

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Department of Religious Studies

Fall 2023

Course: **REL 3020 RVC 1238: Meditation & Spiritual Development**

Instructor: **Dr Samani Pratibha Pragya**

Co-Instructor: **Samani Punya Pragya**

Office: DM 320-C

Office Hours: MW 11am-12pm

or by appointment

Classroom: **Online**

Email: TBA

Required Class Materials

Comfortable clothes, Yoga mat (recommended), Towel, something to cover eyes for meditation. Optional: yoga blocks, yoga belts, water bottle, Textbooks

Academic Misconduct

"Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook."

Course Description

The twenty first century is the era of emergence of spirituality, Meditation & yoga. Students will explore the world of meditation and learn the scientific secrets of spirituality. The course is geared to acknowledging meditation and its historical background with an emphasis on Jain meditation and other traditions. The students shall also get an opportunity to learn the varied techniques of meditation & transformative practices. The course is theory & practice oriented, leaning towards better healthy living. It promotes individual health & wellbeing which encompasses the health & wellbeing of all living beings around us and the world.

Course Objectives

1. To impart knowledge about the basic technique and practice of meditation and yoga including instruction in breath control, various techniques of meditation, and physical postures
2. To develop physical competency and mental concentration
3. To gain an intellectual and theoretical understanding of the principles embodied in the Yoga Sutras, the Bhagavad-Gita, and other important texts and doctrines.
4. Through a concentrated study of yoga asanas, meditation techniques, pranayama (breath control) and their philosophical and scientific base, students will engage in questioning, analysis, and application.

Learning Outcomes/ Competencies

1. Philosophical and scientific understanding of the theory of meditation, yoga and basic related to Indian traditions will be developed.
2. Physical skill and conditioning including increased flexibility, strength, coordination, endurance, and breath control will be enhanced.
3. Powers of concentration, focus, and awareness will be heightened. 5. A humanistic, spiritual sensibility will be cultivated and enhanced.

Reading Material

- **“Preksha Meditation: Philosophy and Practice”** is the required text for this course. It covers the spiritual and scientific base of all different meditations and supportive components of Preksha Meditation.
- **“The Mirror of the Self”** is an authentic text to learn Indian Yoga special Jain Yoga in detail. It delineates yoga’s aim, the necessary practices, the obstacles along with the path, their removal and the precise descriptions of the results that will be obtained from the practice. Like the first book this is also the primary text of Preksha Meditation, Yoga and Therapy”.
- **“Handbook of Preksha Meditation for the Trainers”** is a booklet to know the method of instructions to practice different meditations.

All these books are available online. Apart from the above required books, articles from various sources, necessary videos, and links to concerned website will be made available online. The students are recommended to read the materials before coming to the class. Reading improves the class participation which will be graded.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

10 Meditation Assignments – 30%

Term paper – 20%

3 Discussions – 20%

Term Paper: Term paper has three options: one is based on interview of a meditational practicenor of any eastern western religions, second is based on the theoretical or comparative study of any meditational technique of two traditions eastern or western and third is based on experimental research on the effect of meditation from medical, social or spiritual point of view. The term paper will be a research analysis of the component undertaken. Three to five authentic sources should be used in the paper. Do not refer to wiki or any such unauthentic source. The detail about the options is as follows:

1. In the first option, Term paper can be developed based on some experimental study of the effect of meditation on physical, mental and emotional health or academic performance. In experimental study, one can also work on one of the Yoga-packages prescribed for physical, mental and emotional diseases. For the experimental study one can choose some school, company or hospital and give periodic guided meditation to the human subjects by following the scientific method of the study.
2. In the second option, students can focus on theoretical or comparative study of any one of the components of meditation. One can choose any one of the components of Preksha Meditation and can develop his/her research paper based on authentic sources including current scientific studies on the topic. The topic for the Term paper must receive the approval of the instructor before it is started. For that the students are supposed to submit a research proposal on one page giving outlines and sources of the research paper.
3. In the third option, one can interview any authentic person of any religious tradition about their meditational practices. Write the interview with added research, study & your analysis on the same subject.

Choosing any one of the above options, write a detailed research article in 750-1000 words with authentic references. The research paper must be minimum of 3-5 pages and not more than 5 pages in length, excluding the bibliography or works' cited page and the cover page. The paper must be formal and typed, not hand-written, in Times New Roman, font size 12 and double spaced. The margins should be 1-inch on all sides. APA, MLA, and Chicago Manual Style will be accepted. According to the style of choice, the student is advised to include footnotes or endnotes. A more thorough explanation of the term paper will be given during class.

Attendance/Participation Policy: Attendance and participation are very important to this course. Students are expected to participate in class discussions and meditations. Attendance will be taken, and I expect students to inform me of any prior commitments

or emergencies that prevent them from attending. Students may be absent up to three times. A fourth absence will result in a loss of 15% from their attendance grade. Grading scale:

95-100 A

90-94 A-

87-89 B+

83-86 B

80-82 B-

77-79 C+

73-76 C

70-72 C-

65-69 D+

60-64 D

59 – 0 F

PLAGIARISM POLICY

The following is the definition of plagiarism in the University’s **CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**:

Plagiarism: The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is guilty of plagiarism. Any student helping another to plagiarize may be found guilty of academic misconduct (<http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm>).

DAY	CLASS SCHEDULE
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Spirituality in Indian Perspective • Spirituality in Western Perspective <p>Discussion 1</p>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What and Why Meditation? • Intro to Preksha Meditation • What Mindfulness Is?

	Assignment #1
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leber Day Holiday • Pre-requisites of Meditation • Non-reaction and Moderate Speech
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mantra and Sound Therapy • Om Sound and Its Effect • Arham Sound and Its Effect
	Assignment #2
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food & Meditation • Moderate Food • Fasting and Other Diatry Practices
	Discussion 2
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asana: Physical Exercise and Meditation • Yogic Kriya: Physical Exercise for Small Parts of Body • Other Physical Exercise
	Assignment #3
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pranayama: Breathing Exercise • Various Types of Pranayama • Practice of Pranayama
	Assignment #4
	(Proposal of Term Paper Due)
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of Existence I • Levels of Existence II • Transformation of Consciousness
	Midterm Exam (it will cover matter of week 1-8)
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kayotsarga: Relaxation with Self-awareness • Spiritual Base of Relaxation/Kayotsarg • Scientific Base of Relaxation
	Assignment #5
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Base of Perception of Breathing/Shvas Preksha • Scientific Base of Perception of Breathing/Shvas Preksha
	Assignment #6

Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Base of Perception of Psychic Center/ Chaitanya Kendra/Chakra • Scientific Base of Perception of Psychic Center • Practical Session on Chakra Meditation <p>Assignment #7 Discussion 3</p>
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Base of Leshya Dhyana (Colour Meditation) • Scientific Base of Leshya Dhyana • Veteran's Day Holiday <p>Assignment #8 Discussion 3</p>
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Base of Anupreksha (Auto Suggestion & Contemplation) • Scientific Base of Anupreksha • Practical Session on Anupreksha of Health <p>Assignment #9</p>
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of Jain Meditation • Haribhadra's Work on Yoga (Reconciling Yogas by Christopher Key Chapple (p.18-38)) • Buddhist Meditation <p>Assignment #10 Term Paper Due</p>
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga • Hatha Yoga • Five Elements and Mudra (Postures) <p>Power-point Due</p>
Week 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Presentation • Class-Presentation
Week 17, Dec 10	<p>Final Exam</p>

[Syllabus is subject to change]