RLG 5937: Yoga and Meditation  
Professor Andrea Mantell Seidel  
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T/TH Tues 11-12:15; Thurs. 12:30-2:30  
Office Hours:  Tues: 10-11:00 or by appointment  
Office: Department of Religious Studies

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
The Art of Yoga and Meditation II: Philosophy and Practicum: Through a concentrated study of yoga asanas (postures), meditation techniques, pranayama (breath control) and philosophical and religious scriptures, students will engage in questioning, analysis, and application at a more advanced level. Studio and theory.

THEORETICAL TOPICS  
The Yoga Sutras (or thread) delineate yoga’s aim, the necessary practices, the obstacles along the path, their removal and the precise descriptions of the results that will be obtained from the practice. This is the primary text of Raja Yoga or the mental science of yoga.

The Bhagavad-Gita, meaning “Song of the Lord” is the sixth sacred text of the great Indian war epic, the Mahabharata. Composed in the form of a philosophical poem and dialogue between the warrior Arjuna and his charioteer, the god Krishna, the Bhagavad-Gita has inspired centuries of Indian philosophers and men of wisdom and deeply influenced the religious and cultural life of the Indian subcontinent.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/SELECTED READING ASSIGNMENTS  
Students are required to read the books listed below during the course of the semester. Readings should provide source material for writing the mid-term and final term paper.


Optional  

For Yoga Practicum (optional)

Comfortable clothes
Yoga mat (recommended) or cotton blanket
Towel, something to cover eyes for meditation

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:

Your final grade will be composed of your take-home exam grades, participatory in-class activities and journal, and the final research paper. Grades are based on attendance, written assignments, class participation, mid-term exam, and the term paper.

- 30% - Mid-term exam
- 40% - Term paper
- 30% - Attendance and active class participation (evaluation based on attendance record, punctuality, concentration, attitude/effect, progress, in-class assignments and focus questions). Students will be given weekly discussion assignments related to specific sutras to analyze, summarize and/or present orally for class discussion, or they will be asked to develop discussion questions for the graduate seminar.

EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

Attendance and punctuality in class are required. Tardiness is disruptive and will be noted, and regular, repeated tardiness will be counted towards a grade deduction. If you know you will be absent for any reason, please inform the professor before the class you will miss. Students who know in advance that they will be late or absent should discuss their tardiness or absence with Professor Seidel.

Three late arrivals, three early departures, and/or three observations will result in one absence. The attendance policy related to the graduate seminar is outlined below:

1 absences: 100% no effect on grade
2 absences: 90%
3 absences: 80%
4 absences: 70%
5 absences: 60%
6 absences: 75%
7 absences: 65%
8 absences: 55%

Students who register late will not be penalized during the drop-add period, however your late registration must appear on the official University role received each week by the faculty. Special arrangements can be made with the instructor in the event of illness, injury, or life commitments. If a sustained injury or illness prevents you from participating in class, a letter from your physician must be presented in order to be excused and observe. If unable to participate in class for two weeks or more, a meeting should be arranged with the instructor. An
incomplete is only given if circumstances beyond your control prevent you from completing course requirements. An incomplete must be completed within two terms.

EXAMS
The mid-term consists of a take-home essay topic based on class readings, as well as in-class instruction and any relevant independent readings. The mid-term exam question is outlined below so that you may focus your reading throughout the first half of term on these questions.

MID-TERM EXAM QUESTION
Discuss the yogic path to enlightenment and self-realization as related to the terms listed below through an analysis of the Yoga Sutras. Reference both Bryant and Feurstein texts. You need not incorporate supplemental texts but may do so if necessary for clarification. Include in your discussion, a comprehensive definition of all the terms, with references to specific sutras as relevant. Use standard reference citations. Please highlight in bold italics the terms in the sections where you incorporate your definitions (terms will be forthcoming at midterm).

TERM PAPER (proposal and final paper):
Term Paper Proposal: Topics must be determined through consultation with Professor Seidel. A two page proposal with preliminary bibliographies is due 4-5 weeks after the beginning of the term.
Term Paper: The term paper will entail analyzing and discussing a topic based on course material. Students should use as the basis of their paper a topic or theme from the Yoga Sutras. The length of the term paper should be about 15 pages. It should be printed and double-spaced. Margins should be one inch all around. The style of your paper should be consistent and conform to either that of The Chicago Manual of Style, or MLA style (see http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html and follow the link to the proper style). You may submit a hard copy or submit online. The term paper should follow the proposal submitted earlier in the semester with revised and complete bibliographies. The term paper is due on the first day of the last week of class. The term paper constitutes 40% of the course grade and should include additional reference sources in addition to the required class readings.

WRITTEN JOURNAL (optional for extra credit)
The journal provides an opportunity for cultivating self-discipline, self-reflexivity, and personal analysis of one’s progress in yoga. If you opt to do the journal for extra credit, you need to write a minimum of 1/2 page, 2 times per week for 12 weeks. The journal should focus on the assigned prompt to promote an analysis of the practice including areas of struggle, blocks that arise, and progress and breakthroughs made in both physical and mental aspects of the discipline. Please identify your entries as Week I: Journal Entry 1, 2; Week II, Entry 1, 2, etc. The professor’s intention in reading the journal is to provide guidelines and suggestions for enhancing and creating a more satisfactory practice. Journals are submitted online.

IMPORTANT GENERAL CLASS INFORMATION AND TIPS FOR SUCCESS
Late Work
All late work, without prior approval by the professor, will lose 10 points for each day that it is
late until the grade of 0 is reached. When the assignment is graded, the grading will start at the late grade.

**E-mail**
I check e-mail often. It is reasonable to expect a return message within 72 hours. Generally I return e-mail in a much shorter amount of time; however, sometimes life does not allow that. However, please review the syllabus often, as most of the answers can be found there. Questions and comments should be sent to seidela@fiu.edu.