

**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

**Department of Religious Studies**

**Spring 2023**

Course: **REL 3020 RVC 1231: Meditation & Spiritual Development**

Instructor: **Prof. Samani Chaitanya Pragya**

Co-Instructor: **Dr Samani Him Pragya**

Office: DM 320-C

Office Hours: MWF 3-4pm

or by appointment

Class Hours: **Online**

Email: **Cpragiya@fiu.edu**

**Required Class Materials**

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

**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**

Twenty first century is the era of emergence of spirituality, Meditation & yoga. Students will explore the world of meditation and know the scientific secrets of spirituality. The course is geared to acknowledging the meditations 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. Students understanding of philosophy and science as well as daily life issues will be challenged and enhanced.
2. Philosophical and scientific understanding of the theory of meditation, yoga and basic related to Indian traditions will be developed.
3. Physical skill and conditioning including increased flexibility, strength, coordination, endurance, and breath control will be enhanced.
4. 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 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 on online. Apart from the above required books, the articles from various sources, necessary videos and links of 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**

**3 Exams** – 45 % (15% each)

**10 Practice of Meditations** – 20%

**Research Project/Term paper** – 25%

**PowerPoint-Presentation** – 10%

**Term Paper:** Term paper has two options: one is based on interview, other on theoretical or experimental research. The term paper will be a research analysis of the technique of meditation undertaken. Three to five authentic and academic sources should be used in the paper. Do not refer to wiki. One can use either Chicago, APA or MLA style for the citation. The length of the paper must be in 8-10 pages with single space, 12 font and in A 4 size. The detail about the options is as follows:

1. In the first option, one can interview any authentic person of any religious tradition about their Meditation practice. Write the interview with added research, study & your analysis on the same subject. More will be discussed in the class.

Or

2. In the second option, student is supposed to work on some research project. It can be theoretical or experimental. In theoretical research s/he can choose any one of the components of Preksha Meditation and can develop his/her research paper on the basis of authentic sources including current scientific studies on that component. In experimental research, s/he can work on one of the diseases or on the effect of some physical exercise, breathing exercise or meditational technique. For such research, s/he can choose some school, company or hospital and give meditation session to the subjects of the experimental group. The topic for the paper must receive the approval of the instructor before it is submitted. For that the students are supposed to submit a research proposal in one page giving outlines and sources of the research paper.

Choosing any of the above options write a detail research article with references. The research paper must be minimum of 8 pages and no more than 10 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>).

<b>DAY</b>	<b>CLASS SCHEDULE</b>
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Spirituality, Religion and Science</li> <li>• Who Am I?</li> </ul>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spirituality in Indian Perspective</li> <li>• Spirituality in Western Perspective</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Video</b></li> </ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Meditation</li> <li>• Why Meditate?</li> <li>• <b>Class Discussion</b></li> </ul>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is Preksha Meditation?</li> <li>• Pre-Requisites of Meditation</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Mindfulness</b></li> </ul>
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food &amp; Meditation</li> <li>• Physical Exercise/Asana</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Physical Exercise</b></li> </ul>
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breathing Exercise/Pranayama</li> <li>• Mantra: Healing through Sound</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session Mantra Meditation</b></li> </ul> <p><b>(Proposal of Term Paper Due)</b></p>
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Levels of Existence I</li> <li>• Levels of Existence II</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Four-step Meditation</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Exam #1</b></p>
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual Base of Relaxation/Kayotsarg</li> <li>• Scientific Base of Relaxation</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Relaxation</b></li> </ul>
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual Base of Perception of Breathing/Shvas Preksha</li> <li>• Scientific Base of Perception of Breathing/Shvas Preksha</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Perception of Breathing</b></li> </ul>
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual Base of Perception of Psychic Center/ Chaitanya Kendra/Chakra</li> <li>• Scientific Base of Perception of Psychic Center</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Chakra Meditation</b></li> </ul>
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual Base of Leshya Dhyana (Colour Meditation)</li> <li>• Scientific Base of Leshya Dhyana</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Colour Meditation</b></li> </ul>
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual Base of Anupreksha (Auto Suggestion &amp; Contemplation)</li> <li>• Scientific Base of Anupreksha</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session on Anupreksha</b></li> </ul>
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of Jain Meditation</li> <li>• Haribhadra's Work on Yoga (Reconciling Yogas by Cristopher Key Chapple (p.18-38))</li> <li>• <b>Practical Session Four Types of Dharanas</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Exam #2</b></p>
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddhist Meditation</li> <li>• Vipashyana Meditation</li> <li>• <b>Documentary Shadow</b></li> </ul> <p><b>(Term Paper Due)</b></p>
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga</li> <li>• Hatha Yoga</li> <li>• Five Elements and Mudra (Postures)</li> </ul> <p><b>(PowerPoint due)</b></p>
Week 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class Presentations</li> <li>• Continued</li> </ul> <p><b>Final Exam</b></p>

**[Syllabus is subject to change]**