

**HIS 364 G/ ANS 361/WGS 340: Gender in Modern India**  
**(Unique Numbers # 39110/# 32225/ # 45600 respectively)**

**Instructor: Indrani Chatterjee**

**Class Times: Mon, Wed, 4 pm-5.30 pm**

**Classroom: GAR 1.126**

**Instructor's Office: GAR 3.412**

**Instructor's Office Hours: Wed. 1.10-2-30 pm/ appointment**

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**Description:** This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect to stretch your mental horizons to comprehend the coherence of practices, beliefs, and histories of non-US groups. This is a challenge that needs to be met by each individual before they can become global citizens. Only by learning about others can we better learn to reflect on our own cultures and enhance our skills of critical thinking. (For definitions of 'Critical Thinking' and related tips, see FAQs at the end of this syllabus)

This is a two-part course. In PART I, students will read about the genesis of South Asian ideas of gender by reading poetry, watching clips from films and listening to music that will help them understand the broader social and political structures in which men and women interacted with each other between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries. They will be expected to develop a basic understanding of the shifts that occurred in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, studied in PART II. In the latter segment, students will evaluate how and whether these contradictory developments empowered women from an emergent colonial middle class as they struggled to overthrow colonialism and establish independent nation-states. This segment also includes group activities by students which will require self-and-peer grading as well.

**Grading: LETTER GRADES OF A, B, C, D, F will be given in this course in the following fashion: total of 90-100= A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; Under 50 a Fail or F.**

**Grades for the semester are calculated on the basis of Attendance (20), Class Discussion and Preparedness (30), 2 essays for 30 marks each (50).**

**REQUIREMENTS:**

**Attendance (20): Students will be allowed no more than one professionally undocumented absence.** 'Professional' documentation refers to letters/notices from state/federal/municipal and/or duly certified medical, police, judicial authority, company-recruiters conducting business interviews on campus, directors of laboratories, organisers of job-interviews and of companies conducting placement tests. Without these, absences will adversely affect the final grade.

**Punctuality:** It is **important for each student to be present punctually at the start of class and to stay till the end,** unless you have taken prior permission from the instructor to arrive late or depart early. Such permission should not be sought on a regular basis, but for unavoidable situations and emergencies.

**Attendance is mental as well as physical:** putting your body in a classroom and tuning your mind out on to facebook/twitter/ apps is **unprofessional conduct.** It will be penalized accordingly. **Everybody is required to develop and demonstrate listening skills.** **DO- look at the speaker, take notes, mention an idea that seems to interest you afterwards, ask thoughtful questions if you need clarifications or further development. DON'T – look bored or indifferent, look at your watch/phone/computer screens, yawn, fall asleep, read other course-related books and papers or play games.**

All students have the right to learn in a supportive environment. All mobile messaging devices (phones, etc) must be turned off and stored away during class. If this includes your phone or laptop, the instructor retains the right to ask students to shut off such a device. **All disruptive or inconsiderate behaviors are deemed unprofessional conduct for the purpose of the class. These will affect your grade adversely.**

**2) Reading-Discussion (30) and Writing (50):** Most readings for this course will be available on Canvas or online at University of Austin Library. Those that need to be bought or rented are the following:

- 1) Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Modern India* (Cambridge University Press, 1999, paperback). ISBN-10: 0521653770, ISBN-13: 978-1571310484
- 2) Thomas and Barbara Metcalf, *A Concise History of India* (Cambridge University Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition only, 2012 paperback), ISBN-13 978-1-107-67218-5
- 3) Bapsi Sidhwa, *Ice Candy Man*/( older title) *Cracking India* (new title, Penguin Books, 1989, 1991, 2006). ISBN-10: 1571310487 and ISBN-13:978-1571310484

FOR MAPS and illustrations, visit <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps> and <http://www.virginia.edu/soasia/resources.htm> and <http://dsal.uchicago.edu> <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/southasia/curl>

Students are expected to read the assigned texts **ahead of the class**, and be willing to discuss their responses to these texts in class, sometimes as individual written reflections and sometimes in group-based discussions and presentations (30 points). On the days when the instructor lectures, a student may ask a question or comment at the end of the class. On all other days, class is devoted to clarifying students' questions and comments on the readings.

**The assessment of oral discussion shifts in its emphasis from the beginning to the end of the semester.** **IN the beginning**, a student's ability to ask simple questions of why, when, what coherently will be sufficient. **By the end**, a student's ability to synthesize old and new readings, to remember the beginning and be able to refer to it in discussion will be more favorably assessed than simple why, how and what questions. There will also be forms for self-and peer-reviews given to each of the 6 groups that will be formed for the

conduct of Part II of the course. The instructor retains the final judgement on a student's progress from simple to complex comprehension, engagement with the materials and demonstrated ability to learn new arguments and modes of thinking.

