SEMESTER: Fall 2021

COURSE TITLE: Major Theological and Religious Thinker: Sikh Gurus

COURSE NUMBER/SECTION: THST 4090

TIMES/DAYS: M/W 2:00-3:30pm

INSTRUCTOR: Nirinjan Khalsa

CORE AREA: n/a

FLAGGED: n/a

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

Sikhism began in Northern India in 1469 with its founder Guru Nanak, a poet-saint who expressed his mystical experiences through song. He saw the same divine light shining in every being regardless of caste, creed or gender. His revolutionary teachings promoting equality and social justice were continued by a succession of Gurus (enlightened teachers) who seamlessly integrated saintly practices such as meditation and selfless service with those of a warrior to defend against social and religious persecution, creating a community of “Warrior Saints.” This course will cover the teachings of the Sikh Gurus to probe fundamental theological questions. The main focus of the course will be to highlight central Sikh theological concepts through the reading of the Gurus’ own musico-poetic hymns contained in the Sikh scripture, the Guru Granth. Additionally, we will read commentary and secondary sources to explore how the Sikh Gurus’ teachings inform the Sikh world-view and ethical practice. This course will provide opportunities to engage with the lived practices of Sikh including music and seva (selfless service).

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will cultivate a sense of the richness of Sikh theology through an examination of the hymns, history, doctrines, and practices of the Sikh Gurus.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to critically interpret and creatively respond to texts and other cultural phenomena such as poetry, music and rituals that have religious presuppositions and ethical implications.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to think both empathetically and critically about diverse religious beliefs and practices.
4. Students will learn to communicate theological ideas and articulate their own understanding with greater clarity, both orally and in writing.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

For THST Majors/Minors only.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Shackle, Christopher and Arvind Mandair, Christopher *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus*
Singh, Nikky-Guninder Kaur. *The Name of My Beloved: Verses of the Sikh Gurus*
Additional Readings will be available in Brightspace

**COURSE WORK/EXPECTATIONS**

This seminar course will involve lectures by the instructor, classroom discussions of the assigned readings, participation in engaged learning with reflective journals, as well as papers and presentations. Each student's contribution to the seminar process through participation and presentations will be an important factor in determining the final grade.