

COURSE SYLLABUS

Contemporary India Pune, India

Course code: SOCI360

Suggested US semester credit hours: 3

Delivery method: Face to Face

Course length: Semester

Course Description

Every nation is unique in its own way. One of the world's oldest civilizations, scholars have often referred to India as a 'marvel and a paradox'. This course on "Contemporary India" seeks to acquaint students to contemporary Indian society, culture and its politics. A nation that is pitted to be a superpower with its scientific and technological advances also grapples with poverty and illiteracy. Add to it its complexities that arise out of religious, linguistic and ethnic diversities.

This course will aid the students' understanding and help contextualize current issues in India as they experience it during their stay, through interactions with local people and personal observations. Classroom participation on current issues will be the key to looking at India in its many dimensions.

Students will be able to explore and appreciate India's diversity and complexities including understanding the societal and economic divides that exist, besides politics and other issues of contemporary relevance.

The media presents all socio-economic and political aspects in its current context. It would be essential for the students to regularly read newspapers, magazines and watch the television channels to understand media perspectives. These regular readings will put issues in its perspective during classroom lectures and discussions.

The course will be both informative and analytical through lectures and discussions. It is mandatory for students to drive discussions in class based on recommended reading on specific topics, additional reading, which will be recommended in the class from time to time based on developing current issues during the semester, as well as their own interpretation and observations.

Students must read newspapers and magazines to be on the same page to drive discussions. There is a flow of topics to give a comprehensive view of issues, yet one would often observe an overlap of topics and discussions as they are inter-related.

Although time slots have been allotted to each topic, there may be times when a lecture/session may need more time or less depending on classroom interaction.

It is impossible to be an expert on India through one course. However, this course will enable students to look at India and understand its dynamics.

Learning Objectives

In this course, students will be expected to:

- Acquire working level knowledge about India in terms of her economy, politico-legal structure, her modern history and her future prospects
- Be sensitized about India's nuances in terms of religion, gender, caste and its impacts upon her social, political and economic aspects
- Achieve an understanding of where India stands today in relation to her peers in Asia and across the world in terms of geopolitical relationships, and the reasons for the same
- Know more about India's ecology, and the impact of climate change to this country in the coming years
- Gain an understanding of the potential causes that make India's rise in the 21st century probable, as also an understanding of potential hindrances

Course Schedule

Session 01 and 02/24- 08 Sep 17 and 12 Sep 17

**Introduction to India's Diversity:
Geography – Location and
neighbors, Topography and
climate, Linguistic, and Regional
Diversity**

Session 03/24- 15 Sep 17

Introduction to Food

Session 04/24- 19 Sep 17

Introduction to Religion in India

Session 05/24- 22 Sep 17

Entrepreneurship in Emergent India

Session 06/24- 29 Sep 17

Decoding Indian Elections

Session 07/24- 03 Oct 17

Birth of the Indian Nation: The Indian Nationalist Movement and its Impact in Shaping India

Readings:

- Ramchandra Guha; India after Gandhi, Chap. No. 2 and Chap. No. 6

Session 08/24-06 Oct 17

Discussion on newspaper readings

Session 09/24- 10 Oct 17

Pre- Liberalization India

Readings:

- Ramchandra Guha; India after Gandhi Chap. No. 29

Session 10/24- 13 Oct 17

A Break from the Past: The Emergence of the Great Indian Middle Class

Readings:

- Jagadish Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya; India's Tryst with Destiny- Myth 2.4 and Myth 2.5
- Jagadish Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya; India's Tryst with Destiny- Myth 3.1

Session 11/24- 27 Oct 17

Understanding Indian Politics

Readings:

- Ramchandra Guha; India after Gandhi Chpt 28 (Rulers)

Session 12/24- 03 Nov 17

Terrorism and India

Readings:

- <http://www.caravanmagazine.in/reportage/bloody-crossroads>

Session 13/24- 07 Nov 17

Gender in Indian Society

Session 14/24- 10 Nov 17

Introduction to LGBTQ issues in India

Session 15/24- 13 Nov 17

Representation of Indian diversity in films and literature

Session 16/24- 14 Nov 17 **Discussion on newspaper readings**

Session 17/24- 15 Nov 17 **Caste in Indian Society**

Session 18/24- 16 Nov 17 **The Indian Economy: A look at the Agrarian Economy, an Overview of Myriad Problems, Services and Predicting the Future**

Readings:

