

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

21:510:280:01 History of India and South Asia Up To 1750

Fall 2014

Conklin 424

Tuesday, Thursday: 11:30am-12:50pm

Instructor: Dr. Amita Satyal

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**Course Overview**

This course is a long survey of South Asian history, c.7000 BCE-1750 CE. South Asia or the Indian subcontinent, is a vast and diverse landmass that includes modern nation-states of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The time period starts with the 'Indian Stone Age' and ends with Britain's initial colonization of India. This course aims to explore the factors that shaped South Asia's long and complex history, its distinctive diversity and dynamism in particular. It proposes to accomplish this goal by analyzing the changing interrelationship between state, culture and society in South Asia with an eye to the subcontinent's longstanding global connections that enabled the circulation of humans, ideas and goods in and out of this vast region. The course format is a combination of lecture and class discussion. Students will learn to creatively and critically engage with the course materials so as to interpret historical processes and make connections across space and time. In addition, students will be able to consistently practice their reading, writing and interpretive skills on written assignments as well as bring questions and observations to class on numerous occasions throughout the semester. While there are no examinations as such, this course demands regular and constant work: completing all the course requirements, including written assignments in a timely manner, carefully reading all the assigned readings *before* coming to class, and being present in class, in body and mind, will together enhance the students' overall learning experience, who may not all be very familiar with the region or its history. That said, prior knowledge of South Asian history (will be an asset but) is neither required, nor assumed for this course. Familiarity with a few vernacular terms would, however, be required. Finally, a gentle reminder to remain in the awareness that the world's history comprises multiple trajectories. Difference is, thus, intrinsic to societies' experience, judging and hierarchizing which are pointless historical exercises—although useful to power and politics—as we access the pre-modern world largely in and through the present. These insights help to see South Asian history as not only non-linear and layered but also as a dynamic “bundle of relationships” and lasting interconnections. This was the world that “the People Without History”—one of history's most enduring myths—created and inhabited, and one that we will (unlearn and) learn about in this course.

**Course Readings**

All the course materials will be posted to <https://blackboard.newark.rutgers.edu/> as needed. Course materials posted to blackboard are proprietary and copyrighted. These

materials may be accessed only by students registered for the course and be used for course-related purposes only. Violations will be reported for appropriate action.

Readings in this course are assigned on a weekly basis [*for further details, see PDF file 'SA Reading List and Calendar'*].

Students may **not** use any electronic devices while class is in session. Instead, students will be required to bring a **hardcopy** of all the relevant course materials to class since we will make extensive use of these materials in class: bring a printout of the materials assigned for the week. Coming to class without a hardcopy of all the assigned readings will negatively influence the student's class grade starting the second week of classes (onward of September 9). No excuses, e.g., no blackboard access, late registration etc., will be accepted.

## Course Policies

### 1. Academic Integrity and Code of Student Conduct

Registration for this course assumes the student's agreement to read and abide by the university's policy on academic integrity and code of student conduct. This information is available on <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity>.

In particular, note the following: proper classroom etiquette is required of all and at all times; no cellphones etc., may be used while class is in session; plagiarism and cheating will fetch a failing grade on the course, and additional penalties determined by Newark Academic Integrity Facilitators may apply; students must fully fill out the **Academic Integrity Honor Pledge** on every assignment. **No pledge, no grade.**

*\*Academic Integrity Honor Pledge\**

*\*On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).\**

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

### 2. Attendance

**Attendance is required—no exceptions.** Bring any special circumstances to the instructor's attention immediately. Please bear in mind that:

*Any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences may not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting a failing grade.*

If a student misses more than two classes before and after the drop date, their final grade is lowered by a third of a grade; if a student misses more than four classes, their final grade is lowered by one full grade; and, if a student misses more than six classes, their final grade is lowered by two full grades.

All student communication concerning class absences—indeed, all important course-related matters—must be made on e-mail; verbal intimation alone is not sufficient. Class absences that can be excused include (i) planned absences, i.e., participation in university athletics and religious observance excused per university policy (ii) emergencies. Supporting documentation will be required and must be produced with minimal delay.

