

# Course Outline: An Introduction to India

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<b>School:</b>	Academic Studies
<b>Department:</b>	General Arts
<b>Course Title:</b>	Introduction to Cultural Studies
<b>Total Course Hours:</b>	40 hours in class time 10 hours of independent study time

**Introduction:** This course is an exploration of the culture of India. Through this class students will gain an introductory understanding of India. Major topics will include; religion, cuisine, music, and peoples. We decided on this course because of our interest and familiarity with country. Marc was a student of anthropology and sociology. He has also studied yoga and meditation for 10 years. Varsha is a second generation South Asian from India, Varsha was born and brought up in England and who is interested in exploring her culture, and origins. As such we felt that we would be able to offer students a unique, authentic experience.

The course will offer both a theoretical and practical learning experience. Each week students will experience a hands on learning activity and a seminar where they will be able to listen and ask questions. There is also some independent study time built in for students to pursue independent learning, and collaborate on group projects. The instructor will host office time in parallel to these independent sessions.

**Description:** According to UNESCO global cultural tourism is growing by an unprecedented 15 per cent per year. Today, travellers want to experience a distinct and authentic sense of place while connecting with the endemic tapestry of human endeavour. This course will provide connections by linking India's historical colonialism challenges to today's society; A closer lens will be applied to religion, cuisine, music and people.

Through the explorations of the themes in this course, students will gain an understanding of the conditions in India. They will attempt to discover what an Indian world view would look like. The course will include contributions from the community and there will be many chances for students to get first hand experience with aspects of Indian culture.

## **Major Themes of the course:**

- 1) Religions of India
- 2) People and Cultures of India
- 3) India and its connections to the world

## **Course Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of the course students will have:

- An understanding of colonialism and the impact on a country's economic/social development

- The ability to understand the links India has with the globe.
- An overview of religions practiced in India
- An examination of what it means to be a Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh living in India.
- Knowledge and experience of music originating from India
- The ability to form opinions
- First hand experience of Indian Cuisine
- An understanding of the practice of Yoga and its significance

### **Assignments/weekly plans -**

- 20% - Participation in class and in the online learning component in the course.
  - Expectation to comment and reflect on the experience of the course.
- 20% - 2 Reflective journals (750 word reflections on any aspect of learning transpired through this course)
  - Required to build off of class readings and experience.
  - An effort to discover the essence of Indian culture.
  - A focus on the major themes of the course.
  - Journals must be uploaded to the online community.
- 40% - Group presentation/exploration of Indian culture.
  - Major component of the course.
  - Students must select one major topic eg. Peoples, History, Agriculture, Dance, etc.
  - Each group must create a one hour interactive presentation.
  - This presentation will inform the class about the given topic and provide and opportunity for students to ask questions.
- 10% - Contribution to the class resource site. Create one review.
- 10% - Self Assessment
  - Students will have the opportunity to self assess themselves and attach a grade up the value of 10%

## **Format of Class -**

The course will be presented into a mix modality format.

- Each week a seminar type class will take place
- Students will be assigned readings on the topic and a conversation will take place.
- Students will be expected to reflect on these conversations and write about them online.
- Student Lead Presentations
- A significant portion of class time will be dedicated to student presentations. They will be encouraged to introduce their classmates to their experiential learning. These presentations must relate and build upon one of the major themes of the course.
- Practical component
- Each week students will participate in one cultural based lesson
- These lessons might involve cooking, practicing yoga, listening to music
- Students will share these experience and create their reflective journal
- Online component
- Students will contribute to the online component of the class and assist in the development of resources. At the end of the course, content will be formed and information will be gathered about the culture. This will accumulated as the course continues.

## **Major Themes for each week:**

- 1. Week One – Introduction**
  - a. What is India?
  - b. Who are the Indian People?
- 2. Week Two and Three – The people of India**
  - a. Cultures
  - b. Regions
  - c. Activity films of India
- 3. Week Four and Five- Religions of India**
  - a. Exploration of the different religions
  - b. Yoga experience
- 4. Week Six and Seven – Indian Cuisine**
  - a. Exploration of the different foods from around India
  - b. Hands on cooking workshop.

- 5. Week Eight and Nine – India and the World**
  - a. Indian Politics
  - b. Indian Economics
  - c. Indian Agriculture
- 6. Week Ten and Eleven – Presentation from Groups**
- 7. Week Twelve – The music of India**
  - a. Exploration of modern and traditional Indian Music
  - b. Traditional Music concert.