

Traditional Indian Medicine: Theory and Context

ASIA 3010 (5 Credits / 75 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
India: Traditional Medicine and Healthcare Practices

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent term. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from term to term.

Course Description

The six-week seminar, *Traditional Indian Medicine: Theory and Context*, provides a framework for the investigation of several traditional health care systems by examining some of India's basic social, economic, cultural and legal paradigms. It considers India's rich and ancient philosophical traditions that include theories of health, healing, and medicine. These traditional health care systems are both widely practiced and receive government support today. The course introduces students to the origins of these wellness theories and systems, through lectures, readings, and field visits designed to facilitate direct observation. The primary focus is on the systems of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy in Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, and ethnic-traditional healing in the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. Several fundamental questions form the academic themes that run through the course:

- How are health and well being defined and situated within differing socio-cultural and religious worldviews?
- How does "science" fit into the frameworks for systems of traditional medicine in India?
- How do conceptions of health and healing reflect epistemological and psychological truths for communities or social groups?

With a population of over 1.2 billion, the modern nation of India contains a great diversity of indigenous, tribal, refugee, and ethnic minority groups who continue to follow systems of traditional healing. Students are asked to consider how uneven access to modern health care may affect the sustainability of some of these systems and how religious, cultural and social systems both support and resist the long-term viability of traditional healing systems. By considering issues of globalization, India's modern development agenda, and environmental changes, the course explores the pressures on traditional health systems as well as their resurgence and growth both in India and abroad.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the seminar, students will be able to:

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- Identify and understand India's major systems of traditional health and trace their historical and theoretical roots;
- Analyze the concept of "holistic health" and discuss its significance in diverse Indian/South Asian philosophical perspectives;
- Demonstrate how traditional health practices are both supportive of and alien to a modern allopathic health approach, with examples drawn from case studies observed in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand;
- Discuss the intersections of globalization a modern development agenda and environmental change with traditional health and medicine practices in northern India.

Course Requirements

The seminar engages students in a variety of learning activities including classroom lectures, facilitated discussions, analytical writing assignments, student oral presentations, and extensive excursions to sites of traditional medicine hospitals, colleges, and *ashrams* in north India.

Summer Schedule Overview

Week One: Arrival and Orientation in New Delhi

Lecture topics include: introduction to India; health care in India, introduction to traditional health; defining "holistic;" philosophy and well-being in the Indian context.

Weeks Two – Three: Nainital (Rural and Urban) Uttarakhand

A one-week homestay in rural Nainital in Uttarakhand forms a base for deeper learning about caste and the cultural dimensions of Himalayan society. Lecture topics include: their traditional practices; traditional medicine at a cross-roads; faith-healers; rethinking shamans as healers.

Weeks Four – Five: Rishikesh (Uttarakhand)

This excursion visits the Nature Cure and Yoga Center and the Ashram Hospitals. Lecture topics include: Yoga, Prayanama, Hath yoga and spiritual health practices.

Weeks Five – Six: Dharamsala and Palampur in Himachal Pradesh

The program continues in Himachal Pradesh with explorations of naturopathy and Ayurveda including their approaches to diet and lifestyle in healing and fostering health. Lecture topics may include: the nature of naturopathy; the theory of the three humors in Ayurveda; herbal medicine; revitalization; acupuncture; panch karma the uses of water therapy; physical and mental health.

Readings

Bhasin Veena. *Medical Anthropology: Healing Practices in Contemporary Sikkim*.

www.krepublishers.com/...Bhasin-Veena/Anth-SI-03-7-Bhasin-Veena.

Capila Anjali. *Traditional Health Practices of Kumaoni Women, Continuity and Changes*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 2004.

Indal Rakesh. *Philosophy of Nature Cure, Science of Natural Life*. Arogya Sewa Prakashan, Modi Nagar, UP, 2010.

National Policy on Indian Systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy-2002, AYUSH Section, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi.

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Palep H.S. "Chemistry of Life in Ayurveda," *Scientific Foundation of Ayurveda*. New Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, 2004.

Panda K Ashok, Misra Sangram. "Health Tradition of Sikkim Himalaya." *Journal of Ayurveda & Integrative Medicine*, Vol 1, Issues 3, July 2010.

Singh R.H. , Sharma P.V. *Panchakarma Sarira, Panchakarma Therapy*. New Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, 2010.

Singh R.H. *The Ancient Concept of Yoga, The Foundation of Contemporary Yoga & Yoga Therapy*. New Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, 2009.