- Jagadish Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya; India's Tryst with Destiny – Chap. No.15
- Jagadish Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya; India's Tryst with Destiny – Chap. No. 8
- Jagadish Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya; India's Tryst with Destiny – Chap. No. 10
- Jagadish Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya; India's Tryst with Destiny – Concluding remarks

Session 19/24- 17 Nov 17 **India and Her Demographic Dividend**

Readings:

- <https://medium.com/matter-archive/what-started-the-biggest-population-boom-in-history-1909ce55ada2>

Session 20/24- 20 Nov 17 **India's Foreign Relations: SAARC, Asia and Beyond**

Session 21/24- 21 Nov 17 **India and International Geo-politics in the 21st Century**

Session 22/24- 28 Nov 17 **India and Climate Change: An Impossible conundrum?**

Session 23/24- 29 Nov 17 **Presentations**

Session 24/24- 30 Nov 17 **Presentations**

Course Textbook

A set of photocopy material will be provided as basic background reading for each topic at the beginning of the course.

"India after Gandhi" by Ramchandra Guha

Supplemental Course Materials

Understanding Contemporary India: Eds- Sumit Ganguly & Neil de Votta

India's Tryst with Destiny: Jagadish Bhagwati and Arvind Panagariya

Evaluation

Attendance & Class Participation	10%
Assignment 1 presentation on reading	10%
Assignment 2 Editorial	15 %
Presentation: India After Gandhi	25 %
Research Assignment	40 %

Assessment Criteria

Assignment 1

Write an essay describing the observed contrast between the urban and rural India (**Details of the assignment will be discussed in the class.**)

(Max Marks 15 Word Limit 750) Date of Submission: 03 Oct 2017

Assignment 2

Each student will have to write a guest editorial, suitable for publication in a mainstream Indian daily, on a topic of the student's choice. The topic must be about a feature relatable to contemporary India. The "editorial" must convey an in-depth understanding of the topic chosen, and must be at least somewhat prescriptive in nature. **(Max Marks 15 Word Limit 750) Assignment given on 13 Oct 17; Date of Submission: 01 Nov 17**

Research Assignment

Write a 1500 word essay explaining which topic you would wish to remove from the classes conducted as a part of Contemporary India, and which topic you would like to include in its place. Explain your choice of inclusion on the basis of its relevance to Contemporary India, and on the basis of your interest in the topic.

(Max Marks 50) Date of Submission: 28 Nov 17

Presentation

Prepare and deliver a presentation on the basis of your final research paper. The focus of the presentation should be on how the classes have helped in changing your view on Contemporary India, for better or for worse. The presentation should be reflective in nature.

(**Max Marks 25** – Analysis, contextualising and understanding: 15 marks; Response to questions: 5 marks; Presentation: 5 marks) **Date of presentation: 29 & 30 Nov 2017**

NOTE: All written assignments to be typed with 1.5 line spacing, Times New Roman 12 points and emailed to the teacher. Please avoid hard copies to save paper.

Grading

Alliance programs utilize the follow standard grading policy well accepted by most US institutions.

Excellent	A	93-100%	Good	B+	87-89%	Acceptable	C+	77-79%
	A-	90-92%		B	83-86%		C	73-76%
				B-	80-82%		C-	70-72%
						Unsatisfactory	D+	67-69%
							D	63-66%
							D-	60-62%
						Failing	F	<60%

Course Policies

Exams and Assignments

Students are required to take all regularly scheduled exams in courses for which they are registered, and to submit all assignments on time. Any compelling academic, personal, or medical reason that might justify a rescheduled exam or assignment must be brought up to the Resident Director, not program faculty. Failure to take scheduled exams or submit the requisite assignments for a course will adversely affect your grade as per the stated grading criteria for each course.

Classroom Conduct

Student punctuality is extremely important in China and India. Please do not be late for classes or other activities, as it is considered impolite to do so. It is improper to eat in class, to engage in other activities such as texting, or to slump or nap. Students are expected to be alert and engaged as a sign of respect for their professors.

Attendance

Everyone benefits by learning from each other; if students are not present, it affects everyone and negatively impacts the program. Attendance is required for all classes and mandatory field visits; attendance will be recorded. Students must notify their instructors and the Resident Director ahead of their absence from class or class-related activities. Class participation is expected and is a contributing factor to students' final course grades. Students' grades will be reduced one grade increment for more than two unexcused absences.

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