



## Indian Philosophy: Brahmins, Buddhists, Theists, and Atheists

### Syllabus DRAFT

Course: REL 3000-level

Meeting times and place: TBD

Professor: Dr. Anna A. (Anya) Golovkova; pronouns: she/her/hers<sup>1</sup>

email: TBD

Office Hours: TBD

### Course Description

How do we draw the line between religion and philosophy? Are questions on the nature and the very existence of the Self religious? Do grammar and linguistics belong to religion or science? This course introduces some of the themes and textual traditions that inform the development of Indian philosophy, while providing us with ample opportunities to question our assumptions and categories and to consider historical and contemporary contexts for the scholarship in this field. Rather than offering answers to the “timeless problems” of philosophy, my goal is to introduce some of the main movements and systems of philosophy by highlighting individual voices in an ongoing contest and conversation.

This course includes readings on some of the earliest texts that are often taken to typify Indian philosophy: the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and the Epics. Considered by some scholars to be “quasi-philosophical” in nature because their arguments are rarely systematic, these foundational texts introduce insights and reflections that inform the subsequent course of Indian philosophy. We will also consider some developments in the canonical “schools,” or, literally, “viewpoints” (*darśanas*) of Indian philosophy: Sāṃkhya (Enumerationist Dualism), Mīmāṃsā (Vedic Exegesis), Nyāya (Logic), and Vedānta (Uttara Mīmāṃsā), as well as Philosophy of Language (Grammar) and Buddhist Epistemology. Although in a survey course like this it is impossible to include all even among the most influential authors and developments, an attempt has been made to include some marginalized philosophical traditions: atheist materialism of Cārvāka/Lokāyata, Jaina philosophy, and non-dual and dualist Śaivism.

---

<sup>1</sup> Self-expression and self-identification are important professional and personal values for me. One way to practice these values is to share preferred gender pronouns. My preferred address is Dr. Golovkova and I use she/her/hers pronouns.

### **Required Texts**

*The Bhagavad Gita*. Trans. Laurie L. Patton. London: Penguin Classics, 2008.

*Upaniṣads*. Trans. Patrick Olivelle. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Arnold, Daniel Anderson. *Buddhists, Brahmins, and Belief: Epistemology In South Asian Philosophy of Religion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

### **Required Materials**

Binder, flash drive, notebook, pen/pencil or a laptop for informal in-class assignments.

If you bring a laptop to class, you agree to only use it only for in-class activities.

### **Grading and Assignments**

Your grade is based on the following components:

- Class attendance and participation in discussions: 40%
- First essay (10 pages): 30%
- Second essay (10 pages): 30%

Attend class regularly and be on time. Your grade will suffer with more than two unexcused absences or more than two late arrivals to class. Recognized grounds for absence include illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the professor, and recognized religious holidays. Please contact the professor in advance of class or absences may be counted as unexcused. If you are unable to come to class, it is your responsibility to check in with your classmates to get class notes, etc. Furthermore, you are still responsible for submitting your assignments on-time, unless an extension has been approved by the professor.

Come rested and prepared to participate in all in-class discussions and other activities. Be ready to analyze and respond to the readings, as well as to the contributions of your fellow students. You should plan to read seventy-five to one hundred pages a week on average for this course. Bring all readings, notes, and completed assignments to class with you. Remember that active engagement includes attentive listening as well as thoughtful speaking. Treat every student and every concept you encounter with scholarly respect.

### **Blackboard and Social Media**

We will be using Blackboard (<https://Blackboard.bowdoin.edu>) extensively throughout the course. Familiarize yourself with the site for our class as soon as possible by downloading assigned articles and posting your writing assignments.

### **Deadlines**

Post all your writing assignments on Blackboard in the appropriate folder by 4:00 pm of the due date.

### **Guidelines for Submission of Written Work**

In this course, all your assignments should be formatted using the MLA style. Use Times New Roman font in 12 pt. Proofread and spellcheck all assignments and staple or paper-clip the pages. Start your assignments early and leave plenty of time for revisions. Your submissions should not be your first draft written the night before the assignment. Files should be submitted as Word or Pages documents.

