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**SECOND SEMESTER 2020-21**  
**COURSE HANDOUT**

**Date: 18.01.2021**

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** : GS F332  
**Course Title** : Contemporary India  
**Class hours** : MWF 12-12:50 hrs via Google Classroom and Google Meet  
**Instructor-in-Charge** : Hari Nair  
**Instructor(s)** : Hari Nair  
**Tutorial/Practical Instructors:** None

**1. Course Description:** Elementary forays into Indian geography, economy, foreign/security policy, polity and society. **Distinguishing Modern and Contemporary:** Modern India is generally understood to be the period since the beginning of the establishment of British rule in India, late 18th century onward (I. Bannerjee-Dube, *A history of Modern India*, Delhi: Cambridge 2015). There are, of course, disagreements though. Certain other historians mark the beginning of Modern India with the arrival of Vasco da Gama (C Markovits *et al.*, *A history of Modern India 1480-1950*, London: Anthem, 2004) and for these scholars the Modern period would be since the late 15th/early 16th century. 'Contemporary' would vary according to the questions/disciplines: For the polity, the timeline may begin with Indian independence in 1947 and the emergence of a republican nation-state with citizenship rights. Here, 'contemporary' coincides with the post-colonial. However, since 1991, the Indian economy has transitioned significantly. So from an economic perspective, the timeline of Contemporary India would be since ca. 1991.

**2. Scope and Objective of the Course:** This course aims to assist students in understanding select processes of long duration that created/shaped Contemporary India with the purpose of aiding their analysis of recent events/changes/issues/problems/challenges. Oscar Wilde is reputed to have remarked that "education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught." Can India be taught? Studying a vast, diverse, complex and complicated country such as contemporary India is challenging. If studying is challenging, teaching about India is more so. The most effective approach for studying India - and especially in a course such as this with multi-disciplinary modules - is the critical inquiry approach. The class sessions would be based less on lectures, while relying more on inquiry worksheets with the instructor facilitating learning rather than teaching. Students are expected resolve questions/problems in class as often as possible by accessing the internet; through discussion with peers and the instructor; as well as by referring to material (print/video/audio) located outside the class room.



**3. Text Books:** Rothermund, Dietmar, *Contemporary India: Political Economic and Social developments since 1947*, Delhi-Chennai: Pearson, 2013.

**4. Reference (s):**

Digital South Asia Library retrieved from <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/> on 05 January 2018.

Basu, Kaushik and Annemarie Maertens, *The new concise Oxford companion to Economics in India*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Chandoke, Neera and Praveen Priyadarshi, eds., *Contemporary India: Economy, Society, Politics*, New Delhi: Pearson Education, 2009.

Fell McDermot, Rachel, Leonard A. Gordon, Ainslie T. Embree, Frances W. Pritchett and Dennis Dalton, eds., *Sources of Indian traditions: Modern India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh*, Delhi: Penguin, 2014.

Gopal Jayal, Neeraj and Pratap Bhanu Mehta, eds., *The Oxford Companion to Politics in India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Metcalf, Thomas and Barbara Metcalf, *A concise history of Modern India*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Mohan, Rakesh, ed., *India transformed: 25 years of economic reforms*, New Delhi: Penguin Viking, 2017.

Pant, Harsh, *Indian Foreign Policy: An overview*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.

Roy, Tirthankar, *The Economic History of India 1857-2010*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Vanaik, Achin and Rajeev Bhargava, eds., *Understanding contemporary India: Critical perspectives*, Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2010.

**Additional sources and readings may be suggested during class sessions.**

**5. Course Plan:**

Module and no. of class sessions	Lecture session contents	Reference	Learning outcomes
Geographical and historical preface to contemporary India 7 sessions	Nomenclature of India; Geographical preface to contemporary India through map work; linguistic identities; data as a public good	TB map on p. 134 and those between pp. 144-5.  Retrieved from <a href="http://dsal.uchicago.edu/reference/schwartzberg/paiger.html?obje">http://dsal.uchicago.edu/reference/schwartzberg/paiger.html?obje</a>	Gain an acquaintance the geography of the Indian republic and its historical precedents