**Please note that 1) all discussions of grades will only be done during office hours, within seven days of the receipt of the grade. Such discussions will not be conducted via email correspondence or on the telephone 2) that no person should expect to get a final grade if they have not completed all segments of the course.** 3) Those who have attendance deficits can hope to earn EXTRA CREDITS (2 marks per event) if they attend an event sponsored by the South Asia Institute at UT Austin, and present a page of reportage and analysis on it to the professor the very next class. Each student can turn in a maximum of 2 such reports for extra credit, for a maximum of 4 events. However, I strongly urge students to attend both classes and seminars to get the full credit.

**3) Special Accommodations:** Students who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities (SDD) Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY. I will only accept SSD certificates for the first four weeks at the **beginning** of the semester. I will not make any accommodations if students provide the letters after the mid-term point of the semester.

### **Schedule of Meetings and Readings:**

#### **PART I**

**Jan 23(Wed): Introductions. Instructor talks about the Syllabus and on the Map of South Asia/India** (Start learning the names of key Rivers, Oceans and mountains).

**Jan 28:** Instructor lectures on 'What is History?' When and why did History of women and gender become significant? What is particular to History of Women in South Asia as different from other women's histories? How does learning about those women help us to understand 'modernity'?

**Jan. 30: Modernity of Gender and Sexuality:** Textual Evidence: Students Read 1) *Kamasutra*, 94-130 and 131-160 (PDF on Canvas)

**Feb 4:** Read Ali, 'Censured Sexual Acts in Medieval India' - (PDF on Canvas). Write 2 questions directly related to the reading on a piece of paper with your name on top and bring it to class. Hand this paper to the instructor before the start of class.

**Feb 6:** Read Metcalf *Concise History of India*, pp 1-44: Instructor Lectures on the Coming of Arab, Turk, Mongol and Persian to the Subcontinent 10<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> century.

**February 11:** Read 1) Ranjeeta Dutta, 'The Guru's Household' (PDF on Canvas) and 2) Afshan Bokhari, 'Masculine Modes of Female Subjectivity' (PDF on Canvas). Write 5

lines connecting the two readings on a piece of paper with your name on top. Hand this paper to the instructor before the start of class.

Feb 13: Students Read Metcalf *Concise History of India* pp. 44- 81

Feb 18: Read Sharmila Rege 'Hegemonic Appropriation of Sexuality' (PDF on Canvas). Can you see the relationship between state-authority and the ways that intersectionality of caste, gender, marital status, class and religion could shore up different kinds of governments? Be prepared to discuss your views in class.

Feb 20: Students read Metcalfs pp. 81-91 AND Students Read Shweta S. Jha, 'Tawaif as Poet and Patron' (PDF on Canvas) and Indrani Chatterjee, 'Monastic Commerce' (PDF on Canvas)

Feb 25: Read Metcalfs *Concise History of India*, 92- 155 + Veena Poonacha, 'Redefining Gender Relationships' (PDF on Canvas). Write 5 sentences connecting one reading with the other with your name on top. Hand this paper to the Instructor before the start of class.

Feb 27: **Students read Tarabai Shinde** 'Comparison of women and men' (*Stripurush Tulana translated by Rosalind O'Hanlon*) for discussion in class. What issues of caste, gender and class norms does reading this tract raise for you? Be prepared to discuss in class.

March 4: Read Janaki Nair, 'Prohibited Marriage' (PDF on Canvas). Write 5 sentences connecting this reading with any previous reading that you have done in this course.

March 6: **Students will write an in-class essay (30 points) in a blue-book on the following question:** How do you situate *Stri Purush Tulana* (Comparison of Men and Women) in the larger context of 19<sup>th</sup> century cultural, legal and political changes that impacted different classes and castes in the Indian subcontinent? **Bring a Blue Book to class.**

March 8: ARUNDHATI KATJU Speaks on the Indian Supreme Court and decision on Sec 377. EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYBODY.

PART II: Students Teach

March 11 Group 1: Students Teach Metcalfs pp 155-202

March 13: Group 2: Students Teach Geraldine Forbes, pp. 76- 156

March 25: Discussion combining both.

March 27: Group 3: Students Teach Metcalfs pp 203-230

April 1: Group 4: Students Teach Forbes 157-188 linking with Metcalfs

April 3: Group 5 teaches Bapsi Sidhwa, Ice-Candy Man/ Cracking India

April 8-10: Students watch film 'Earth' in class with an eye to identifying key differences of interpretation between the novel and the film in discussion.

