

Indic Knowledge Systems – I

All UG programs

Course Category: Foundation

Schedule of Offering: Semester I

Course Credit Structure: [4]

Course Code: VK101

- **Lecture : 3 Hours per week**
- **Tutorial : 1 Hour per week**
- **Practical : None**

Contact Hours per week: 4 Hours per week

1. Introduction

As human beings march in their journey towards progress, through newer developments, they need to be guided by a core set of ideals and principle of living. In today's context, these paradigms of living are stemming from recent ideas originating from the western world. While we have been making progress there is also a wide-spread understanding that for every new solution and idea that we discover, we introduce more and more challenges and problems arising out of them. This potentially raises the need to look for alternative paradigms for the emerging world order. Indic Knowledge Systems (**IKS**) can potentially offer ideas for developing new paradigms for the world order. A knowledge of IKS is the first step in this process. The Chinmaya University addresses this requirement through a two-part foundational course.

IKS constitute a vast majority of literature spanning across multiple perspectives. This includes ideas on fundamental premises related to one's living as laid out in the Vedas, components of knowledge that help us develop a correct understanding of the Vedic literature, *Purāṇas*, *Darśaṇas*, *Smṛtis*, Upa Vedas and many more. This is typically referred to as *Caturdaśa-vidyāsthānam*. This course outline covers one part of this knowledge tradition and the rest is covered in the second course.

2. Objectives

The course design seeks to address the following issues:

- To introduce to the students the overall organization of IKS
- To develop an appreciation among the students the role and importance of Veda, Vedāṅgas, Upa Vedas and Purāṇas
- To show case the multi-dimensional nature of IKS and their importance in the contemporary society
- To motivate the students to take up a detailed study of some of these topics and explore their application potential

3. Pre-requisites

There are no pre-requisites for this course as it is introductory in nature. Some rudimentary understanding of Sanskrit and familiarity with Devanagari script will be useful.

4. Readings

There is no text book for this course. However, a set of readings have been identified under each module of the course. Students will be required to access these reading material from the library repository and assemble a set of readings for their personal use.

5. Module-wise topics

Module 1: Introduction to IKS – 3 Sessions

Objectives:

- To set a stage for understanding the architecture of the Ancient Indian Knowledge Systems
- To develop an overall understanding of their role and relevance to the contemporary society

Topics:

- What is IKS?
- Organization of IKS – चतुर्दश-विद्यास्थानं
- Relevance to Modern day knowledge systems

Module 2: Śruti (Vedas) – The Knowledge Architecture & Relevance – 6 Sessions

Objectives:

- To introduce the role of Vedas as the primary basis for IKS
- To develop a rudimentary understanding of the components of the Vedas, their organization and subject matter discussed in them

Topics:

- The Vedas as the basis of IKS
- Historicity of the Veda: Traditional and Modern views

- Broad Divisions of the Veda: Mantra, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka, Upaniṣad; Śākhās; Understanding Karmakāṇḍa–Jñānakāṇḍa: their purpose, message (Yajña – Jñāna) and use in ancient times; their relevance in the present day
- Renowned commentaries on the Veda; an introduction to their niceties through selected textual study

Readings:

- **Swami Tejomayananda. (1994).** “The Karma Kāṇḍa”, Chapter IV in Hindu Culture: An Introduction, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, pp 30 – 40.
- **Swami Tejomayananda. (1994).** “The Jñāna Kāṇḍa”, Chapter V in Hindu Culture: An Introduction, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, pp 41 – 51.
- **Swami Harshananda.** “A bird’s eye view of vedas”. R K Math. Bangalore. <http://rkmathbangalore.org/Books/ABirdsEyeViewOfTheVedas.pdf>. Last accessed on May 10, 2018.
- **Kashyap, R.L. (2003).** “Introduction to Rig Veda” in Secrets of Rig Veda: First 121 Suktas, Sri Aurobindo Kapāli Sāstry Institute of Vedic Culture, pp 1 – 44.
- **Archak, K.B. (2012).** “The Brahmana Literature”, Chapter VIII in Essentials of Vedic Literature, Kaveri Books, New Delhi, pp 271 – 301.
- **Archak, K.B. (2012).** “The Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads”, Chapter IX in Essentials of Vedic Literature, Kaveri Books, New Delhi, pp 302 – 329.
- **Shashi Prabha Kumar. (2002).** “Bhumisukta of the Atharvaveda”, in Vedic Traditions and Modern Crisis, (Ed.), Pushpendara Kumar, Eastern Book Linkers, Delhi, pp 10 – 22.

Module 3: Six Vedāṅgas – 15 Sessions

Objectives:

- To introduce the role of in developing a correct understanding of the Vedic literature
- To provide an overview of the Vedāṅgas and introduce to the main works pertaining to this literature

Topics:

- The assistive role of the Vedāṅgas in the study of the Veda; the Vedāṅgas constituting the Veda-puruṣa
- Overview of all the six Vedāṅgas: Essential aspects; Various seminal works
- Contribution to the world pool of knowledge; the special contribution of the Padaśāstra and Vākyaśāstra to the entire IKS
- Modern discoveries in ancient works pertaining to the Vedāṅga

Readings:

