

Unit Outline

HT355

Unit Name	History of Hinduism		
Unit weighting	Unit Credit Points: 3		
Pre-requisite or co-requisite	Nil		
Delivery mode	Face to face on site	Full time or part time	
Location	<i>Sheridan</i> 18/7 Aberdeen St, Piccadilly Square West, Perth WA 6000		
Student Workload	<p><i>Timetabled: 36 hours (3 hours per week over 12 teaching weeks)</i></p> <p><i>Personal Study: 114 hours (7 hours per week over 12 teaching weeks + 10 hours per week over 2 non-teaching weeks and 1 exam week)</i></p> <p><i>Total workload: 150 hours (10 hours per week over 15 weeks)</i></p> <p><i>Academic writing support available if needed.</i></p>		
Prescribed Textbook(s)	Course Reader (available on Canvas)		
Other resource requirements	Access to the Learning Management System Canvas canvas.sheridan.edu.au		
Work-integrated learning activity	Not applicable		
Timetabled day and time	Thursday 1.00 p.m.	Room	1 (Amber)
Unit Coordinator	Dr Jonathan James	Phone	6222-4222
Email	jjames@sheridan.edu.au		

Unit Description

Welcome to HT355 History of Hinduism.

This unit provides a general introduction to Hinduism both from an historical as well as a thematic perspective. It encourages students to understand Hinduism, both as theory and practice, and, as a social, cultural, and political reality.

The unit traces Hinduism from its Vedic origins to its contemporary forms practiced in India and abroad. We survey this multifaceted faith and identify its underpinnings such as “revealed” scriptures, epic and mythological narratives, legal commentaries, and devotional poetry.

The unit aims to enlighten students on the various aspects of this diverse religion, including theological concepts such as karma, rebirth, and the mystery of human life; the major divinities of the Hindu pantheon; the sectarian movements; ritual, legalistic and ascetic practices; and its social organisation based on caste and gender.

Students will have the opportunity to examine contemporary issues such as the political dimensions of Hinduism, Hindu televangelism and issues surrounding the Hindu diaspora.

HT355 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism.
- B. Identify the historical background and development of Hinduism.
- C. Understand the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions.
- D. Formulate your own critical evaluation of the relation between theory and practice in studying Hinduism using appropriate communication conventions and skills.

Sheridan Graduate Attributes

Sheridan graduates will be ...

1. Lovers of truth
2. Seekers of wisdom
3. Innovative thinkers
4. Effective communicators
5. Independent learners
6. Servant leaders

Assessment Schedule

Assessment Type	Value	Due Date	Learning Outcomes (LOs) Assessed	Graduate Attributes (GAs) Addressed
1. Presentations	20%	Weeks 4-6, & 8	A, B, D	1,2,3,4
2. Reflective Essay (2000 words)	40%	Week 9	A, B, C, D	1,2,4,5
3. Final Exam	40%	Week 15	A, B, C	1,4

NB: You must submit all assessments to satisfy the unit requirements.

1. Presentations

There will be four presentations from weeks 4-6 and week 8. These presentations are designed to assess both your scholarly interactions with the chosen topic and, where applicable, your ability to collaborate with fellow students to articulate the various historical and theological positions and concepts within the framework of Hinduism. Depending on the class size, the presentations will either be done individually or in small groups (of up to 3 students).

The topics for the four presentations are as follows:

- **Week 4** – Who is a Hindu and how does one become a Hindu? Answer, referring to the prescribed and primary sources.
- **Week 5** – In your view, how do Hindus come to terms with the “many gods, one god” practice within the framework of Hinduism. Answer, referring to the prescribed and primary sources.
- **Week 6** – What is the role of images and iconography in Hinduism? Answer, referring to the prescribed and primary sources.
- **Week 8** – “Hinduism has been challenged by the modern world, especially through the combined forces of colonialism, diaspora and globalisation”. Discuss this statement referring to the prescribed and primary sources.

If applicable, groups will be formed in the first week. Each group will have 2-3 students depending on the class size. The presentations will take 15 minutes (excluding question time from the class). All group members will receive the same grade based on the Presentation rubric.

Assessment Type	Presentations				
Criteria /Grade	High Distinction (80-100%)	Distinction (70-79%)	Credit (60-69%)	Pass (50-59%)	Fail (0-49%)
Demonstration of the knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Demonstrates pronounced knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Demonstrates good knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Has begun to demonstrate knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	No evidence of knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism
Identification of the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates pronounced ability to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates good ability to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates satisfactory ability to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Has begun to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Limited or no evidence of identifying the historical background and development of Hinduism
Formulation of a critical evaluation of the relation between theory and practice in Hinduism using appropriate communication conventions and skills	Formulates a pronounced critique of Hinduism and uses excellent communication skills	Formulates a good critique of Hinduism and uses good communication skills	Formulates a satisfactory critique of Hinduism with satisfactory communication skills	Formulates a minimal critique of Hinduism with minimal communication skills	Limited skills in critiquing and communication

2. Essay

In this unit you will be asked to view a lecture by a Hindu Guru (on YouTube) and write an essay (due Week 9) based on the research question: Is Hinduism a religion or a way of life?

