X	X
Outcome #3	X	X	X	X
Outcome #4	X	X	X	X
Outcome #5	X	X	X	X
Outcome #6	X	X	X	
Outcome #7			X	X

Texts, Readings, Materials

Books:

Giridharadas, Anand (2011) India Calling. Times Books.

Murthy, U.R. Anantha (1978) Samskara. Oxford Press.

Articles:

Pingle, Vibha “Caste” in Ganguly and DeVotta, eds. Understanding Contemporary India. Lynne Rienner, 2003

Viramma “High and Low Castes in Karani” in in Mines and Lamb, ed. Everyday Life in South Asia, 2cd ed. Indiana U Press, 2010.

Trivedi, Lisa “Women in India” in DeVotta, ed. Understanding Contemporary India, 2cd ed. Lynne Rienner, 2010

Kapur, Cari “Rethinking Courtship, Marriage and Divorce in an Indian Call Center” in Mines and Lamb, ed. Everyday Life in South Asia, 2cd ed. Indiana U Press, 2010.

Sharma, S. “Indian Politics” in in DeVotta, ed. Understanding Contemporary India, 2cd ed. Lynne Rienner, 2010.

Embree, Ainslee “Religion” in in DeVotta, ed. Understanding Contemporary India, 2cd ed. Lynne Rienner, 2010.

*Additional articles in reader (see reading schedule below)

Course Requirements

30%	Journals on readings, lectures, fieldtrips and experiences. 3 papers of 5 pages each to be submitted weekly. (See assignment sheet)
30%	Active participation and attendance at all required events (lectures, language classes, films, field excursions, etc).
40%	Final essay on key themes in the course (8-10 pages)

Grading Policy

A-Range	Student demonstrated superior analytical abilities in all her/his assignments. Student carefully read all relevant material and provided both a clear understanding of what s/he has read and provided insightful analyses and thoughtful critiques. Moreover, the topic under study was explored fully.
B-Range	Student demonstrated an above average analytical ability. Student was able to provide a clear understanding of the material and some insights and critiques. The topic under study was explored fairly thoroughly.
C-Range	Student could demonstrate average analytical ability. Student was unable to provide a clear understanding of the material and offered few insights and critiques. The topic under study was not explored fully.
D-Range	Student completed assignments but could not provide any analytical ability. Student was unable to provide a clear understanding of the material and offered no insights and critiques. The topic was explored minimally.
Fail	Student did not complete assignments.

A	94+	B-	83 – 80	D+	69 – 67
A-	90 – 93	C+	79 – 77	D	66 – 63
B+	87 – 89	C	76 – 74	F	59 – 0
B	86 – 84	C-	73 – 70		

Attendance Policy

Given the particular nature of the course, attendance is mandatory. 2.5% points will be deducted from the final earned grade for each absence.

College policy states that students must notify faculty within the first three weeks of the semester if they anticipate missing any classes due to religious observance.

Course Enrichment Component

Through a combination of in-meetings and field trips, this course meets or exceeds the required contact time for a four-credit course. Thus, this course will not include a separate Course Enrichment Component.

Electronic Forms of Communication

In accordance with College policy, I will use your Ramapo College email address (@ramapo.edu) to communicate with you about all course-related matters. Additional readings will be made available through Moodle.

Policy on Academic Integrity

“Students are expected to read and understand Ramapo College’s academic integrity policy, which can be found online in the *College Catalog*. Members of the Ramapo College community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who violate this policy will be required to meet with the faculty member and/or will be referred to the Office of the Provost.” This policy will be strictly enforced. No exceptions will be made, and the Office of the Provost will be notified in ALL cases.

Students with Disabilities

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a disability that has been documented with the Office of Specialized Services, please make an appointment with me.

Draft 2014 Schedule begins on next page...

Draft Schedule for Course #1

Date	Time	Topic	Lecturer / Facilitator	Assignments
08 January, Wednesday	03:00 am	Arrival (Bangalore International Airport) – 18 total passengers Emirates Flight #568 (via Dubai)		
INTRODUCTION				
08 January, Wednesday	02:00 pm - 05:00 pm	Orientation to RCNJ Semester in India Program, Fireflies and Bangalore	RCNJ Resident Program Assistant - Alysa Ochoa	
	06:00 pm - 08:00 pm			
09 January, Thursday	09:30 am - 11:00 am	Fireflies campus tour	Siddhartha	
	11:30 am - 01:00 pm	Welcome ceremony	Siddhartha and team	
		Explaining Fireflies and Pipal Tree		
COURSE - I: INDIAN CULTURE AND SOCIETY				
MODULE - I: CONTEXTUALISING INDIAN CULTURE AND SOCIETY				
10 January, Friday	09:30 am - 01:00 pm	Understanding Contemporary India: Culture, Economy and Politics	Sanghamitra Padhy & Susan Hangen	Read India Calling
	02:00 pm - 03:00 pm	Learning Kannada #1	Shalini S.K.	
	04:30 pm - 05:30 pm	Visit the Cow Ashram	Suresh Mathew	
11 January, Saturday	09:30 am - 11:00 am	India: Colonization and Post-Colonial Politics	Sanghamitra Padhy	Read Guha
	11:30 am - 01:00 pm	Introduction to Course #4 (Field Study Project)	Susan Hangen & Sanghamitra Padhy	
	02:00 pm - 04:00 pm	Research Methods - Overview	Susan Hangen & Sanghamitra Padhy	
12 January, Sunday	Break			
MODULE – II: SOCIAL STRUCTURES				
13 January, Monday	09:30 am - 01:00 pm	Understanding Caste in Modern India	Sanghamitra Padhy & Susan Hangen	Read Pingle & Viramma