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		<a href="#">ct=187</a> 05 Jan 18	
Economy – 7 sessions	Road to economic reform of 1991 (and beyond) Planning and the License Raj regime 1950-64 Agriculture: Drought, poverty and the poverty line; Green Revolution; farmer suicides Industrial stagnation and ‘Self-Reliance’: 1967-90	TB, chapter 4, 5, 7 and 8	Identify the key elements of the Indian economy since 1947
Foreign policy (external) – 7 sessions	Non-alignment Disputes with Pakistan and China New orientations at the end of the Cold War	TB chapter 11	Gain an overview of India’s foreign security policy
Polity – 7 sessions	Issues concerning citizenship, religion and secularism Local government RTI	TB, chapters 2-3	Explore the structure of the Indian polity
Society – 7 sessions	Issues involving Gender, Caste, Women	TB chapters 6, 10 and 11	Explore select aspects of Indian society



## 6. Evaluation Scheme:

Component	Duration	Weightage (%)	Date & Time	Nature of component (Close Book/ Open Book)
Mid-Semester Test	90 mins as per AUGSD hand out template	30	To be confirmed by AUGSD	Closed Book On Google Classroom
Comprehensive Examination	3 hrs as per AUGSD hand out template	40	10 May 2021 FN	Closed Book On Google Classroom
Self Study Assignment Prelim draft	2 pages max	10	Due Fri 05 Feb 2021; to be uploaded on Google Classroom. <sup>1</sup>	Open
Self Study Assignment Final draft	2500 words max	15	Due Fri 02 Apr 2021 to be uploaded on Google Classroom. <sup>2</sup>	Open
Oral presentation of the Self Study Assignment	Panel discussion after class hours	5	On Google Meet; schedule to be announced in class or via E-mail after receiving the final draft submission	Open

### Evaluation Scheme<sup>3</sup>

**Evaluation components and its nature:** There would be three evaluation components. These are the Mid-Semester (written, closed book, 90 mins) and Comprehensive Exams (written, closed book, 180 mins) and a Self-Study Assignment. However, the Self-Study Assignment is divided into three parts, which is continuous and cumulative, and has to be performed all through the semester. The details of the exams would be as per the schedule of the Instruction Division.

<sup>1</sup> The deadline must be adhered to. Any extension will be deemed equivalent to rules governing make-up in accordance with *Academic Regulations* 4.07.

<sup>2</sup> The deadline must be adhered to. Any extension will be deemed equivalent to rules governing make-up in accordance with *Academic Regulations* 4.07.

<sup>3</sup> Please see the Bloom's taxonomy corresponding to the cognitive domain for learning outcomes and how these match with the evaluation components at the end of this course hand out.



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**Self-study Assignment (SSA):** The Self Study Assignment is broken down into three parts: one, a prelim written draft; two, a final written draft; and three, an oral presentation based on the final written draft of the self-study assignment. This evaluation component is in accordance with *Academic Regulations* 4.01 & 4.05 (Open Book). The prelim draft is a plan document, and hence, synoptic. The final written draft of the SSA will be based on your cumulative work through the semester. It will be followed by a brief oral presentation usually in the form of a panel discussion and often these group discussions tend to last between 60-90 mins.

**SSA prelim draft details concerning submission:** Length - 1-2 pages max; please number the pages on the top right corner; your name, ID no. and word count on the top right of the page.

**Expected contents and break-up of marks upon 10/20:** Problematic - Aims and hypotheses of your assignment (2/4); detailed thematic index (2/4); method of study (1/2); list of sources & studies (3/6) with a timeline of tasks factoring in sources/studies and themes (2/4). You might have to run through originality check/anti-plagiarism software TURNITIN (or URKUND in its absence), if necessary. In that case, please attach a print copy of the software report along with your assignment. **The evaluated SSA prelim draft with the instructor's comments must be attached when you make the final draft submission of the SSA.**

**SSA final draft details concerning submission:** 2500 words max; include word count at the end of your draft; please number the pages on the top right corner with your name, ID number and word count. **Break-up of marks 15/30:** Problematic and use of sources (5/10); Structure (5/10); Critical assessment (5/10).

**Synoptic style sheet (generic guidelines):** Garamond 16 for text, 14 for citations in the body of the text; 12 for footnotes; spacing 1.5; name and roll number on the top right margin with date of submission. You might have to run by originality check/anti-plagiarism software TURNITIN (or URKUND in its absence) as may be required. In such cases, please attach a print copy of the software report along with your assignment.