The link to the video is provided: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VH3IhfJ-BC0>

Listen carefully to the Guru's discourse on Hinduism and critically evaluate what he says considering your understanding of Hinduism through the lectures and texts we have referred to (and if applicable, your personal experiences with the faith).

Your critical evaluation of the lecture will be composed as a well-researched and written essay of 2,000 words. You must include at least 3 primary sources. You are welcome to review any relevant books or journals in the optional or supplementary reading lists found in this unit outline. However, students are encouraged to locate and evaluate quality and relevant sources beyond the reading list presented in this unit outline.

Assessment Type	Essay				
Criteria /Grade	High Distinction (80-100%)	Distinction (70-79%)	Credit (60-69%)	Pass (50-59%)	Fail (0-49%)
Demonstration of the knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Demonstrates pronounced knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Demonstrates good knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Has begun to demonstrate knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	No evidence of knowledge of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism
Identification of the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates pronounced ability to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates good ability to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates satisfactory ability to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Has begun to identify the historical background and development of Hinduism	Limited or no evidence of identifying the historical background and development of Hinduism
Understanding of the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions.	Demonstrates pronounced ability in understanding the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions	Demonstrates a good ability in understanding the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions	Demonstrates a satisfactory ability in understanding the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions	Shows promise in understanding the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions	Limited or no evidence of understanding the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions
Formulation of a critical evaluation of the relation between theory and practice in Hinduism using appropriate communication conventions and skills	Formulates a pronounced critique of Hinduism and uses excellent communication skills	Formulates a good critique of Hinduism and uses good communication skills	Formulates a satisfactory critique of Hinduism with satisfactory communication skills	Formulates a minimal critique of Hinduism with minimal communication skills	Limited skills in critiquing and communication

3. Final Exam

The final exam will be closed book and based on the main themes discussed in lectures and learning forums. It is intended to test both your factual and analytic, historical knowledge of Hinduism.

The final exam will consist of a combination of short answer questions (all of which are compulsory) and a choice of essay topics from which you will choose one and complete an essay style answer. The essay questions will be of a broader nature in terms of the themes they will ask you to write about, thus requiring and testing your ability to be able to draw parallels and synthesise related, but different, historical themes. In this sense the exam is intended to be a chance for you to demonstrate both your recall (that is, to gauge if you have done your readings and attended classes) and your ability to display your analytic skills.

Assessment Type	Final Exam				
Criteria /Grade	High Distinction (80-100%)	Distinction (70-79%)	Credit (60-69%)	Pass (50-59%)	Fail (0-49%)
Thematic and Factual Recall of the key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism	Provides excellent evidence of thematic and factual recall of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism.	Provides good evidence of thematic and factual recall of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism.	Provides satisfactory evidence of thematic and factual recall of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism.	Has begun to provide evidence of thematic and factual recall of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism.	Does not provide evidence of thematic and factual recall of key terms, concepts, texts, and traditions of Hinduism.
Factual and thematic recall of the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates pronounced evidence of factual and thematic recall of the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates good evidence of factual and thematic recall of the historical background and development of Hinduism	Demonstrates satisfactory evidence of factual and thematic recall of the historical background and development of Hinduism	Has begun to demonstrate evidence of factual and thematic recall of the historical background and development of Hinduism	Limited or no evidence of factual and thematic recall of the historical background and development of Hinduism
Factual and thematic recall of the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions.	Demonstrates pronounced evidence of factual and thematic recall of the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions.	Demonstrates good evidence of factual and thematic recall of the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions.	Demonstrates satisfactory evidence of factual and thematic recall of the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions.	Has begun to demonstrate evidence of factual and thematic recall of the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions	Limited or no evidence of factual and thematic recall of the diversity of Hindu religious cultures and traditions

Learning Resources

Prescribed Textbook(s)

Course Reader (available on Canvas contains extracts from the following books):

Flood, G. (1996). *An Introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge University Press.

Flood, G. (2022). *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*. Blackwell Publishing.

James, J. D. (2010). *McDonaldisation, Masala McGospel and Om Economics: Televangelism in contemporary India*. Sage Publications.

James, J. D. (2017). *Transnational religious movements: Faith's flows*. Sage Publications.

Shukla-Bhatt, N. (2023). *Hinduism: the basics*. Routledge.

Recommended Supplementary Reading

Primary Sources

In addition to the course reader, students will find the following books of value:

Dutt, C. R. (1899). *The Ramayana: Condensed translation*. Bombay: Jaico Publishing.

<https://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/dutt/duttintr.htm>

Fowler, J. D. (1997). *Hinduism: Beliefs and practices*. Sussex Academic Press.

Klostermaier, K. K. (2007). *A survey of Hinduism* (3rd ed.). State University of NY Press.

Mitchell, S. (Trans.) (2000). *Bhagavad Gita: A new translation*. Three Rivers Press.

