Organization of the Seminar and Course Requirements:

Students must attend all class meetings. Meetings will be divided into two parts: 1) discussions of the readings (about 1.5 hours); and 2) a one-hour lecture by Professor White.

Beginning January 20, seminar discussions will be led by students, in groups of two. The students who are presenting will precirculate, via email and no later than the Sunday before class, questions and points for discussion based on the readings.

The writing assignment for the seminar will be a term paper of twenty-five pages in length, due on March 30. All papers turned in after March 30 will be graded substantially lower than papers submitted on or before the due date. Students submitting papers later than May 31 will receive a failing grade for the course.

Term papers must combine an interpretation of some portion or theme of the Mahābhārata itself with sources outside the epic text itself (Buddhist or Jain scriptures, pre- or post-epic Hindu scriptures, Indo-European mythology, non-scriptural South Asian texts, religious art and iconography, inscriptions, numismatics, archaeology, non-Indian texts, etc.).

Students are encouraged to consult with Professor White as early in the quarter as possible concerning their term paper topics.

Books for purchase at the UCSB Bookstore:

___________, The Mahābhārata, vol. 2 (The Book of the Assembly Hall; The Book of the Forest)
___________, The Mahābhārata, vol. 3 (The Book of Virāṭa; The Book of Effort)
Georges Dumézil, The Destiny of a King
Alf Hiltebeitel, The Ritual of Battle
W. J. Johnson, The Sauptikaparvan of the Mahābhārata
C. V. Narasimhan, The Mahābhārata
Jaan Puhvel, Comparative Mythology

Books and Articles on two-hour reserve in Davidson Library:

Thomas B. Coburn, Devī Māhātmya, The Crystallization of the Goddess Tradition
Georges Dumézil, The Stakes of the Warrior
Jan Heestermann, The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration
E. Washburn Hopkins, Epic Mythology
Charlotte Vaudeville, Myths, Saints and Legends in Medieval India
David Gordon White, Kiss of the Yogini
Chapters and Excerpts available through eRes: (password: ancient):
http://eres.library.ucsb.edu/eres/default.aspx

Johannes Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha. Studies in the Culture of Early India (Leiden: Brill, 2007)
André Couture and Charlotte Schmid, "The Harivamśa, the Goddess Ekānaṃśā, and the Iconography of the Vṛṣṇi Triads," JAOS 121:2 (April-June 2001)
V. S. Sukthankar, "Prolegomenon," The Mahābhārata, Ādi Parvan
J. N. Tiwari, Goddess Cults in Ancient India (With Special Reference to the First Seven Centuries A.D.)(Delhi: Sundeep, 1985)
David Gordon White, Myths of the Dog-Man (University of Chicago Press, 1991)

Readings available on-line through JSTOR:

André Couture, “From Viśṇu’s Deeds to Viśṇu’s Play: or Observations on the word Avatāra as a Designation for the Manifestations of Viśṇu,” Journal of Indian Philosophy 29 (2001): 313-326

Readings Available through e-mail from Professor White

“Durga-Stava [D] The Vulgate Version” (appendix to the Virāṭa Parvan)
David Gordon White, Sinister Yogis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009)

Themes of Class Meetings with Required Readings

Jan. 6  Plot of the Mahābhārata

Narasimhan, Mahābhārata (all)
Bhagavad Gita, chap. 9 (any edition)
Van Buitenen, Mahābhārata, vol. 1: 1-16; 31-44; 155-71; 398-431
Van Buitenen, Mahābhārata, vol. 2: 319-64
Van Buitenen, Mahābhārata, vol. 3: 25-44; 96-97

Jan. 13  The Mahābhārata: Text and Context

Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, pp. 79-85; 94-111
Fitzgerald, Mahābhārata, vol. 7, pp. 100-142
Fitzgerald, “Many Voices,” pp. 803-5; 807-15
Hiltebeitel, Rethinking the Mahābhārata, pp. 1-31
Malinar, Bhagavadgītā, pp. 144-56
Sax, "Who’s Who in the Pāṇḍav Lilā?" pp. 131-55
Sukthankar, "Prolegomenon," The Mahābhārata, Adi Parvan, pp. i-ix; xxx-xxxiii; lxv; lxxvi-lxxxi; lxxxvi-lxxxviii; cii-civ
Van Buitenen, Mahābhārata, vol. 1, introduction, pp. xiii-xliv; vol. 3, pp. 142-59