	03:00 pm - 04:00 pm	Learning Kannada #2	Shalini S.K.	
14 January, Tuesday	09:30 am - 01:00 pm	Kinship and Gender	Susan Hangen	Read Trivedi & Kapur
	03:00 pm - 04:00 pm	Interaction with the doctor at the Homeopathy clinic on the community health programme (<i>excursion</i>)	Dr. Ramdas	
15 January, Wednesday	09:30 am - 11:00 am	Discussion of Readings	Sanghamitra Padhy & Susan Hagen	Journal Due
	11:30 am - 01:00 pm	Orientation to the H.D. Kote Field Visit (History of the displacement of Adivasis; their struggle for land)	Siddhartha, Ananda, Shalini	Read ‘Adivasi rights and forest governance’ article by Ananda Siddhartha.
	06:00 pm - 07:30 pm	Documentary Film: The Bee, The Bear and the Kuruba		
16 January, Thursday	08:00 am	Leave for Pipal Tree field programme area, Kabini via Mysore	Sanghamitra Padhy, Susan Hangen, Alysa, Shalini SK, Ananda	
		Mysore Palace & Chamundi Temple		
	07:00 pm	Stay at Blue Waters		
17 January, Friday	07:30 am - 09:30 am	Visit to an Adivasi village in the forest and interaction with the community.	Profs. Sanghamitra Padhy & Susan Hangen, Pipal Tree Field Team	
	10:30 am - 01:00 pm	Visit to Udbur Ashram School (Government Residential School for Adivasis)		
	04:00 pm	Coracle ride, Blue Waters		
	06:00 pm - 07:30 pm	Interaction with the children at the Children’s College	Profs. Sanghamitra Padhy & Susan Hangen, Pipal Tree Field Team	
18 January, Saturday	07:30 am - 09:30 am	Discussion in a Dalit village on dryland agriculture and other issues (<i>a Pipal Tree Program</i>)	Profs. Sanghamitra Padhy & Susan Hangen, Pipal	

			Tree Field Team	
	10:30 am - 12:00noon	The Culture and Social Structure of Tribal Communities.	Kekkeri Narayanan	
	Evening	Interaction with Adivasi women	Profs. Sanghamitra Padhy & Susan Hangen, Pipal Tree Field Team	<i>(Susan & Sangha travel back to Bangalore for departure early morning of 19 Jan)</i>
19 January, Sunday	09:30 am - 12 noon	Interaction with Julie and Vivek on their organic farm, on alternatives.	Julie and Vivek Cariappa	
	02:00 pm - 05:30 pm	Safari in the Nagarhole National Park		
20 January, Monday	09:00 am	Leave for Fireflies via Mysore (Tipu Sultan's Palace)		
21 January, Tuesday	10:00 am - 11:30 am	Evaluation of the Field Trip	Alysa Ochoa	
22 January, Wed	09:30 am - 11:00 am	Discussion on U.R. Ananthamurthy's Novel, 'SAMSKARA: A Rite for a Dead Man'	Dr. Mamta G. Sagar	Read: Samskara
	11:30 am - 01:00 pm	Women's Writings in India		Read: 'Women in Surabhi' and 'Faith'
	03:00 pm - 04:00 pm	Learning Kannada #3	Shalini SK	
23 January, Thursday	Break			
24 January, Friday	Break			
25 January, Saturday	09:30 am - 12 noon	Field Trip to Electronic City	TBD	Journal due
	03:00 pm - 04:00 pm	Learning Kannada #4	Shalini SK	
MODULE – III: RELIGIONS				
26 January, Sunday	09:30 am - 01:00 pm	The Life Affirming Dimension of Hinduism	Siddhartha	Read: Open Source Hinduism

	05:00 pm	Film: Dharm		
27 January, Monday	09:30 am - 01:00 pm	Participatory Hermeneutics of Hope	Siddhartha	Read: Rethinking festivals
	Afternoon	Visit to the Art of Living Ashram	Ananda	
28 January, Tuesday	Break			
29 January, Wednesday	09:30 am - 01:00 pm	Islam and the Muslim minority in India	Maqbool Siraj	Read:
	05:30 pm	Film: Parzania		
30 January, Thursday	Writing day			
31 January, Friday	09:30 am - 01:00 pm	Meeting to Reflect on Essays and Course - I	Siddhartha	Journal Due / Essays for Course - I Due
01 - 03 February (Sat-Mon)	Break			