### **Bowdoin College Policies and Procedures**

#### **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

Source: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/academic-honesty/index.shtml>

As an institution committed to the principles of a liberal education, Bowdoin seeks to promote a free and honest exchange of ideas among its faculty and students. To maintain the integrity of this exchange, we submit for evaluation only work that is genuinely the product of our own efforts, make explicit all forms of collaboration, acknowledge and properly cite research sources, and ensure that all members of the Bowdoin community have access to the resources they need to carry out their research. As a Bowdoin student, you should apply these principles of academic honesty to all of your assignments. Remember that professors assign papers and projects to assess your own level of understanding of a topic and hear your original ideas about the subject; they already know what the established sources have to say and are looking for fresh perspectives. Learning to think creatively and independently is an important goal of a Bowdoin education and academic honesty reinforces this objective.

In addition to expressing your own unique ideas about a topic, a paper or project should effectively document the sources you consulted while developing those ideas. This is the crucial process of citing sources. Citing sources allows you to:

- Participate in a community of scholars
- Enable others to build on or verify your research
- Show your familiarity with other scholars' ideas on a subject
- Give credit to others for their work
- Differentiate between which ideas are yours and which come from others
- Develop within yourself academic and personal integrity
- Avoid the serious academic and personal consequences of plagiarizing

For information on The Academic Honor Code and Social Code, please see [www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/student-handbook/college-policies/index.shtml](http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/student-handbook/college-policies/index.shtml)

**Students with Disabilities**

I strongly support Bowdoin’s College’s commitment to equality of educational opportunity for all students. Please let me know if you have special needs and talk to me if there is anything I can do to help you participate and fully engage in course activities. For information on accommodations, please see the Student Disability Services page <http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/special-accommodations/accommodation-policy.shtml>.

**Diversity Statement**

I will actively strive to create and sustain a welcoming, accessible, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, disability status, religious beliefs, and political beliefs.

**Writing Support**

The Writing Project is a writing-across-the-curriculum program that offers student writers a chance to talk through their ideas with a peer writing assistant. These guided conversations lead to better learning, thinking, and writing. For more information on writing resources that are available to you, visit <http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-project/>

<b>Indian Philosophy: Brahmins, Buddhists, Theists, and Atheists</b> <b>Class Schedule DRAFT</b>	
<p><b>Week 1</b> Introduction to the study of Indian philosophy in the postcolonial world</p>	<p><b>Richard King</b>, “Introduction” and “The power of definitions: a genealogy of the idea of ‘the mystical’ in <i>Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and ‘The Mystic East’</i> pp. 1-35 (Blackboard)</p> <p><b>Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan</b>, “General Introduction [to <i>A Source Book in Indian Philosophy</i>]” (Blackboard)</p> <p><b>Daya Krishna</b>, “Three Myths about Indian Philosophy” (Blackboard)</p> <p><b>Wilhelm Halbfass</b>, “Research and Reflection: Responses to my Respondents” (Blackboard)</p> <p><b>Randall Collins</b>, from <i>The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change</i>, pp. 224-255 (Blackboard)</p>

