

COURSE SYLLABUS



CONTEMPORARY INDIA

Pune, India

US semester credit hours: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Course Code: SOCI360

Course Length: Semester

Delivery Method: Face to face

Language of Instruction: English

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.

COURSE DELIVERY

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.

COURSE SYLLABUS

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.

Students are expected to read or view assigned resources in advance and be prepared to actively discuss them in class. In most meetings, the instructor will overview the topic and then facilitate a group discussion, drawing out relevant themes, following up on specific lines of inquiry, and prompting students' thoughtful engagement with the topic.

Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions (based on experiential learning theory) and to make cognitive connections between this course and others in India whenever possible (based on the philosophy of integrative learning).

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course will:

Insert student learning objectives in bullet points

- 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
- Become familiar with resources available for further research on the topic of the course.
- Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in India.

COURSE OUTLINE

Session 01 and 02/24- Introduction to India's Diversity: Geography – Location and neighbors, Topography and climate, Linguistic, and Regional Diversity

Session 03/24- Introduction to Food

Session 04/24- Introduction to Religion in India

COURSE SYLLABUS

Session 05/24-

Entrepreneurship in Emergent India

Session 06/24-

Decoding Indian Elections

Session 07/24-

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
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Session 08/24-

Discussion on newspaper readings

Session 09/24-

Pre- Liberalization India

Readings:

- Ramchandra Guha; India after Gandhi Chap. No. 29
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Session 10/24-

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
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Session 11/24-

Understanding Indian Politics

Readings:

- Ramchandra Guha; India after Gandhi Chpt 28 (Rulers)
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Session 12/24-

Terrorism and India

Readings:

- <http://www.caravanmagazine.in/reportage/bloody-crossroads>
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Session 13/24-

Gender in Indian Society

Session 14/24-

Introduction to LGBTQ issues in India

Session 15/24-

Representation of Indian diversity in films and literature

Session 16/24-

Discussion on newspaper readings

Session 17/24-

Caste in Indian Society

Session 18/24-

The Indian Economy: A look at the Agrarian Economy, an Overview of Myriad Problems, Services and Predicting the Future

Readings:

COURSE SYLLABUS

- 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- India and Her Demographic Dividend

Readings:

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

Session 20/24-	India's Foreign Relations: SAARC, Asia and Beyond
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Session 21/24-	India and International Geo-politics in the 21 st Century
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Session 22/24- An Impossible conundrum?	India and Climate Change:
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Session 23/24-	Presentations
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Session 24/24-	Presentations
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RESOURCES

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 METHODS

The course instructor will provide specific requirements and grading rubrics for individual assignments for the course. Your final grade in the course will be comprised of the following course requirements:

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

COURSE SYLLABUS

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)

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**)

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)

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)

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

IFSA Pune 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%

Timely Submissions

COURSE SYLLABUS

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA resident director as well as your home institution.

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