Sharma, A. (Ed.) (2003). *The study of Hinduism*. University of South Carolina Press.

Subramuniaswami, S. S. (2002). *How to become a Hindu: A guide for seekers and born Hindus*. Himalayan Academy.

Sweetman, W. (2017). *Hinduism: An introduction*. I. B. Tauris.

Zavos, J, Kanungo, P, Reddy, D.S., Warriar, M., & Williams, R. (2012). *Public Hinduisms*. Sage Publications.

Secondary Sources

Chetterjee, G. (2001). *Sacred Hindu symbols*. Abhinav Publications.

Doniger, W. (Trans.), & Smith B.K. (1991). *The laws of Manu*. Penguin Books.

Embree, A. T. (1988). *Sources of Indian tradition*. Volume 1: *From the beginning to 1800* (2nd ed.). Columbia University Press.

Herman, A. L. (1991). *A brief introduction to Hinduism: Religion, philosophy, and ways of liberation*. Westview.

- Hopkins, T. J. (1971). *The Hindu religious tradition*. Dickenson.
- Jaffrelot, C. (2007). *Hindu Nationalism: A reader*. Princeton University Press.
- Kinsley, D. R. (1993). *Hinduism: A cultural perspective* (2nd ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Kurien, P. (2007). *A place at the multicultural table: The development of American Hinduism*. Rutgers University Press.
- Lipner, J. (1998). *Hindus: Their religious beliefs and practices*. Routledge.
- Nanda, M. (2009). *The God market: How globalization is making India more Hindu*. Monthly Review Press.
- Oddie, G. A. (2006). *Imagined Hinduism: British missionary constructions of Hinduism, 1793–1900*. Sage Publications.
- Pennington, B. K. (2005). *Was Hinduism invented? Britons, Indians, and colonial construction*. Oxford University Press.
- Srinivas, M. N. (1952). *Religion and society among the Coorgs of South India*. Oxford University Press.
- Whaley, F. (2006). *Understanding Hinduism*. Academic Press.

Academic Journals

You may find relevant articles in the following journals:

- *Hinduism Today*
- *International Journal for the Study of Hinduism*
- *International Journal of Hindu Studies*
- *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies*
- *Journal of Hindu Studies*

Other Sources

Jiva Institute of Vaishnava Studies:

<http://www.jiva.org/hindu-studies-program-at-rudgers-university/>

The American Institute of Vedic Studies:

<https://vedanet.com/bookspubs/hinduism-the-eternal-tradition-sanatana-dharma/>

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies:

<http://www.ochs.org.uk/>

Weekly Schedule of Topics

HT355 History Hinduism

Prescribed text: *Course Reader* (available on Canvas).

WEEK	TOPICS	PRESCRIBED READINGS	ASSESSMENTS
1	<p>Introduction The Origins of Hinduism and its comparative definitions. Epistemology for studying Hinduism</p>	Flood, 1996, Introduction, pp. 1-21.	
2	<p>The Vedic age. The nature of the Vedas as sacred texts, their four major divisions, and their significance within Hinduism</p>	Flood, 1996, pp. 21-50.	
3	<p>The Epic age The origins of the epics, their nature, and the reasons for their popularity</p>	<p>Flood, 1996, pp. 103-109. Shukla-Bhatt, 2023, pp. 49-53.</p> <p>Basham A.L. The Mahabharata and the Ramayana. UNESDOC Library (click link): https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000032971</p>	
4	<p>The Medieval age Saiva, Vaisnava & bhakti movements</p>	Flood, 1996, pp. 128-147.	First Presentation
5	<p>The Modern age The religious, social, and political background of the nineteenth and twentieth century reformers</p>	Shukla-Bhatt, 2023, pp. 141-160.	Second Presentation
6	<p>Hindu Darshanas Hindu philosophical ideas and the spiritual significance of Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta</p>	Flood, 1996, pp. 224-249.	Third Presentation
7	Mid-semester Study Week		
8	<p>Non-Vedic systems (Jainism, Buddhism) A Study of religions in relation to Hinduism, their origins and major points of differences and similarities with orthodox Hinduism</p>	<p>University of Calicut (click link): http://14.139.185.6/website/SDE/ex4462.pdf</p>	Fourth Presentation

9	Hindu Devotion and Worship A study of the main forms, images and attributes of various deities, their symbolism and significance in the spiritual life of Hindus	Hindu Worship website (click link): https://factsanddetails.com/world/cat55/sub388/item1350.html	Essay Due
10	Hindu Ethics A study of the four varnas, the four ashramas, the purushartas, karma and rebirth	Shukla-Bhatt, 2023, pp. 86-104.	
11	Conversion and Sects Ethical Conversion / Hinduism in the West and Sects within Hinduism	James, 2017, pp. 37-58.	
12	Contemporary Hinduism Transnational Hinduism / Hindu Televangelism / The politics of Hinduism	James, 2010, pp. 115-132.	
13	Review		
14	Exam Study Week		
15	Exam week		Final Exam