Seminar Faculty, Advisors and Resource People

Academic Director: Dr. Azim Khan

Academic Coordinator: Abid Siraj

Faculty

Dr Ashutosh Guleri, Head of the Department, Ayurveda and Panch Karma, Kayakalp, Himalayan Research Institute for Yoga and Naturopathy, Palampur, Himachal Pradesh

Dr Malvika Badyal, Physician and Panch Karma Specialist, Kayakalp, Himalayan Research Institute for Yoga and Naturopathy, Palampur, Himachal Pradesh

Dr. Rajeev Prasad Bijalwan MD (Ayurveda) and MA in International Health Management and Development; Research Coordinator, Himalayan Institute of Medical Science, Uttarakhand

Mr Vivek Badoni, Yoga Teacher and Practitioner, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Dr Mohd Akram, Associate Professor, Hamdard Unani Medicine School, Hamdard University, New Delhi

Dr Sushil Sharma, CEO, AAROHI-Nainital, Uttarakhand

Mr Hariram Bisht, Traditional Healer, Bheemtal, Uttarakhand

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

With the exception of journals and field notebooks, all assignments should be typed and double-spaced. Spelling and grammar are part of grading criteria; careful proofreading and editing are essential parts of the writing process. Please note: *description is not analysis*. While there is a place for description of people, events or organizations in your assignments, be aware that extensive description is not a substitute for critical analysis based on independent thinking and understanding. The more your writing reflects synthesis of theory, observation and reflection, the more successful your work will be.

Assignments

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation and presentation of evidence.

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| Short Quizzes | 25% |
| Uttarakhand Research Paper - Written | 50% |
| Discussions and Participation | 25% |

Short Quizzes – 25%

Throughout the seminar, short quizzes consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions will be given, based on content from assigned readings, lectures, and field visits. Students are expected to be up-to-date with all assigned readings and to take notes during lectures and during visits to clinics, hospitals and other organizations. Short answers will be evaluated based on accuracy of information, evidence of reflection on relevant program themes as applied to the topic at hand, and clarity of presentation.

Uttarakhand Research Paper – 50%

The two-week Uttarakhand excursion forms the basis of this research paper. The topic of ethnic traditional healers in rural Uttarakhand allows students a window into the complexities of caste dynamics, gender roles, and faith-based healing. Students may focus on one type of healer such as:

- the Tantrik,
- the Ojha,
- the Shamana,
- the Priest.

Another possible choice of focus for the paper could be women’s role as healers. Based on their particular topic, students will have opportunities to travel in small groups to observe such healers and conduct group interviews. They will then be expected to discuss their impressions and findings in a five to seven page paper, which addresses the specific functions of these traditional healers in a socially stratified context.

The goal of the paper is to demonstrate the students’ understanding and synthesis of traditional healing in India through discussion and analysis of a case study of a particular type of healer in Uttarakhand. Successful completion of the paper requires a thorough discussion of the topic of choice, including a socio-economic and cultural dimension of analysis. Students are required to use a minimum of four secondary sources to evidence their arguments. It is expected that the paper will be **rigorously edited** so that it exhibits the following attributes: freedom from grammatical errors and typos; compliance with a standard format of citation for both primary and secondary sources; and, most importantly, concise and logical argument.

Discussions and Participation – 25%

The seminar includes classroom-based lectures and student and faculty-led discussions. Each student is required to lead at least one synthesis discussion session on a specific reading or seminar activity during the course. Discussion leaders are expected to demonstrate a level of understanding of the material that enables them to facilitate group analysis of key themes and ideas. Students are expected both to attend all activities and also to engage actively through questions and keen observations.

All seminar lectures and activities are mandatory and students must discuss planned absences with the Academic Director before their absence.

Participation is not the same as attendance. All students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the seminar. This means asking pertinent questions to the course’s guest lecturers,

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engaging in discussion and analysis during question opportunities after lectures, in group discussions and while visiting seminar locations. Students are expected to complete the required reading in a timely fashion, and to demonstrate their understanding of texts through reflection, writing, and discussion.

Participation includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class;
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, note-taking;
- Involvement in Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge and information. This means speaking up if you usually don't, and allowing others to speak by not dominating class discussions;
- Group Accountability - participates positively as a part of a group during excursions and classes;
- Respect - culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities. This includes appropriately greeting people when entering offices and classrooms and saying thank you.

Late papers will marked down one step (B- to C+, e.g.) for each day they are late.

Grading Criteria

All grades assigned will take into account the special circumstances and challenges of students in a foreign country. An "A" grade for an assignment entails superior (not just "very good") performance in terms of structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logical argumentation and consistency, and the provision of factual, numerical and/or historical evidence. In terms of Class Participation, an "A" grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all academic seminar lectures, discussions, field trips, workshops and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of the students` participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Grading Scale

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

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| 94-100% | A |
| 90-93% | A- |
| 87-89% | B+ |
| 84-86% | B |
| 80-83% | B- |
| 77-79% | C+ |
| 74-76% | C |
| 70-73% | C- |
| 67-69% | D+ |
| 64-66% | D |
| Below 64 | F |

Expectations and Policies

Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.

Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

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Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak

Attendance. All students are required to attend all lectures and to participate in all bi-weekly discussion and analysis sessions. All excursions are mandatory and students must discuss absences with the Academic Director before the planned departure.

Participation. Participation is not the same as attendance. All students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the course. This means asking pertinent questions to the course's guest lecturers, engaging in discussion and analysis during lectures, group discussions and on excursions. Students are expected to complete the required reading in a timely fashion, and to demonstrate their understanding of texts through reflection, writing, and discussion.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Dossier given to you at Orientation.

Disability Services: For information about and support from Disability Services (DS) to facilitate an accessible educational experience, please contact disabilityservices@sit.edu or +1-802-258-3390. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services can be found on the DS website at: <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.

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