Jan. 20  Transpositions of Vedic Myth into Epic Narrative

O’Flaherty, Hindu Myths, pp. 126-37
Parpola, “Pre-proto-Iranians,” pp. 260-71
Puhvel, Comparative Mythology, 45-89
Van Buitenen, Mahābhārata, vol. 1: 71-91; 132-38; 151-54; 213-70; 314-19; 370-75
Van Buitenen Mahābhārata, vol. 2: 195-97; 248-51; 417-21; 456-62; 779-95
Van Buitenen Mahābhārata, vol. 3: 159-66; 200-18
Jan. 27 Indo-European Themes in the Mahābhārata, 1

Dumézil, *Stakes of the Warrior* (all)
Hiltebeitel, *Ritual of Battle*, 229-43
Puhvel, *Comparative Mythology*, 241-55; 277-83
Van Buitenen, *Mahābhārata*, vol. 1: 319-20; 338-42; 344-70
Van Buitenen, *Mahābhārata*, vol. 2: 14-18; 22-26; 54-75; 96-106

Feb. 3 Indo-European Themes in the Mahābhārata, 2

Dumézil, *Destiny of a King* (all)
Hiltebeitel, *Ritual of Battle*, 143-228
Lyle, “Dumézil’s Three Functions”
Puhvel, *Comparative Mythology*, 256-68
Van Buitenen, *Mahābhārata*, vol. 1: 130-32; 171-210

Feb. 10 Mahābhārata as Narrativized Ritual

Heestermann, *Royal Consecration*, pp. 91-139; 158-61
Hiltebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahābhārata*, pp. 92-104; 118-30; 154-61
Johnson, *Sauptikaparvan*, pp. xxxv-xli; 5-10; 34-53
Minkowski, "Janamejaya's Sattra and Ritu
al Sacrifice"
____________, “The Interrupted Sacrifice and the Sanskrit Epics”
Puhvel, *Comparative Mythology*, 269-76
Van Buitenen, *Mahābhārata*, vol. 1: 44; 57-59; 113-14;
Van Buitenen, *Mahābhārata*, vol. 3: 446-48
White, *Myths of the Dog-Man*, pp. 91-100

Feb. 17 Sabha Parvan: the Game of Dice

Heesterman, *Royal Consecration*, pp. 140-157
Hiltebeitel, *Cult of Draupadi*, pp. 224-38
Hiltebeitel, *Ritual of Battle*, 86-101
Van Buitenen, "On the Structure of the Sabhā Parvan," pp. 68-84
Van Buitenen, *Mahābhārata*, vol. 2:122-69; 330-32; 353-54
White, "Dogs Die," pp. 283-303
Feb. 24  Epic Polytheism

Couture, “From Viṣṇu’s Deeds to Viṣṇu’s Play,” pp. 313-26
Hiltebeitel, Ritual of Battle, pp. 312-25
Hopkins, Epic Mythology, pp. 3-29
Johnson, Sauptikaparvan, pp. 25-33; 81-86
Van Buitenen Mahābhārata, vol. 2, pp. 372-403
Van Buitenen Mahābhārata, vol. 3: 336-38; 523-28
Vaudeville, Myths, Saints, and Legends, pp. 17-46; 140-57

March 3 Emergence of Goddess Cults

Coburn, Devi Māhātmya, pp. 98-121; 151-53; 223-30; 267-89
Couture and Schmid, "Viṣṇi Triads," pp. 173-92
“Durga-Stava”
Parpola, “Pre-proto-Iranians,” pp. 271-87
Parpola, “Vāc as Goddess,” pp. 101-43
Tiwari, Goddess Cults, pp. 28-54; 116-28
Van Buitenen, Mahābhārata, vol. 2: 646-64
White, Kiss of the Yogini, pp. 35-66; 188-95

March 10 Yoga in the Mahābhārata

Hopkins, “Yoga-technique,” pp. 333-79
Van Buitenen, Mahābhārata, vol. 3: 182-84; 285-94
White, Sinister Yogis, pp. 38-82; 135-61; 167-97