**Oral presentation (5/10 marks):** You are expected to make an **oral presentation in the form of a panel discussion** based on your final draft submission and respond to queries. The schedule would be mailed to you after the submission of the final draft. The panel discussions are usually scheduled after Institute hours and tend to last from 60-90 mins.

**You are expected to answer the following questions during the oral presentation:** Why did you choose the topic that you did? What is the question/problematic that you were trying to resolve through the SSA? Respond to this particular question in as much detail as required. **This forms the core of your presentation.** How did you attempt the resolution of the problematic? Did you know anything about the theme earlier? How did the SSA help you? What are the weaknesses of your SSA? Did you require the assistance of the instructor for your SSA? Did his inputs aid you in anyway? If not, what should he have done? How did your assignment evolve over the duration of the semester? Power point presentations are especially useful if you have images, maps, graphs and the like. Talking to the audience rather than reading from a text is preferred for an oral presentation as the former demonstrates clarity of thought of the speaker and because it may also encourage a discussion amongst the listeners.





**7. Chamber Consultation Hour:** Wed 18-19 hrs in 6168-U;

otherwise by prior appointment via E-mail [harinair@pilani.bits-pilani.ac.in](mailto:harinair@pilani.bits-pilani.ac.in)

**8. Notices:** Notices concerning the course will be announced in class and/or shared via Google drive/ e-mailed. **Please be alert to the possibility of change of dates according to the academic calendar. Therefore, confront and verify the dates of the evaluation components with the Instructor/Time-table provided by ID.**

**9. Make-up Policy:** If you are unable to present an evaluation component for reasons other than a medical condition and you desire to make-up, please inform the I-C in person with a written application, at least a week in advance of the date on which the component is scheduled, wherein the reasons for your absence/inability is appropriately presented; for absence due to ill-health, please provide documentary support from the BITS medical centre if you are requesting a make-up. For make-up, please refer to *Academic regulations* 4.07.

**10. Note (if any):**

#### **General guidelines for your self-study assignment**

Choose a specific topic from the themes contained in the Course Handout II. You could choose any topic/theme that interests you, including one about which you know very little or nothing at all. Your **written assignment** could take the form of a reading report; a book-review, or a revision of select scholarly literature, or a term paper. Your **self-study assignment** could also take the form of a **report (written or compose a short video)**. However, it should contain more than a mere narrative. It should respond to a question or problem that you are trying to resolve. If it is a video, the script and detailed screenplay would be evaluated as your prelim draft.

Whatever form it takes, make sure that you do not include any phrase or sentence, paraphrased or verbatim, text or image, **intentionally or otherwise**, without due acknowledgment of the sources. To do so would amount to **plagiarism** and it is an **extremely serious ethical and legal offence**. You are also cautioned against submitting a work written by someone else, or by you but for a different purpose, or for another course, previously or simultaneously. The discovery of any violation of these guidelines might result in your score being nullified for the corresponding as well as related evaluation component(s). This offence may be reported to the Department of Humanities & Social Sciences.

For understanding what amounts to plagiarism, please refer to [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org) or similar websites. **If the student still has persisting doubts about what may or may not amount to plagiarism, it is her/his duty to assuage the doubts with the instructor well ahead of deadlines. Ignorance of the norms/rules is not a sufficient cause for justifying plagiarism. You might have to run your assignment on the originality check/anti-**



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plagiarism software (preferably TURNITIN and its in absence URKUND). In such cases, please do so sufficiently ahead of the due date of submission. As the deadlines approach, the traffic on the server might turn heavy.

For information on documentation, you are encouraged to follow the guidelines contained in *The Chicago Manual of Style* <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>. In the 16<sup>th</sup> edition, please see especially chapters 14 & 15. A copy of the same is available in the BITS Pilani Library with classification 655.25 C533 2010.

A **book-review** ought to contain a summary of the book, an outline of its structure, an explanation of how this book is different from others of its ilk, information regarding the author(s), and a constructive critique of the thesis/argument of the book. The purpose of a book-review is to inform and invite readers to engage with the book. You could consider other reviews of the book that you are reviewing, in case these are available. This would prevent your review from being repetitive. If this is too demanding, you could prepare a report based on your reading of the book(s) or parts thereof.

