

Bhakti Yoga Religion 01:840:366:01
Tue/Thur Beck 011, Livingston Campus 5th period (3.20-4.40)
Instructor: Edwin Bryant <edbryant@rci.rutgers.edu>
Office Hours: Tue, 1-2 pm Loree 108.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is focused on one expression of *bhakti*: that of a dominant form of Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*, as a template for *bhakti* in general. The primary readings are drawn from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, a very important classical text, and will feature the stories of great *bhakti* exemplars, as well as episodes from the life of Kṛṣṇa. The course will also feature the 16th century *Bhagavat Sandarbha*, a theological treatise theologizing the tradition's understanding of Kṛṣṇa as Supreme Godhead and Absolute Truth.

Our aim in this course is to provide students with a window into how *bhakti* is understood through the frame of reference of one community of theologians and practitioners in the pre-modern period prior to its encounter with modernity in the colonial period. As a result of our chosen focus, in addition to engaging selections from an important *bhakti* text, we will gain an exposure to a traditional mode of understanding, interpreting and reworking sacred scripture (hermeneutics).

Course Prerequisites: None.

Course Requirement: All assigned reading. Two quizzes (each 25% of the total grade), and term paper (10 pgs, 40%) due the last day of class. Students' attendance record and overall performance in class will factor into the remaining 10% of the grade (one point deducted for each unexcused absence; more than 10 such absences will result in a fail grade for the entire course). Students are expected to read whatever material is assigned for each particular week, and be prepared to discuss this in class. Any student called upon who has obviously not done the assigned reading will lose grade points. Computers are allowed for note taking, but any student using the computer for any other reason, such as surfing the web or going on Facebook, will lose grade points and no longer be allowed to bring the computer to class (and I will check up from time to time!). Any student wishing to bring the computer to class for note taking *must sit in the front row of the class*. Anyone using a cell phone in class will likewise lose points.

Please note: **there are no make-ups for missed quizzes** except in the case of an absence caused by an unexpected emergency and evidenced by a doctor's or dean's note. In the event of such a documented emergency, the instructor must be informed of the impending absence immediately (i.e. on the day of the quiz), and the make-up must be taken within 24 hours of the quiz. There are no exceptions to these conditions.

Required Reading:

Bryant, Edwin. *Bhakti Yoga: Tales and Teachings from the Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, New York: North Point Press, 2017.

Dasa, Satyanarāyaṇa. *Bhāgavata Sandarbha*,

Note: The readings below are due by the date indicated.

Tue, Sept. 5th Introduction to the course.

Thur, Sept. 7th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 1-55.

Tue, Sept. 12th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 55-112.

Thur, Sept. 14th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 112-147.

Tue, Sept. 19th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 147- 219

Thur, Sept. 21st **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 219-292

Tue, Sept. 26th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 292-361

Thur, Sept. 28th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 361-440

Tue, Oct. 3rd **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 440-469

Thur, Oct. 5th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs 469-529

Tue, Oct. 10th **Readings:** *Bhakti Yoga* pgs *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 1041-1043.

Thur, Oct. 12th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 1-65.

Tue, Oct. 17th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 65-134.

Thur, Oct. 19th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 134-209.

Tue, Oct. 24th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 209-268.

Thur, Oct. 26th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 268-343.

Tue, Oct. 31st **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 343-405.

Thur, Nov. 2nd **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 405-488.

Tue, Nov. 7th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 488-554.

Thur, Nov. 9th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 554 -600.

Tue, Nov. 14th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 600-662.

Thur, Nov. 16th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 666-700.

Tue, Nov. 21st **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 700- 782.

Thur, Nov 23rd **THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS**

Tue, Nov. 28th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 782-838.

Thur, Nov. 30th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 838-885.

Tue, Dec. 5th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 885-937. **QUIZ II**

Thur, Dec 7th **Readings:** *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* pgs 937-1041.

Tue, Dec. 12th Last class Final Papers Due.