KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES AT
RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

Web Syllabus

Course Code	BSTD 205
Course Title	Anthropological Study of Nepalese Religions
Course Topic	Anthropological & Historical Survey of Nepalese Religions
Course Delivery Mode	Lecture
Semester, Year	Fall 2027
Schedule: class day & time	Please consult F27 course schedule
Class Location	Please consult F27 course schedule
Required text(s)	1. Hillary Rodrigues, *Hinduism – The eBook.* (Download at www.jbeonlinebooks.org). 2. Selected articles and audio-visual materials available on the BSTD 205 Microsoft Teams page. 3. A reader containing selections primarily from the following texts: 4. D. N. Gellner, *Monk, Householder and Tantric Priest* (Cambridge) 5. John K. Locke, *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal* (Sahayogi) 6. John K. Locke, *Karunamaya* (Sahayogi/CNAS) 7. Gregory Sharkey, Buddhist Daily Ritual (Orchid) *These and selected articles are provided in electronic format via Teams. A printed reader for the Newar Buddhism section of the course can be ordered from the RYI office.*
Optional Readings	none

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the primary religious traditions of Nepal, with special emphasis on the Kathmandu Valley. It is designed specifically for students pursuing the BA in Buddhist Studies who have completed the first-year curriculum.

In response to the needs of students without a comprehensive foundation in South Asian traditions, the course begins with a survey of Hindu tradition. We begin with an overview of classical Indian religion, Hinduism, from which Buddhism took its rise, and alongside which it grew. “Hinduism” embraces a diversity of symbols, beliefs and practices in a broad range of cultural contexts. This introductory survey attempts to identify some central elements and

unifying themes of the Indian tradition, especially those relevant to Buddhism. The approach is thematic in that we examine key ideas such as *dharma* and *karma*, renunciation and liberation. It is historical in that we trace the origin and development of these critical concepts and note how certain patterns and themes recur throughout the history of Hinduism.

The second part of the course focuses on Buddhism in Nepal, particularly as practiced by the Newars, the indigenous people of Kathmandu Valley. It presumes a general familiarity with Buddhist thought and history and complements the introductory Buddhism courses taught at KU-CBS. The first part of the course is heavily historical, or 'diachronic', the latter half is a more 'synchronic' survey of Newar Buddhist beliefs and practices.

Course Requirements	
How do I succeed in the course?	• Input from the lectures is critical. Anyone taking the course for credit should plan to attend each class. If you have a legitimate reason to miss class, kindly bring it to the instructor's attention. • For those enrolled in the in-person classes, site visits are considered class meetings and are not optional.
Assessments	Weight
Active participation in class discussion, quizzes, short writing assignments	25%
Midterm examination	25%
Final examination	50%