



**Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani**  
Hyderabad Campus

**FIRST SEMESTER 2023-2024**

Course Handout Part II

Date: 11-08-2023

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</i> & <i>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 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> ; Nirguna Brahman, unconditioned <i>Brahman</i> and soul; <i>Brahman</i> one	TB: Pg 478-497



		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 (Minutes)	Weightage (%)	Date & Time	Nature of Component
Assignment/ Quizzes/ Presentation 2	NA	30%	TBA	Open Book
Mid Semester Examination	90	30%	13/10 - 9.30 - 11.00AM	Closed Book
Comprehensive Examination	180	40%	18/12 FN	Closed Book

**Chamber Consultation Hour: Chamber Consultation Hours:** To be announced in the class.

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

**Make-up Policy:** Make-up component will be allowed provided there is credible documentary evidence to prove the authenticity of the case.

**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**

