

**UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

PHIL 3910
Indian Philosophy

Instructor: K. Dorter

Fall 2014

Extension: 53218

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Office Hours: Wednesdays from 9:30 to 10:30 and 12:30 to 1:30 in 353 MacKinnon, or by appointment, but you can talk to me any time I'm in my office except for the hour before class when I'm preparing (see the schedule on Courselink or next to my door).

Description: The primary readings for class discussion will deal with selected readings in 1) Radhakrishnan and Moore (editors): *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy* (Bookstore), 2) Dorter (ed.): *Five Upanishads* (Courselink), and 3) Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhymakakarika* (Courselink). If time remains we'll also read Śankara's *Vivekachudamani* (Courselink).

Assignments: In addition to the final exam (50%) you may write **either** two 1250 word essays (25% each) **or** one 2500 word essay (50%). 1250 or 2500 words are minimum lengths – **essays may be longer if justified by the content**. You can also use the first 1250 word essay as a trial run for the 2500 word essay, or you can expunge the grade for your first essay by submitting a 2500 word essay later – in both cases resubmit the original essay along with the final version. If you want preliminary feedback submit something by the first deadline. **Submit on paper** – electronic submissions will not be accepted. See the attached Essay Guidelines for due dates.

Essays: Essay topics may be of two kinds. 1) Discussion of a general problem in Indian philosophy (see next page for suggested topics). 2) Explication of a philosopher or text **not dealt with in class** (see Radhakrishnan & Moore, chapters V-VIII and XVI-XVII).

Final Exam (12/11/2014 from 08:30 to 10:30): The exam will consist of **three essay questions** (25 marks each) on the material covered in class (to be selected from a list handed out at the last class, which will be a review class), and **five identification questions** (5 marks each) from: Carvaka, Jainism, Nyaya, Vaiśeṣhika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva-Mimamsa, and Vedanta. For the identification questions you need only read Radhakrishnan & Moore's introductions to chapters VII, VIII, X-XV.

Pronunciation of Sanskrit terms: Transliterations from Sanskrit are not always pronounced the way they look in English. See the pronunciation guide on pp. 638-9 of Radhakrishnan and Moore.

Readings for class discussion:

1) From *Five Upanishads* (download from CourseLink):

Isha

Katha

- Chandogya*: a) BOOK 6 ch.1-3, 8-16
b) BOOK 1 ch.1; and BOOK 7 (all)
c) BOOK 8 ch. 7-15
d) BOOK 5 ch. 3-18 and *Mandukya Upanishad*

From *Source Book in Indian Philosophy*:

2) *Bhagavad Gita*: 3 chapters per class

3) Buddhism:

- a) 274-286: Early texts
b) 292-325: *Dhammapada* (7 chapters per class)
c) *Mula-madhyamaka-karika* (CourseLink): chapters 1, 24, and 18.
d) 333-337: *Trimshika*.

4) Advaita Vedanta: Shankara's *Vivekachudamani* (download from CourseLink).

Essay Topics (relate your discussions both to **Indian texts** and **your own judgment**): You may write on an Indian philosophical text that **isn't part of the Readings For Class Discussion** (above), or you may write on a general problem in Indian philosophy. Here are four possibilities.

1. A central concept in many Indian philosophies is *ahimsa* or non-violence (see R-M's index under "*ahimsa*", "harmlessness", "non-violence"). Discuss the pros and cons of this way of life.

2. Reincarnation is an important feature of several Indian philosophies (see R-M's index under "cycles of births and deaths", "rebirth", "*samsara*"). It is a powerful incentive for moral behavior, but it is hard to reconcile with the contribution that the body makes to our individuality, and also with belief in heaven and hell. How convincing is this theory? What difference does it make if we believe it, and what does it imply about the relation between the soul, the body, and the individual that I am at present? (The following books by Ian Stevenson are on 3-day reserve – there's no need to consult more than one: *Cases of the Reincarnation Type* BL515.S746, *Children Who Remember Previous Lives* BL515.S747, *The Evidence for Survival from Claimed Memories of Former Incarnations* BF1311.R35 S88, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation* BL515.S75. If you use Stevenson's books, also look at the articles on Stevenson in CourseLink.)

3. What is the nature of the self or soul? (There are numerous entries in R-M's index under "Self", "self", "Soul", "soul".)

