The purpose of this course: The religions of India have been a subject of western fascination, interpretation, and misinterpretation for over two millennia. In this course, we will survey the major indigenous religions of India, together with Indian transformations of Islam via recent and accurate primary translations of Indian religious texts, as well as interpretive secondary works written by contemporary western and Indian scholars. The course will have a dual focus: the ancient and medieval history of these religions, and modern-day South Asian religious practice.

In addition to surveying these five religious traditions, we will also attempt to make both historical and thematic connections between them. On the historical level, we must bear in mind that all of these traditions (including, to an important extent, Islam in India) arose out of a preexisting Indian matrix, and have never ceased to reflect their common Indian heritage, in spite of their doctrinal specificities. It is for this reason that one third of the course will be devoted to the earliest Indian religion, i.e., Hinduism: this will serve to ground our understanding of the four other traditions under study. On the thematic level, we will seek to critically compare and contrast a number of elements common to these traditions: care for the dead, religion and society, religious biography of founders, popular religious practice, holy men and their cults, and mystic traditions.

Structure of the course: The class will meet two times each week, and will consist of lectures, often complemented by visual imagery, on the topics of the readings for a given meeting. Generally speaking, the lectures will provide historical and theoretical background for the specific readings on any given day. In addition to taking midterm and final examinations, students will also write two five-page papers on common thematic elements mentioned above. These will be critical cross-traditional evaluations of two of the following: 1) beliefs and practices relating to death and afterlife; 2) popular religious belief and practice; 3) biography of religious founders; 4) holy men and religious specialists. These papers will be due on May 11 and June 3.

Grades: Final grades will be calculated as follows: two short papers, total 30%; midterm exam (May 4) 30%; final exam (June 7) 40%.

Books for purchase at UCSB Bookstore:

Stephen Huyler, Meeting God: Elements of Hindu Devotionalism
Don Lopez, ed., Religions of India in Practice [RIP]
Kevin Trainor, ed., Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide
Excerpted articles and chapters, available at Alternative Copy Shop, 6556 Pardall Rd.:

Lawrence A. Babb, *Absent Lord: Ascetics and Kings in Jain Ritual Culture*  
A. L. Basham, *Origins and Development of Classical Hinduism*  
Robert DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha: Indian Popular Religions and the Foundation of Buddhism*  
John E. Cort, *Jains in the World*  
Richard Eaton, "Court of Man, Court of God: Local Perceptions of the Shrine of Baba Farid, Pakpattan, Punjab"  
Phyllis Granoff, "From Detachment to Engagement: The Construction of the Holy Man in Medieval Svetambara Jain Literature"  
John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India*  
John Holt, "Assisting the Dead by Venerating the Living"  
Padmanabh Jaini, *The Jaina Path of Purification*  
Stephanie Jamison, *The Ravenous Hyenas and the Wounded Sun*  
David M. Knipe, "Sapindikarana: The Hindu Rite of Entry into Heaven"  
Todd Lewis, "The Story of Simhala," in Donald Lopez, ed., *Buddhism in Practice* [BP]  
Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition*  
Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Hindu Myths* [HM]  
Steven W. Ramey, *Hindu, Sufi or Sikh: Contested Practices and Identifications of Sindhi Hindus in India and Beyond*  
John Renard, *Seven Doors of Islam*  
James Robinson, *Buddha's Lions: The Lives of the Eighty-four Siddhas*  
David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis*  
Kristi Wiley, *Encyclopedia of Jainism*

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<td>March 30</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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| April 1    | Vedic Religion | Davis, "Brief History," in RIP, pp. 5-12  
Jamison, *Ravenous*, pp. 16-32  
O'Flaherty, HM, pp. 70-77; 97-99  
O'Flaherty, RV, pp. 29-32; 128-31; 148-58 |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Authors/Works</th>
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| April 6 | Care for the Dead in Hinduism               | Babb, *Divine Hierarchy*, pp. 90-98  
O'Flaherty, *RV*, pp. 41-51 |
| April 8 | Karma and Renunciation                      | Davis, "Brief History," in *RIP*, 12-16  
Huyler, *Meeting*, pp. 234-50  
Olivelle, "Ascetic Withdrawal," in *RIP*, pp. 533-46 |
| April 13 | Hindu Devotionalism                         | Basham, *Origins*, pp. 82-97  
Davis, "Brief History," in *RIP*, pp. 24-31; 38-41  
Huyler, *Meeting*, pp. 33-39; 44-63 |
| April 15 | Popular Hinduism                            | Huyler, *Meeting*, pp. 64-154 |
| April 20 | Hindu Yogis                                 | White, *Sinister Yogis*, 23-37  
White, "Mastnath," in *RIP*, pp. 399-411 |
| April 22 | The Life of the Buddha                      | Trainor, *Buddhism*, pp. 22-45 |
| April 27 | What the Buddha Taught                      | Trainor, *Buddhism*, pp. 58-61, 64-83; 186-93 |
| April 29 | Buddhist Care for the Dead                  | Holt, "Assisting the Dead," pp. 1-29  
Trainor, *Buddhism*, pp. 62-63; 96-99; 104-05; 110-11 |
| May 4   | MIDTERM EXAMINATION                         |                                                                                                         |
| May 6   | The Bodhisattva Ideal                       | DeCaroli, *Haunting*, pp. 173-81  
Trainor, *Buddhism*, pp. 54-55; 86-93; 132-49; 196-207 |
| May 11  | Mahasiddhas and Buddhist Tantra             | Robinson, *Buddha’s Lions*, pp. 27-32  
Lewis, "Power," in *RIP*, pp. 227-34  
Trainor, *Buddhism*, pp. 162-73; 208-11 |
### JAINISM

**May 13**  
Mahavira: Origins of Jainism  
Jaini, *Jaina Path*, pp. 6-29  

**May 18**  
Jain Worship  
Cort, *Jains in the World*, pp. 61-80  
Cort, “Tantra in Jainism,” pp. 115-33

**May 20**  
Jain Holy Men  
Babb, *Absent Lord*, pp. 102-19  
Granoff, “Detachment,” pp. 97-121  
Granoff, "Jain," in *RIP*, pp. 412-17

### SIKHISM

**May 25**  
Guru Nanak: Origins of Sikhism  
Hawley, "Nanak," in *Songs*, pp. 63-88  
McLeod, "Life," in *RIP*, pp. 449-61

**May 27**  
Popular Sikhism  
Oberoi, *Construction*, pp. 147-69  
Ramey, *Hindu, Sufi, Sikh*, pp. 1-7

### ISLAM IN SOUTH ASIA

**June 1**  
The Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Doctrine  
Davis, "Brief History," in *RIP*, 31-37  
Renard, *Seven Doors*, pp. 1-13; 35-63

**June 3**  
Muslim Holy Men  
Eaton, "Court of Man," pp. 44-61  
Stewart, "Satya Pir", in *RIP*, pp. 578-97

[second paper due]

**Monday June 7, 12:00 – 3:00 PM**  
**FINAL EXAMINATION**