A revision of scholarly literature (or **literature review**) is a more complex assignment than a book review because you are evidently dealing with more than one study. Its purpose is to highlight the nature of existing knowledge in the corresponding field/subject. A literature review is a preliminary but necessary step towards conducting research (understood here as a serious inquiry) in a chosen field/subject of intense study.

A **term paper** is an academic assignment that normally contains a problematic: a question, one or more hypotheses, an explicit statement of method for the resolution of the question, a study of sources, and a revision of existing scholarly literature. It should contain a thematic index that outlines the structure of your paper.

You are expected to make an **oral presentation in the form of a panel discussion** of your self-study assignment in class. The schedule will be mailed to you after the submission of the final draft of your assignment. The purpose of the oral presentation is to develop your oral skills; share the outcome of your self-study assignment with your classmates, who may not have read your assignment; and generate a discussion. You are encouraged to use images, if required.

All your assignments should be uploaded on Google Classroom. **Please do not slip your assignment under the door of the instructor's chamber. As a precautionary measure against loss of your written assignment by you or the instructor, it is the responsibility of the student to have a back-up copy of the same at least until the final evaluation of the course is completed. To avoid losing your e-copy stored in a computer, please ensure that you progressively save your draft written work on google drive/e-mail/dropbox as well.**

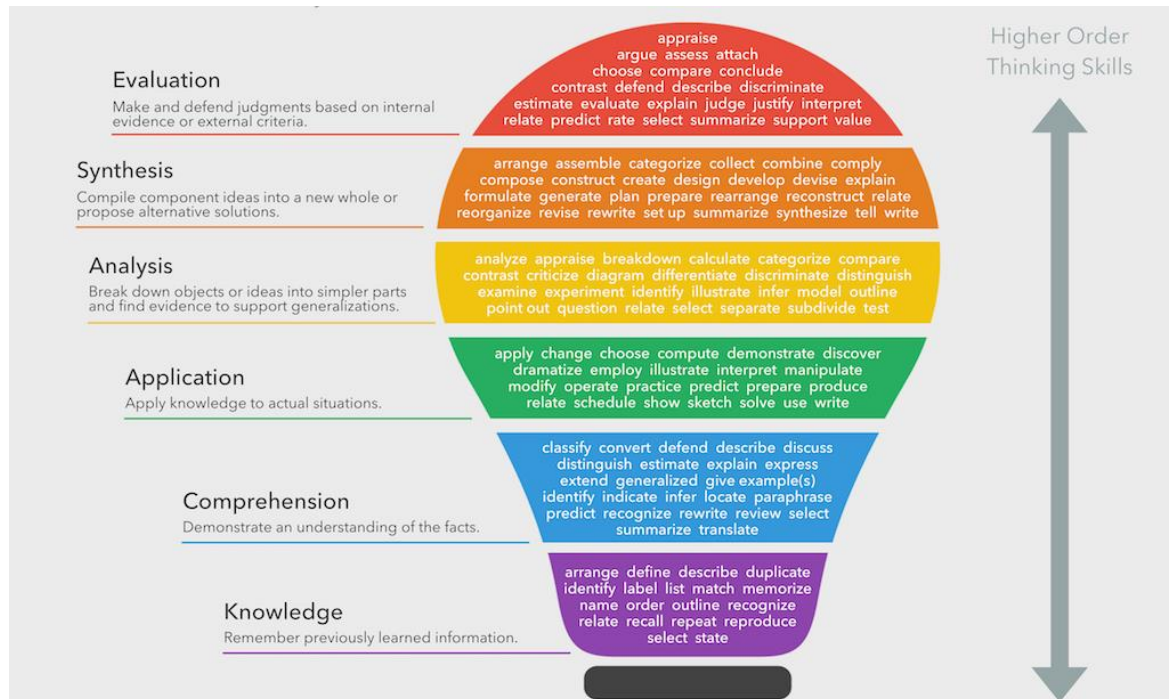
Reading, studying, thinking, as well as composing a video and redacting a text are laborious tasks, which improve with methodical practice. For thinking through a subject, for organizing one's thoughts, and for writing in a structured manner require the fullness of time. Rushed writing under the pressure of deadlines does not often fulfill the aforesaid aims. One could consider this assignment as an exercise in mastering the craft of academic writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences, but above all, for clarifying your thinking process, sharpening your critical skills, and articulating your views persuasively.



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