April 15: Group 6: Students teach Kamla Bhasin and Ritu Menon 'Borders and Boundaries' (PDF on canvas) in class and tie it to their earlier readings

April 17: Read Vazira Zamindar *The Long Partition* (PDF on canvas)

April 22: Watch **Khamosh Pani** in class

April 24: Discussion on the many after-lives of Partition

April 29: Read Yasmin Saikia (PDF on canvas)

May 1: Read 'Women and the Rise of the Hindu Right' (PDF on Canvas)

May 6: Review of Class and Discussion of Finals

May 8: Write an essay in class assessing the long-lasting effects of colonialism and nationalism for different groups of women in the subcontinent (30) **Bring your own Blue Books.**

## **FAQs**

### **1. What is critical thinking?**

The critical thinker does not simply accept what she/he reads or hears and does not simply make assertions, but bases arguments on evidence and sound reasoning. A way of practising critical thinking is to ask yourself questions as you listen, read and study: questions such as a) • What is really important here? b) How does this relate to what I know already? C) • Is this really true? Can I check its accuracy? (A statement can be clear but inaccurate, as in "Most Indians are less than 150cm in height.") Critical thinking includes such 'higher-order' thinking tasks as reasoning, problem-solving, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The skills or tasks involved in critical thinking will vary, but may include a) Developing a logical argument; b) Identifying the flaws or weaknesses in an argument; c) Making relevant connections or links across disciplines, or from theory to practice; d) Analyzing the material in a range of sources and synthesizing it;

A critical thinker does not simply observe others thinking, but also her/himself thinking and writing. No matter how brief your response, ask yourself questions such as a) Could I have expressed this point in another (better) way? Have I elaborated sufficiently? b)

Could I have been more specific? c) How is this related to the topic? Is it really relevant to the question? How does this follow from what I said before? Does this contradict a previous statement? When we think, we bring a variety of thoughts together in some order. If the combination of these ideas is not mutually supportive, or does not make sense, then the combination is not logical. D) Have I addressed the complexities of the author/article's questions, or have I just skated over the surface? E) Are there issues I have omitted? Is there another way to look at this question? These questions apply sound intellectual standards to your thinking. It involves self-evaluation, thinking about your thinking, and being sure that you are not jumping to conclusions. You should be prepared to consider all aspects of an issue before making up your mind, and to avoid letting personal bias or prejudice interfere with your reasoning. Critical thinking is important for most academic tasks, including reading, tutorial discussions, written assignments and exam answers.

**2) How do I come up with a question on a reading?**

All historians are taught to ask ‘what’ ‘when’ ‘where’, ‘how’ – and especially ‘why’- questions. For those who have never taken a history class before, this is usually a good place to begin. Keep notes of everything you read. Once you have practiced asking such questions, the next set of bigger questions can follow, such as:

- What exactly is the **subject or topic** of the essay/article/book? (Try to summarize the piece in 2 short sentences)
- What is the **thesis—or main argument—of the article, essay or book?** (Having a summary of the article/book is a huge help at this stage) If the author wanted you to get one idea, what would it be? What has the article/book accomplished?
- Is the author **arguing with other scholars in a bigger field?** Does this change the field for you in some way? Does any of the author's information (or conclusions) conflict with other books you've read, courses you've taken or just previous assumptions you had of the subject?
- **How does the author support her/his argument?** What **evidence** does he/she use to prove her point? Do you find that evidence convincing? Why or why not? How does the author structure her/his argument? What are the parts that make up the whole? Does the argument make sense? Does it persuade you? Why or why not?
- Would you recommend the chapter to a friend who is not in this class?

When writing an essay, begin with a well-organised Introduction identifying the task before you. Have a Thesis Statement on the first page. Proceed to write out your observations according to the questions you have been raising while reading.

**3) Rubric that the Instructor Uses for assessing every student's essay.**

	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Not Great (C)	Needs Work (D)	Poor (F)
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Argument/ Thesis (5/5 is Excellent)	Strong thesis is clearly stated in first paragraph; argument is consistently supported	Thesis is not clear or difficult to locate, or inconsistently supported	Thesis poorly defined or vague and inconsistently supported	No thesis and/or inconsistent argumentation	No thesis and inconsistent argumentation
Understanding/ Content (5/5) is excellent	Informative and original analysis demonstrates high level of understanding of multiple sources	Demonstrates significant level of understanding with some analysis	Passive understanding with little analysis; mostly summarizes documents	Does not demonstrate clear understanding or knowledge of the material	Failure to address the sources or prompt
Use of Evidence (5/5)	Expert use of evidence: Sources are selected, introduced, contextualized, interpreted, and cited correctly.	Uses evidence well to support thesis: Sources are selected, introduced, contextualized, interpreted, and cited adequately.	Some use of evidence: Sources are used but not properly introduced, contextualized, interpreted or cited.	Poor or insufficient use of evidence: Sources are used inappropriately or without proper citation.	No use of evidence
Organization/ Style (2/2)	Sophisticated arrangement of content supports argument; writer's voice clear through illustrative use of language	Functional arrangement of content sustains a logical order; generic use of words and sentence structures	Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content; limited word choice and control of sentence structure	Confused arrangement of content obscures argument; problematic word choices; relies on quotations/ paraphrasing with not authorial voice	Minimal control of content arrangement; problematic word choices and sentence structures
Grammar/ Spelling and Usage (3/3)	Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.	Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.	Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation— begins to affect clarity	Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation— impedes clarity	Grammar and usage errors impede clarity

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