After receiving all this knowledge of the Yoga rules taught by Death, Naciketas attained absolute reality (brahman); he became free from death and self-controlled. Others will too who know these teachings about the supreme self.

Introduction

This course is a study of Yoga from ancient India to modern global contexts. Almost everyone is familiar with Yoga as a popular form of exercise for flexibility and muscle strength, but there is far less familiarity with Yoga as an ancient psychological school and non-sectarian religious technique aimed at supernatural powers and direct perception of supreme reality. The oldest and most influential books on Yoga do not mention Yoga postures and stretching, but they do discuss religious practice and the nature of religious experience. We will start there and go onto the medieval period when postural Yoga begins, and continue to the present when Yoga is practiced in spiritual, psychological, and physiological contexts. The learning outcomes of this course are:

1. To develop an understanding of the original texts and commentaries out of which contemporary Yoga practices and philosophies were derived.
2. To develop an enhanced philosophical understanding of epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, psychology, and theology from the ancient to contemporary Yoga traditions through an enrichment of vocabulary and philosophical concepts.
3. To develop the ability to critically engage the central terms and concepts in the Yoga tradition.

This course has an informal comparative element too, allowing you to contrast your own religious and philosophical views with that of the Indian traditions, thus bringing to light some of your own presuppositions and hopefully assisting you to further develop your own thought.

Requirements

1. Attendance – 10%
2. Announced Quizzes – 10%
3. Midterm – 20%
4. Final Exam – 20%
5. Final Paper – 40%
6. See “Policies” handout for more information

Reading List

3. All handouts and online readings

**Tentative Weekly Lecture & Reading Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 - Introduction</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part I: Ancient Yoga Sources</strong></td>
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| Week 2 - *Yoga in the History of Indian Thought*  
  - Bryant, “The History of Yoga” |
| Week 3 - *Sāṁkhya-Yoga Metaphysics, Psychology and Cosmogony*  
  - Bryant, “The Subject Matter of the Yoga Śūtras” |
| Week 4 - *The Definition and Goal of Yoga*  
  - Yoga Śūtra 1.1  
  - Yoga Śūtra 1.2-4; 4.34  
  - Lecture: [https://historyofphilosophy.net/yoga-maas](https://historyofphilosophy.net/yoga-maas) |
| Week 5 - *Practice Makes Perfect and Yogic Theology*  
  - Yoga Śūtra 1.12-1.22  
  - Yoga Śūtra 1.23-1.33 |
| Week 6 - *The Eight Limbs of Yoga*  
  - Yoga Śūtra 2.29-2.32; 2.45-2.46; 2.49; 2.54; 3.1-3.3 |
| Week 7  
  - Bhagavad Gītā, selections from Chapter 2, 6, 18 |
| Week 8  
  - Catch Up and Midterm |

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<tr>
<th>Part II: Early Postural Yoga</th>
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| Week 9 - *Hatha Yoga*  
| Week 10 - *Hatha Yoga*  
  - Selections from the *Gheranda Samhitā*  
| Week 11  
  - Selections from *Khecarividyā of Ādinātha*  
  - Selections from *Roots of Yoga*, Penguin |

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<tr>
<th>Part II: Modern Yoga</th>
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| Week 12  
  - Singleton, Ch 2 |
| Week 13 - *Hatha Yoga*  
  - Singleton, Ch 3-4 |
| Week 14 - No classes: *American Academy of Religion & Thanksgiving* |
| Week 15  
  - Singleton, Ch 5-6 |
| Week 16  
  - Singleton, Ch 8-9 |