**Indian Philosophy: Brahmins, Buddhists, Theists, and Atheists**  
**Class Schedule DRAFT**

<p><b>Week 2</b> Brahmanical origins: the Vedic corpus</p>	<p><b>Michael Witzel</b>, “Vedas and Upaniṣads” (from Gavin Flood, ed., <i>The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism</i> (Blackboard))  <b>John G. Arapura and K. Kunjunn Raja</b>, “Philosophical Elements in Vedic Literature” (Blackboard)  <b>Stephanie Jamison and Joel Brereton</b>, <i>The Rigveda: The Earliest Religious Poetry of India</i>, Introduction and selected hymns (Blackboard)  <b>film</b>: Frits Staal, <i>Altar of Fire</i></p>
<p><b>Week 3</b> The <i>Upaniṣads</i> and the transvaluation of temporal existence</p>	<p><b>Patrick Olivelle</b>, from <i>Upaniṣads</i>, Introduction (pp.xxix-xxxvi, xlix-lvi), from <i>Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad</i> (34-71), <i>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</i>, Chapter 6 (pp. 148-156), <i>Kena, Kaṭha, Īśa</i>, and <i>Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads</i> (pp. 226-265)  <b>Steven Collins</b>, <i>Selfless Persons</i>, pp. 41-63, 271-274 [endnotes] (Blackboard)  <b>Paul Deussen</b>, <i>The Philosophy of the Upanishads</i>, “The Fundamental Conception of the Upanishads and its Significance” (pp. 38-50)</p>
<p><b>Week 4</b> Beginnings of philosophy of language: a distinctively “Indic” discourse?</p>	<p><b>S.D. Joshi and J.A.F. Roodbergen</b>, Introduction to Patañjali's “Great Commentary” on Sanskrit grammar (Blackboard)  <b>B. K. Matilal</b>, “Introduction,” “On Grammar and Linguistic Studies,” “Words and their Meanings,” and “Names and Things: Universals,” <i>The Word and the World</i>, pp. 3-39 (Blackboard)</p>
<p><b>Week 5</b> Pūrva Mīmāṃsā: common sense epistemology and counter-intuitive arguments</p>	<p><b>Larry McCrea</b>, trans., <i>Śābarabhāṣya</i> [selections] (pp.11-12, 15-20) and “The Hierarchical Organization of Language in Mīmāṃsā Interpretive Theory” (Blackboard)  <b>Francis X. Clooney</b>, <i>Thinking Ritually: Rediscovering the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā of Jaimini</i>, (pp.131-61) (Blackboard)  <b>Sheldon Pollock</b>, “Mīmāṃsā and the Problem of History in Traditional India” (Blackboard)</p>
<p><b>Week 6</b> What does logic have to do with it?</p>	<p><b>M.K. Gangopadhyaya</b>, trans., Vātsyāyana's <i>Nyāyabhāṣya</i> (tr.) (Blackboard)  <b>B.K. Matilal</b>, <i>The Character of Logic in India</i> (Blackboard)  <b>Kei Kataoka</b>, Introduction and selected sections from <i>A Critical Edition of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī</i> (Blackboard)</p>

**Indian Philosophy: Brahmins, Buddhists, Theists, and Atheists**  
**Class Schedule DRAFT**

<p><b>Week 7</b>          Godless liberation and atheism: Sāṃkhya, Yoga, and Cārvāka</p>	<p><b>Franklin Edgerton</b>, trans., “Selections from the <i>Mokṣadharmā</i> (<i>Mahābhārata</i>, Book 12)” (Blackboard)  <b>Gerald Larson</b>, trans., “The <i>Sāṃkhyakārikā</i> of Īśvarakṛṣṇa” (<i>Classical Sāṃkhya</i>, Appendix B; Blackboard)  <b>Christopher Chapple</b>, “The Unseen Seer and the Field: Consciousness in Sāṃkhya and Yoga” (Blackboard)  <b>Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya</b>, <i>Cārvāka/Lokāyata</i> (Blackboard)</p>
<p><b>Week 8</b>          The <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>: popularization and synthesis of Yoga and Sāṃkhya</p>	<p><b>Laurie L. Patton</b>, trans., <i>Introduction</i> and the text of <i>The Bhagavad Gīta</i></p>
<p><b>Week 9</b>          The challenge of Buddhism: arguments against the Self and Brahmanical response</p>	<p>Excerpts from <b>I. B. Horner</b>, trans., <i>Milinda’s Questions</i> (<i>Milindapanha</i>)  <b>Matthew Kapstein</b>, “Vasubandhu and the Nyāya Philosophers on Personal Identity”          Excerpts from Vasubandhu's <i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i> (Blackboard)  <b>Noa Ronkin</b>, <i>Early Buddhist Metaphysics</i> (Blackboard)  <b>John Taber</b>, “The Mīmāṃsā Theory of Self-Recognition” (Blackboard)</p>
<p><b>Week 10</b>          Bhartṛhari's Linguistic Monism and Buddhist Epistemology</p>	<p><b>K.A. Subramania Iyer</b>, trans., from <b>Bhartṛhari's</b> <i>Vākyapadīya</i> (Blackboard)          Dignāga <i>Pramanasamuccaya</i> (tr. Hattori, Hayes) (Blackboard)  <b>B.K. Matilal</b>, <i>Perception</i> (Blackboard)  <b>Satkari Mukherjee</b>, <i>The Buddhist Philosophy of Eternal Flux</i> (Blackboard)  <b>Jonardon Ganeri</b>, <i>Philosophy in Classical India</i>, Chapter Four (Blackboard)  <b>D.A. Arnold</b>, <i>Buddhists, Brahmins, and Belief</i>, Chapters 1 and 2</p>
<p><b>Week 11</b>          Buddhist Epistemology and Mīmāṃsā: Nobody is <i>seen</i> going to heaven</p>	<p><b>Kumārila</b>, from <i>Ślokavārttika</i> (tr. Jha, Taber) (Blackboard)  <b>B.K. Matilal</b>, <i>Perception</i> (Blackboard)  <b>D.A. Arnold</b>, <i>Buddhists, Brahmins, and Belief</i>, Chapters 3 and 4</p>