- **Bhate, S. (2002).** “Pāṇini’s grammar: An over view”, Chapter 2 in Panini, *Sahitya Academy*, New Delhi, pp 6 - 11.
- **Bhate, S. (2002).** “The form of Pāṇini’s grammar”, Chapter 3 in Panini, *Sahitya Academy*, New Delhi, pp 12 - 18.
- Sanskrit Prosody, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanskrit_prosody. Last accessed on May 10, 2018.
- **Sarup, L. (2015).** “The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta of Śrī Yāskācārya”, *Motilal Banarsidass Publishers*. pp 13 – 14, 49 – 50, and selected portions from 53 – 69.
- **Bhagwat, B. (2009).** “Kalpa-Vedāṅga: Origin & Development”, *Adarsha Sanskrit Shoda Samsthan, Pune*, Selected portions from the book.
- **Vartak, P.V. (1995).** “Veda and Jyotish”, Part II, Chapter 2, in *Issues in Veda and Astrology*, H Pandya (Ed.), pp 65 – 73.
- **Sundaram, A.V. (1995).** “Astrology: Its usefulness and Limitations in Modern Times”, Part II, Chapter 9, in *Issues in Veda and Astrology*, H Pandya (Ed.), pp 129 – 135.
- **Archak, K.B. (2012).** “The Vedāṅga Literature”, Chapter VIII in *Essentials of Vedic Literature*, Kaveri Books, New Delhi, pp 330 – 391.

Module 4: The Upa Vedas – 14 Sessions

Objectives:

- To introduce the four Upa Vedas and their contributions to IKS
- To develop an appreciation of the application domains and potential of Upa Vedas in contemporary settings

Topics:

- Overview of the four Upa Vedas – derived from the four Vedas; the essential texts, teachers
- Ayurveda: Science of holistic health; Issues Addressed; Basic philosophy
- Dhanurveda: Gleanings from various texts and lessons for modern times - basic information
- Gandharvaveda: Gleanings from Bharata’s Nāṭyaśāstra- Abhinava Gupta’s thoughts; Naradiya śikṣā; Sangīta śāstra Overview; Nṛtya-Gāṇa-Vādyā; Music; Musical Instruments
- Arthaśāstra: Overview; Issues addressed in Kauṭilya’s work; Relevance
- Sthāpatyaveda: Vāstuvidyā; Gleanings from various Āgamas; Iconography and Temple Architecture; Architecture pertaining to residential buildings

Readings:

- **Vasant Lad (1996),** “Ayurveda: A Brief Introduction and Guide”, (*whole article*).

- **Ramachandrudu P. (2010)**, “Glimpse into Kautilya’s Arthashastra”, (pp: 1-37), Sanskrit Academy, Hyderabad.
- “Sthapatya Veda – An introductory note”.
http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/stahpatya_veda. Last accessed on Dec. 8, 2016.
- **Gaur, N.A. (2009)**. “Ideal Village Planning” Chapter 2 in *Sthāpatya Ved-Vāstu Śāstra*, New Age Books, pp 26 – 39.
- **Amita, S. (1998)**. “Design of Settlements in the Vaastu Shastras”, *Journal of Cultural Geography*, **17** (2), pp 27 – 41.

Module 5: Purāṇas – 5 Sessions

Objectives:

- To introduce the critical role Purāṇas as a knowledge system play in development of individuals and the society
- To provide an overview of the Purāṇas , their constituents, organization and structure
- To briefly introduce to the philosophical thoughts and other perspectives in this literature

Topics:

- Purāṇa-Lakṣana (Pañcalakṣaṇa & Daśalakṣaṇa) and categorisations: Purāṇas-Mahāpurāṇa-Upapurāṇas-Sthalapurāṇas
- The encyclopedic nature of the Paurāṇika literature, purpose served, important Upākhyānas from the Purāṇas
- Purāṇas as a source of important philosophical thoughts; historical & geographical details
- Understanding Paurāṇic style by textual study of some portions from Bhāgavata etc.
- Translations, Philosophical Interpretations, Abridgements, and Encyclopedias and others works on the Purāṇas
- Contemporary application potential

Readings:

- **Swami Tejomayananda. (1994)**. “The Purāṇas”, Chapter XVIII in *Hindu Culture: An Introduction*, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, pp 157 – 163.
- **Pusalker, A.D. (1955)**. “Introduction” in *Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, (Eds.) KM Munshi and N Chandrashekara Aiyer, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, pp xliii – lxviii.
- An introduction to Purāṇas, Extracted from Wikipedia,
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puranas>. Last accessed on January 4, 2018.
- **Swami Ranganathananda, (2010)**. “The Central Theme of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam”, *Advaita Ashrama*, pp 5 – 15, 18 – 22, 25 – 28, 46 – 56.
- **Kantawala, S.G. (1999)**. “Purāṇas: Source of Ancient Indian History & Culture”, Chapter 11 in *Studies in Purāṇas*, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, pp 58 – 169.

- Selected readings from Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa and Agni Purāṇa

Module 6: Conclusions – 2 sessions

Objectives:

- To sensitise to the students the contemporary usefulness of the literature
- To encourage the students to explore specific areas for contemporary application of some of the topics discussed in the course
- To summarise the literature covered in the course in a concise manner

Topics:

- Areas of contemporary Applications & uses
- Concluding thoughts on IKS – I

Readings:

- **Shashi Prabha Kumar. (2002).** “Indian Feminism in Vedic Perspective”, in Vedic Traditions and Modern Crisis, (Ed.), Pushpendara Kumar, Eastern Book Linkers, Delhi, pp 95 – 110.
- **Meister, M.W. (1985).** “Measurement and Proportion in Hindu Temple Architecture”, *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, **10** (3), pp 248 – 258.

6. Pedagogy

The teaching methodology will be primarily lecture oriented. In class discussions, talks by experts and student presentations based on some related work will supplement the learning process.

7. Evaluation Pattern

- Student Submissions (Group Work) : 20 Marks
- Class Participation thru presentations : 15 Marks
- Mid-term Examination : 25 Marks
- End-Term Examination : 40 Marks
- Total : 100 Marks