Also note:

- Students are responsible for signing attendance sheet in each class—they will have until 11:35am to do so.
- Arriving late to class or leaving class early without the instructor’s prior permission will cause loss of attendance for the day (there is no partial attendance).
- Makeups are **not** permitted for missed classes, short assignments & long papers.

### 3. Students with Special Needs and Disability

Students with special needs and disability are requested to first contact the Office of Student Life and Leadership, Paul Robeson Campus Center for academic accommodations, approvals and related documentation. For further information, see the following link: <http://robeson.rutgers.edu/studentlife/disability.html>. Once a letter of accommodation is granted, the concerned student is advised to contact the instructor to discuss implementing the approved accommodation. If needed, the student may electronically access course materials in class, record lectures, and capture slide images of lecture presentations with the instructor’s permission.

### 4. Office Meetings, Blackboard Access and Course Communication

Office hour meetings are walk-ins. E-mail the instructor in advance for appointments, which will be scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9:00-10am and 1:00-3:00pm. Individual paper and grade questions will typically be brought to office meetings. Students are also welcome to meet the instructor with their feedback or to discuss any course-related matters as needed.

Students are responsible for regularly checking their e-mail and blackboard—a few times in a day is recommended!—for e-mails from the course instructor and updates and class announcements posted to blackboard. Neither will bounced, skipped or forgotten e-mails nor will blackboard problems/access issues be considered as valid reasons for any purpose in this course. It is the students’ responsibility to resolve any blackboard/account issues without delay: the on-campus ‘Help Desk’, not the instructor, is the relevant resource in this regard.

On course e-mails, make sure that the addressee and sender’s name along with a short and relevant subject line are provided. Voicemail messages are not acceptable.

### Course Requirements

1. Class Participation: Class preparedness, participation in class discussion and class conduct.
2. Short Assignments: In-class and take-home; Format may vary (e.g., short essays, quizzes etc.). For short assignments’ schedule, see PDF file ‘SA Calendar and Reading List’.
3. Long Papers: Two papers (4-6 pages each) due via blackboard—details will be on blackboard closer to the time. For paper submission schedule, see PDF file ‘SA Calendar and Reading List’.

### Scoring Rubric and Grades

CATEGORY	WEIGHT
Class Grade	20%
Short Assignments	40%
Long Papers	40%

Grades are non-negotiable. A student's final grade is based on their individual performance and fulfillment of the course requirements listed on the syllabus.

**Outline: Weekly Topics\***

WEEK	TOPIC
1) Sep 2, 4	Introductory Lectures
2) Sep 9, 11	Geographical Context
3) Sep 16, 18	Indian Stone Age Up To 7000 BCE
4) Sep 23, 25	Settled Life and Indus Valley Civilization, 7000-1900 BCE
5) Sep 30, Oct 2	The Bronze Age: Vedic Cultures, 1900-600 BCE
6) Oct 7, 9	Vedic and Ascetic Religions, 600-300 BCE
7) Oct 14, 16	Expansion of Iron: Kingdoms, Cities, Empires, 700-200 BCE
8) Oct 21, 23	Classicism, Interaction, Innovation, 200 BCE-700 CE
9) Oct 28, 30	Regional Configurations: Peninsular India, 600-1200 CE
10) Nov 4, 6	Indo-Islam: Northern India, 700-1500 CE
11) Nov 11, 13	Indo-Islam: Peninsular India, 1300-1500 CE
12) Nov 18, 20	The Mughals: Early Context & Consolidation, 1500-1650 CE
13) Dec 2, 4	Ascendancy of English East India Company, 1650-1757 CE
14) Dec 9	Final Review

\*See 'SA Reading List and Calendar' on blackboard for details.



***Famous 'Yogi seal': A three-faced male yogi (deity?) depicted as meditating in the lotus position on an elevated throne. Note the bangles on his arms, and the pipal leaves [bot. name: Ficus Religiosa] rising from his remarkable head-dress; five symbols of the Indus script are inscribed above the yogi but the Harappan script is yet to be deciphered, so their meaning eludes us. The figure depicted above could be the earliest representation of Shiva. Seal Material: Tan steatite; Site and Date: Indus Valley or Harappan Civilization, Indian subcontinent, c.3300 BCE.***

***Have a nice semester!*** 😊