**Indian Philosophy: Brahmins, Buddhists, Theists, and Atheists**  
**Class Schedule DRAFT**

<p><b>Week 12</b>          Belief and Skepticism:          further encounters with          Buddhist Epistemology</p>	<p><b>John Dunne</b>, <i>Foundations of Dharmakīrti's Thought</i> (Blackboard)  <b>Lawrence McCrea</b>, “Prajñākara on the Pramāṇas and their Objects” (Blackboard)  <b>Lawrence McCrea and Parimal Patil</b>, “Traditionalism and Innovation: Philosophy, Exegesis, and Intellectual History in Jnānaśrīmitra’s Apohaprakaraṇa” (Blackboard)  <b>Eli Franco</b>, <i>Perception, Knowledge, and Disbelief</i> (Blackboard)  <b>D.A. Arnold</b>, <i>Buddhists, Brahmins, and Belief</i>, Chapters 5, 6 and 7</p>
<p><b>Week 13</b>          Philosophy and          Religious Pluralism:          The Rise of Vedānta          and the metaphysical          perspectivalism of the          Jains</p>	<p><b>Śaṅkara</b>, <i>Brahmasūtrabhāṣya</i> (tr. Thibaut) (Blackboard)  <b>Vācaspatimiśra</b> <i>Bhāmātī</i> (tr. Suryanarayana Sastri and Kunjunni Raja) (Blackboard)  <b>Phyllis Granoff</b>, <i>Philosophy and Argument in Late Vedānta</i> (Blackboard)  <b>Phillips</b>, <i>Classical Indian Metaphysics</i> (on Śrīharsa) (Blackboard)  <b>B. K. Matilal</b>, <i>The Central Philosophy of Jainism</i> (Blackboard)</p>
<p><b>Week 14</b>          Self-Recognition and          Self-Awareness in          Śaivism. Conversations          with Buddhists and the          the Grammarians</p>	<p><b>Raffaele Torella</b>. From <i>The Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā of Utpaladeva</i> and “The Pratyabhijñā and the Logical-Epistemological School of Buddhism.”  <b>Jaideva Singh</b>, <i>Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam</i>  <b>Isabelle Ratié</b>, “How Free is Imagination” and “The Dreamer and the Yogin: On the relationship between Buddhist and Śaiva idealisms” (Blackboard)  <b>Alex Watson</b>, “Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha’s Elaboration of Self-Awareness (<i>svasaṃvedana</i>), and How it Differs from Dharmakīrti’s Exposition of the Concept” (Blackboard)</p>