



Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani
Hyderabad Campus

FIRST SEMESTER 2024-2025

Course Handout Part II

Date: 17-08-2024

In addition to part-I (General Handout for all courses appended to the time table) this portion gives further specific details regarding the course.

Course No. : HSS F331
Course Title : Shankara's Thoughts
Instructor-in-Charge : Dr. Maya Vinai

Scope and Objective of the Course: The course aims to provide a critical introduction to (1) the life and achievements of Adi Śhaṅkara, (2) pre-Śhaṅkara *Vedānta*, and (3) Śhaṅkara's contribution to Indian heritage. A few of the basic *Advaita* concepts and theories *around which the course is structured include* (1) *ātman and jīva*; (2) *nature, sources, and validity of knowledge*; (3) *Brahman and Īśvara*; (4) *maya and world*; (5) *avidyā*; and (6) *bondage and liberation*.

Textbooks:

1. Ranganathananda, Swami. *The Message of Vivekachudamani*. Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2013.
2. Internet Sources for certain literary compositions of Adi Sankara (*Bhaja Govindan/ Manisha Panchakam/ Nirvana Shatkam/ Guru Paduka Stotram*)

Reference books

1. Alston, A. J. ed. and trans. 2004. *A Śaṅkara Source Book*. 2nd edn. 5 vols. London: Shanti Sadan.
2. Deutsch, Eliot. 1971. *Advaita Vedanta: A Philosophical Reconstruction*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
3. Deutsch, Eliot and J. A. B. van Buitenen, eds. 1971. *A Source Book of Advaita Vedānta*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
4. Grimes, John. 1996. *A Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy*. Rev. edn. Albany: State University of New York Press.
5. Gupta, Bina. 1991. *Perceiving in Advaita Vedānta: Epistemological Analysis and Interpretation*. Lewisburg, PN: Bucknell University Press.



Course Plan:

Lecture No.	Learning objectives	Topics to be covered	Chapter in the Text Book
1- 2	To familiarize with the course content and understand the social environment during Adi Shankara's times.	Course Overview (The Orthodox and Un-Orthodox Schools of Indian Philosophy)	Class Notes
3 - 6	To acquaint with the life of Adi Shankara and the various literary and philosophical treatises written by Adi Shankara.	Life and achievements of Adi Shankara. (Birth/ Education/ Mathas established/ / 4 major disciples and Shankara's major works/ <i>Digvijaya</i> by Adi Shankara. Types of audience for Adi Shankara's compositions)	Class Notes/ Web sources
7- 9	To understand the structure of Vedas and traditional philosophical schools that existed in ancient India before Adi Shankara	Pre Shankara-Vedanta. Basic Concepts and theories of Advaita philosophy. Origin of Advaita philosophy (Dwaita-Dualist/Vishista Advaita- Qualified non-Dualist and Advaita- non dualist) and its basic ideology, and the other major schools of philosophy that existed in India	Class Notes
10- 20	Understand, analyze, and appraise the notion of <i>Pancha- Kosha</i> and causes for duality of self	<i>Concept of Atman</i> and <i>Jeeva</i> Bondage <i>Pancha- Kosha/ Bhaja Govindam</i> Qualities of an ideal student- <i>sadhana chatustaya & shad sampatti</i> , the necessity of self-effort, qualities of an ideal guru (<i>guru paduka stotram</i>)	TB: Pg 61- 143 & Web Sources
21- 29	To analyze Shankara's Metaphysics	Maya and the World. Nature, sources, and validity of knowledge. Bondage and Liberation. What is self? (Identification of self with the gross body/ world/ super-imposition/ illusion of reality/ <i>Nirvana Shatkam</i>)	TB: Pg 260- 294 443- 478 & <i>Nirvana Shatkam</i>
30- 38	Evaluate the concept of Brahman	Brahman and Iswara The three gunas, (manifestation of gunas on self) nature of <i>Brahman</i> ;	TB: Pg 478-497



		Nirguna Brahman, unconditioned <i>Brahman</i> and soul; <i>Brahman</i> one without a second; attributes of <i>Brahman</i> ; qualified <i>Brahman</i> ; conceptions. Shankara's concept of <i>Jeevan mukta</i>	
39- 40	Summing up of the course	Shankara's contribution to Indian Heritage. Criticism leveled against Shankara's Philosophy Advaitic Thinkers after Adi Shankara	Class Notes

Evaluation Scheme:

Component	Duration	Weightage (%)	Date & Time	Nature of Component
Assignments/ Quiz/Presentation (1 & 2)	TBA	30	TBA	Open Book
Class Participation	TBA	10	During the class hours	Open Book
Mid semester Test	90 minutes	25	Refer to the TT	Closed Book
Comprehensive Exam	3 hours	35	Refer to the TT	Closed Book

Chamber Consultation Hour: Tuesday 3.00- 4.00 pm

Notices: Notices, if any, will be displayed on the CMS.

Make-up Policy: Make-up exams and make-up assignments will be granted due to medical reasons if students have prior clearance from institute authorities and if students have informed the instructor beforehand. If a student has an extraordinary situation that does not allow him/her to appear/ for the examination/submit an assignment, the student is responsible for intimating the matter to the instructor at the earliest.

Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy: Academic honesty and integrity are to be maintained by all students throughout the semester and no type of academic dishonesty is acceptable.

Dr. Maya Vinai

INSTRUCTOR-IN-CHARGE