4. It sounds plausible to say that bodily desires interfere with the mind's ability to see reality, and that therefore asceticism is important. But it also sounds plausible to say that the body is natural, and that any attempt to cut the mind off from it leads to an unnatural and sterile intellectualism. Is asceticism an advantage or disadvantage for our effort to discover truth? (See R-M's index under "asceticism", "*sannyasa*", "*sannyasin*").

GUIDELINES FOR ESSAYS

Also see “Standard Statements”.

1. **Deadlines**: 2500 word essay: Wednesday, November 5th; **or** two 1250 word essays: Wednesday October 15th and Wednesday, November 5th. **Label your essays** “First Essay”, “Second Essay” or “Long Essay” because short essays and long essays are graded differently. If it’s a rewrite of your first essay hand in your first essay with it so I can see my original comments. If you’d like feedback on an early draft of the 50% essay let me see it by the first deadline. Late essays will be penalized one mark (out of 100) per weekday. The “day” ends at 4:30—if it’s in my mailbox in MacKinnon 343 the next morning I’ll count it as submitted yesterday; if it’s under my door I’ll count it as today. No essay will be accepted after **9 a.m.** the **weekday before** the final exam. **If you want comments** submit on paper, otherwise you can submit an email attachment. **After the end of classes you should submit by email only.** Students won’t normally be required to answer questions about their essay, but may in some cases. After the last class meeting I’ll email you if any questions arise, so check your email daily since I won’t be able to grade it if I can’t reach you.

2. **Subject**: Any philosopher in the subject area of the course who **isn’t studied in class**, or any relevant issue not studied in class. Check with me to make sure. There’s nothing wrong with referring to works studied in class as long as they aren’t the main focus.

3. **Sources**: If the essay deals with a philosopher focus on **primary texts** (texts of the original author), although secondary sources (works *about* the original author’s texts) may be used as a supplement. **Quotations in a secondary source don’t count as primary texts** because they’re taken out of context. The point is to develop skill in exegesis and evaluation; reporting the results of other people’s exegesis and evaluation doesn’t accomplish this. If not enough primary material exists (as might happen if you write on someone obscure) use at least three secondary sources.

4. **Content**: Combine scholarship and creativity, i.e. both attentiveness to the text (where applicable) and a personal response of your own. If you’re interpreting a particularly difficult text it may be enough just to give a clear explanation of it. Where the interpretation is more straightforward your creativity can take the form of considering objections to the author’s views and how the author might reply to them; explain why you think the author can or cannot withstand the criticisms. **Whether you write on a problem or a text consider possible objections to your own views.** The more challenging you can make these issues, the better: treating answers as obvious isn’t worth as much as seeing how they are controversial and difficult.

5. **Format**: The five paragraph model you learned in high school was training wheels to teach discipline. People don’t really write essays like that. Just organize your ideas to be as clear as possible. Use double spaced full sized font (12 point). Also use page numbers. 1250 or 2500 words are minimum lengths – **essays may be longer if justified by the content.**

6. **Style**: Use “I” rather than awkward and outdated circumlocutions like “the author.” And use inclusive language like “humankind” instead of “mankind”, “people ... they” instead of “a person ... he.” Other possibilities: “he or she”, “she or he”, “s/he”, etc.

7. **References**: Give references to all information and ideas taken from someone else, even if they aren’t direct quotations. Otherwise it may be plagiarism (when in doubt ask). Listing your sources in a bibliography isn’t enough since it doesn’t show where you make use of them. References should list the **author** (or at least the individual title if the author is unknown) that you’re citing first. For example, if you use Radhakrishnan & Moore (editors), *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, and cite p. 229 (**you must give page numbers**), write “Sarvadarśanasamgraha, Radhakrishnan & Moore, 229”, **not** “Radahakrishnan & Moore, 229”. If you use the latter format I’ll assume you’re citing only a secondary source (what the editors wrote). The bibliography should say Radhakrishnan & Moore (editors), *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Sample philosophy essays are available on Courselink.

STANDARD STATEMENTS FOR FALL 2014

The following statements are incorporated into all Course Outlines for Fall 2014 courses in the Department of Philosophy.

Email communication: As per university regulations, all students are required to check their uoguelph.ca email account regularly: email is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement: When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and email contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar's information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop Date: The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, October 31, 2014. See the Undergraduate Calendar's regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses.

Copies of out-of-class assignments: Keep paper and/or other reliable backup copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility: The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities (soon to be re-named Student Accessibility Services) as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or refer to the CSD website.

Academic Misconduct: The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Recording of Materials: Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources: The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars>