

# The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

## Student Handbook



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The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies  
13 Magdalen Street  
Oxford, OX1 3AE



A RECOGNISED INDEPENDENT CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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## **Welcome to the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies.**

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As well as the library, the good food, and the office facilities, we aim to create a community of learning in which we can all develop the field of Hindu studies together.

We have had students of the Centre reading for degrees in the faculties of Theology, Oriental Studies, Anthropology, and even Computer Science. The OCHS has attracted students from all over the world, including Japan, Belgium, France, Germany, USA, England, Croatia, Ireland, India, Germany, Trinidad, Zambia, Israel, and South Africa.

This attraction to Oxford, its wonderful resources, and students' attraction to Hindu culture has helped nurture an extraordinary community of young scholars.

Visitors often remark on the very friendly and peaceful atmosphere of the Centre. It is a place which is viewed with real affection by those who have studied here and, where many young scholars feel at home today.

### **What kind of students do we hope to attract?**

Interestingly enough, we hope to attract intelligent, hard working students, committed to their chosen subject. At OCHS we are keenly interested in budding scholars from all sectors of education, home and abroad, who will make the most of the excellent academic facilities and committed tuition offered by us. OCHS is a community whose primary purpose is learning and in which there is a shared commitment to your success. All aspects of OCHS life serve this purpose, and our students will always be our best ambassadors.

### **OCHS and the University**

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies is a Recognised Independent Centre of Oxford University and the principal provider for the teaching of Hindu Studies at Oxford University. The Centre is focused on developing a multi-disciplinary approach to the field of Hindu Studies.

All OCHS students must be members of Oxford University, Registered Visiting Students, or Associated Students of the University. The Academic Director may propose other visiting scholars of merit as visitors to the OCHS

### **The OCHS Community**

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The OCHS is a relatively young Institution in Oxford. It began its life over a fireside chat between Shaunaka Rishi Das and Prof. Keith Ward, Regius Professor of Divinity, at Christ Church College in 1995.

The Centre has retained some of the informality of that first meeting, leading to a warmth of relationship and a sense of community among its scholars and students. This atmosphere enables us to retain an honour system in our Library system and in all our dealings among our colleagues.

Creating a 'hot-house' of intellectuals, focusing, in critical debate and research, on diverse issues in Hindu Studies, our community is an historical development. Drawing together good thinkers from different traditions, an important academic association of scholars is being nurtured, with an emphasis on excellence in research, education, and publishing.

## **Ethos of public service**

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Students at the Centre are encouraged to contribute to society by developing a mood of public service. This is very much in keeping with the Indian tradition of *seva* – dedication to service.

This can happen in many ways according to the talents and availability of the student. For example, where appropriate, students may engage in outreach and other public service opportunities such as public talks, writing, and broadcasting.

Current public space projects include contributions to the BBC website, encyclopaedia entries, regular contributions to the media, The Dow Jones Dharma Index, and a UN backed programme on Hinduism and the environment. These projects help train you in effectively contributing to informed debate and commentary on issues of interest and concern in the public domain.

Students may wish to gain teaching experience by training in our Continuing Education Department, for the Hindu Studies Certificate Course. Through this, and many opportunities for public lectures and appearances, you can meet members of many communities and make new friends.

The growth of the OCHS itself can be assisted by students offering thanks for their facilities to our Friends and Benefactors, by letter and by phone. Serving fellow students by engaging and assisting in their public service is also encouraged.

Public service inspires thoughtfulness, builds character, and focuses commitment. It fosters communication and networking skills, and engages us in dealing with the bigger issues. It helps us digest our education and see how it is practically helpful in a global context. We hope you will find the time to get involved in some of our public service opportunities during your time with us.

## **Wednesday lunches**

In 2002, in the mood of *seva*, our students began the Wednesday Student Lunch. Each Wednesday, a lunch is held at the Library, to which all students, scholars, staff, and occasional special guests are invited. These lunches are friendly gatherings that build the collegial spirit that the Centre has always valued.

Each term there is one student responsible for organising the cooking and serving of the lunches as well as registering attendees and collecting a small fee.

Students are encouraged to attend these lunches when possible and to register with the student organising the lunch no less than 24 hours before the lunch. Students may also volunteer to assist in preparation, serving, and cleaning.

## **Tutorials**

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Oxford offers you a unique learning experience through the tutorial system, in which you are responsible for managing your own time to ensure the necessary work gets done. You will meet at least once a week with your college tutor, either on a one-to-one basis or with one or two other students, to discuss an essay or solutions to set problems which you will have researched in advance. The purpose of the tutorial is to review your answers and theories and to raise any new points that result from the discussion.

The tutorial system's success relies on the active exchange of ideas between you, your tutor, and other students present. You do not need to be an experienced debater to do well in tutorials but you must be prepared to give and defend your own opinions, whilst conceding to others and accepting constructive criticism and advice.

Through this method of teaching you will develop your ability to think independently, which will not only benefit you academically but will provide you with one of the many transferable skills employers find attractive when recruiting Oxford graduates.

OCHS faculty members are available for tutorials. Each term we host a senior visiting scholar from India (Shivdasani Visiting Fellows), who offer extra classes and tutoring in specialised areas of study. Students of the Centre can arrange appointments for tutorials with faculty members and visiting fellows directly.

The OCHS offers students access to all its lectures, seminars, symposia, and conferences. Each term our lecture list covers a wide range in the fields of Hindu Studies and Religious Studies, delivered by senior scholars. Graduate seminars will help you find your voice, defend your perspective, and accept feedback in a public setting.

These presentations and discussions are integrated with lectures, seminars, and practicals which are organised by the University.

## **Student facilities**

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### **Publications**

The OCHS actively seeks partnerships with academic publishers with an aim to produce quality resources on Hinduism, particularly those produced by OCHS students and fellows.

We publish the *Journal of Hindu Studies* with Oxford University Press and have produced twelve titles in partnership with Routledge (see appendix for listing). We also propose an occasional monograph series publishing work of distinction by OCHS students and fellows.

### **Computers and internet access**

Computers are available at the OCHS Offices in Magdalen Street. All computers provide free broadband internet access. Students can use printers and photocopiers at a nominal charge of 3p per page.

### **OCHS website**

The OCHS website at [www.ochs.org.uk](http://www.ochs.org.uk) is a valuable resource for all students of Hinduism. It lists faculty and staff (past and present), lists of all lectures (and mp3 recordings of most of these), news updates, and information about most aspects of the Centre and its work. There is also a weekly lecture podcast.

### **Telephone**

The OCHS does not provide telephone access for students. Students wishing to use the phone on a regular basis may seek permission to access the telephone system via a calling card. These may be purchased at various locations in Oxford. Shops on the Cowley Road are reportedly a good source of cards for long distance destinations.

## **Kitchen and food consumption**

The kitchen is a source of wonderful dinners and lunches, contributing greatly to the grace of living of the OCHS.

No food or drink are to be consumed in the vicinity of the printer, photocopier, or at desks. Drinks must be kept well away from computers and telephones. In the event of damage caused to equipment from spillages etc., equipment will be replaced at the expense of the individual responsible.

## **Hindu-friendly space**

In order to ensure that the OCHS is a Hindu-friendly space we ask our students to respect the rule of no meat, fish, egg, onions, garlic, or alcohol on the premises. This helps us retain our five star any-Hindu-can-eat-here status. This will facilitate students and scholars from the most orthodox backgrounds.

## **Scrap paper**

The Centre participates in an Oxford-wide scheme to recycle scrap paper. You can help us in this by leaving your scrap paper in the box provided, found on the photocopy room window-ledge. Please ensure that any staples or paperclips have been removed.

Please don't forget to collect your printing, as uncollected printing will be added to the scrap paper collection each evening.

## **Security**

For insurance reasons all windows and doors must be closed by the last person leaving the building each day. It is also the responsibility of the last person leaving the building to switch out lights, lock the reception door, and double lock the main entrance.

## **Open door policy**

The Director's door, and that of all senior staff, is almost always open for students to discuss difficulties, ideas, proposals, or anything else that students feel they wish to discuss or contribute. If senior staff members are busy when a student wishes to speak with them, he or she may arrange an appointment with the Office Secretary.

## **Complaints**

In the first instance, complaints may be directed to the Director in person or in writing. If this is not felt to be appropriate or effective, complaints may be directed to a member of the Board of Governors. If neither of these avenues bring satisfaction, independent mediation may be sought.

## **Library**

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The OCHS library is held at the Magdalen St offices. Since its inception it has worked closely with Oxford's Indian Institute Library. It currently holds approximately 6,500 titles, mostly in the fields of Vaishnavism and Vedanta. There are plans to expand the Purana section and Comparative Theology section. The library has received numerous donations, notably a sizeable donation from the libraries of Hridayananda Dasa

Goswami and Shaunaka Rishi Das, and bequests from the private collections of Tamal Krishna Goswami and Prof. B. K. Matilal. The library is open to students of the Centre and members of Oxford University.

## **Guidelines for users**

The Library is regularly used for lectures, seminars, or meetings; during those times, the books in the main library room are not accessible. For more information, please contact the receptionist.

### **Registration**

All persons who wish to use the library must be registered first. A registration form can be obtained from the librarian.

### **Borrowing books**

Users who wish to borrow books need to bring a valid Bodleian Library Card or another form of identification.

Members of Oxford University and members of the OCHS can borrow books. To borrow a book:

- Write the date and your name on the book-card in the back of the book you wish to borrow;
- Leave this card in the borrowing box, alphabetically under the author's last name;
- Write the date and (short) title of the book on your personal card, which will always be in the borrowing box, filed alphabetically under your last name.

### **Returning books**

Books borrowed during term can be kept until the end of that term (week eight). Books borrowed during term breaks can be kept until the beginning of the next term (week one). To return a book, just leave it on the return shelf in the library, which is marked with 'Return Books Here'. Please do not re-shelve books, even if only removed for a short time.

### **Damaged or lost books**

Please do not deface or damage a book in any way by making marginal notes or underlining, even in pencil. Damaged or lost books will have to be paid for.

### **Library catalogue**

Though the majority of the books in the main library room have been catalogued, the catalogue is not yet accessible for users. If you are unable to find a particular book, please contact the librarian.

### **Journals**

The OCHS Library has subscriptions to several academic journals. The journals are kept in the student room and may not be borrowed.

### **Photocopies**

A photocopier is provided for your use in the archive room. Copies cost 3p a page, to be paid to the receptionist. All photocopying must be in accordance with British copyright laws. If there are problems with the machine, or the paper or toner runs out, please contact the receptionist.

### **Donations**

The OCHS library has limited funds to acquire new books and donations are gladly accepted. If you have any books you wish to donate to the library, please contact the librarian or the receptionist.

### **Further questions**

If you have any further questions regarding the library, please contact Rembert Lutjeharms, the librarian at [library@ochs.org.uk](mailto:library@ochs.org.uk).

## **Money Matters**

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The Centre is not currently able to offer full scholarships but we have five bursaries, and a small book grant we are happy to offer to our students. All of these bursaries are advertised in fourth week of Hilary term with a fortnight deadline, and awarded at the end of the Hilary term. They are all open to all current students of the OCHS for fees, maintenance, or research costs. Students should apply by sending a CV and letter of application to the Academic Director.

### ***Pandit Abaji Bursary***

This Bursary of £1008 is sponsored by Raj and Ramila Chauhan of Aartus Printers, Leicester. It is named in honour of their revered mentor, Shri Pandit Abaji.

### ***Jiva Goswami Bursary***

The Jiva Goswami Bursary in Vaishnava Studies was established in 2007 by Dr Ravi and Mrs Amrita Gupta to help a student of outstanding academic merit pursue postgraduate study at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies. Through this bursary, Dr Gupta wishes to extend to emerging scholars the opportunities he received as a student at the Centre. The bursary is for £1000.

### ***The Gupta-dana Bursary***

This £500 bursary is given anonymously by a family dedicated to supporting education.

### ***Asvattha Narayan Bursaries***

These two bursaries, of £500 each are offered by the Asvattha Narayan Foundation. Applications are invited from students in Indology.

### ***Patel Book Grant***

This small grant of £50 will be offered to a deserving student at the discretion of our Academic Director, at the final Student Lunch of Michaelmas term each year.

## Book discounts

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Discounts are available to OCHS students from Blackwells and Borders.

### *Blackwells*

To qualify for a discount at Blackwells, students names must be added to a list maintained at the store. Please ask the Director if you wish to be added to the discount list.

Books are not paid for at the time of purchase, they are added to the OCHS account and the student must pay the amount to the OCHS within three days.

On taking the books to the till, students should say that they wish to charge them to the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies account. They will be asked to produce a form of ID with a signature (e.g. Bodleian card), their name will be checked against the authorised users list and if they are on the list the books will be charged on the OCHS account. The student will then be asked to sign for the books and will keep the top copy of the invoice for their records. The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies will receive regular statements which will show all sales on the account.

### *Borders*

To qualify for a discount at Borders, students will need a discount card which can be received on application to the Director.

## Appendix one: Organisation and directory

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### **OCHS directory**

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies  
13 Magdalen Street  
Oxford  
OX1 3AE

Area code: 01865

Country code: +44

Email: [info@ochs.org.uk](mailto:info@ochs.org.uk)

Web: [www.ochs.org.uk](http://www.ochs.org.uk)

General enquiries: 304300

Fax: 304301

#### ***Office Secretary***

Judit Bajusz 304300      [secretary@ochs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ochs.org.uk)

#### ***Director***

Shaunaka Rishi Das 304303      [shaunaka@ochs.org.uk](mailto:shaunaka@ochs.org.uk)

#### ***Academic Director***

Prof. Gavin Flood 304302      [gavin.flood@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:gavin.flood@theology.ox.ac.uk)

#### ***Academic Administrator***

Dr Jessica Frazier 304307      [jfrazier@ochs.org.uk](mailto:jfrazier@ochs.org.uk)

***Development Administrator***

Lal Krishna 304306 lal@ochs.org.uk

***Librarian***

Rembert Lutjeharms 304305 rembert@ochs.org.uk

**Organisational structure**

***Director***

Mr Shaunaka Rishi Das

***Academic Director***

Prof. Gavin Flood

***Finance Administrator***

Mr Upendra Kalan

***Academic Administrator***

Dr Jessica Frazier

***Development Administrator***

Mr Lal Krishna

***Administrative Secretary***

Miss Judit Bajusz

***Domestic Bursar***

Meru Ostlund

***Book keeping***

Syama Dasi

**Fellows**

Dr Gillian Evison

Prof. Gavin Flood

Dr Jessica Frazier

Dr Sanjukta Gupta

Mr Rembert Lutjeharms

Peggy Morgan

Dr Kenneth Valpey

**Continuing Education Department**

Dr Nicholas Sutton

Ms Anuradha Dooney

**Senior Associate Fellows**

Prof. Francis X. Clooney, SJ

Prof. Thomas Hopkins

Prof. Joseph O'Connell

Prof. M. N. Narasimhachary

**Board of Governors**

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Dr John Muddiman  
Mr Harish I. K. Patel  
Mrs Neerja Sethi  
Mr Pramod Thakkar  
Prof. Keith Ward, FBA

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Baroness Prasher, CBE  
Dr L. M. Singhvi, MP (India)  
The Maharaja of Jodhpur  
The Maharaja of Puri  
Mr Ranjit Sondhi, CBE

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Prof. Malory Nye  
Prof. Ceri Peach

Prof. Lord Bikhu Parekh  
Dr Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad  
Dr David Smith  
Dr David Washbrook

**Friends of OCHS Inc (USA)**

***Directors***

Shaunaka Rishi Das  
Dr S. Bhattacharya-Ford  
Mr Todd Wahlstrom

**Appendix two: Publications**

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**Journal of Hindu Studies**

In partnership with Oxford University Press  
[www.jhs.oxfordjournals.org](http://www.jhs.oxfordjournals.org)

**Volume One**

***Introduction to the Journal of Hindu Studies***

Gavin Flood

***Hermeneutics in Hindu Studies***

Jessica Frazier

***Abhinavagupta's Philosophical Hermeneutics of Grammatical Persons***

David Peter Lawrence

***'Icon and Mother': An Inquiry into India's National Song***

Julius J. Lipner

***Rsis Imagined Across Difference: Some Possibilities for the Study of Conceptual Metaphor in Early India***

Laurie L. Patton

***Theologising the Inaugural Verse: Slesa Reading in Ramayana Commentary***

Ajay K. Rao

***Buddhism in Modern Andhra: Literary Representations from Telugu***

Velcheru Narayana Rao

***Philosophical Hermeneutics within a Darsana (Philosophical School)***

T. S. Rukmani

***Two Whiffs of Air: A Critical Essay***

Frits Staal

**Book Reviews**

Dermot Killingley, Brian Black, Christopher Key Chapple, W. J. Johnson, Kiyokazu Okita, Nicholas Sutton, Rashi Rohatgi

**Volume Two, No. 1**

***An Alternative Historiography for Hinduism***

Wendy Doniger

***Dark Matter in Vartaland: On the Enterprise of History in Early Pustimarga Discourse***

Frederick M. Smith

***Narratives of Penance and Purification in Western India, c. 1650–1850***

Rosalind O’Hanlon

***The Shrine in Early Hinduism: The Changing Sacred Landscape***

Himanshu Prabha Ray

***The Solidarities of Caste: The Metaphysical Basis of the ‘Organic’ Community***

Ankur Barua

**Book reviews**

Shashiprabha Kumar, Abhishek Ghosh, David Buchta

**OCHS Routledge Hindu Studies Series**

Series Editor: Gavin Flood, Academic Director, OCHS

**Epistemologies and the Limitations of Philosophical Inquiry: Doctrine in Madhva Vedanta**

Deepak Sarma

ISBN: 9780415308052

ISBN-10: 0415308054

Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 28/10/2004

Pages: 120

**A Hindu Critique of Buddhist Epistemology: Kumarila on perception: The ‘Determination of Perception’ chapter of Kumarila Bhatta’s Slokavarttika - Translation and Commentary**

John Taber

ISBN: 9780415336024

ISBN-10: 0415336023

Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 07/01/2005

Pages: 288

**Samkara’s Advaita Vedanta: A Way of Teaching**

Jacqueline G Suthren Hirst

ISBN: 9780415355490

ISBN-10: 0415355494

Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 13/04/2005  
Pages: 264

**Attending Krishna's Image: Chaitanya Vaishnava Murti-seva as Devotional Truth**

Kenneth Russell Valpey  
ISBN: 9780415383943  
ISBN-10: 0415383943  
Publisher: Routledge  
Publication Date: 21/04/2006  
Pages: 240

**Advaita Vedanta and Vaisnavism: The Philosophy of Madhusudana Sarasvati**

Sanjukta Gupta  
ISBN: 9780415395359  
ISBN-10: 0415395356  
Publisher: Routledge  
Publication Date: 24/08/2006  
Pages: 192

**Classical Samkhya and Yoga: An Indian Metaphysics of Experience**

Mikel Burley  
ISBN: 9780415394482  
ISBN-10: 0415394481  
Publisher: Routledge  
Publication Date: 26/10/2006  
Pages: 240

**Self-Surrender (prapatti) to God in Shrivaisnavism: Tamil Cats or Sanskrit Monkeys?**

Srilata Raman  
ISBN: 9780415391856  
ISBN-10: 0415391857  
Publisher: Routledge  
Publication Date: 20/12/2006  
Pages: 256

**The Chaitanya Vaishnava Vedanta of Jiva Gosvami: When Knowledge Meets Devotion**

Ravi M Gupta  
ISBN: 9780415405485  
ISBN-10: 0415405483  
Publisher: Routledge  
Publication Date: 30/03/2007  
Pages: 256

**Gender and Narrative in the Mahabharata**

Editors: Simon Brodbeck, Brian Black  
ISBN: 9780415415408  
ISBN-10: 0415415403  
Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 24/07/2007

### **Yoga in the Modern World**

Editors: Mark Singleton and Jean Byrne

ISBN-10: 0415452589

ISBN-13: 978-0415452588

Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 31/03/08

### **Desire and Motivation in Indian Philosophy**

Christopher G Framarin

ISBN: 978-0-415-46194-8

Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 27/03/2009

### **Consciousness in Indian Philosophy**

Sthaneshwar Timalina

ISBN: 978-0-415-77677-6

Publisher: Routledge

Publication Date: 20/10/2008

## **Appendix three: Health and safety**

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Any accidents or injuries which occur on the premises of the OCHS must be recorded in writing and given to our office Secretary. This can be done via email. If there is a need for First Aid or medical attention, Meru Ostlund is our designated member of staff. There is a First Aid box in the in the kitchen; if materials are taken or missing from it please inform the Office Secretary.

Our Health and Safety Policy follows the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974'. A copy of the Health and Safety Law poster is on display in the kitchen as required by law.

### **Fire procedures**

#### **Fire extinguishers**

Fire extinguishers are located at the top of the entrance stairs and outside the toilets at the rear of our floor. Operating instructions are on the extinguishers. There are two types of extinguisher: a large one containing water and a smaller carbon dioxide one for electrical fires. There is also a fire blanket located in the kitchen.

#### **Fire alarm**

- There are three points for activating the fire alarm. These are red square boxes on the reception wall just inside the main door,
- at the beginning of the corridor,
- at the far end of the corridor just past the toilets.

To activate the alarm, break the glass and press the silver button.

#### **Fire exits**

There are three fire exits to the building.

- The main entrance staircase at the front.
- The glass door half way up the corridor, which leads out onto the flat roof area.
- The door at the rear of the corridor near the toilets. This door has a glass bar covering the lock. To exit, break the glass, open the door, and go down the staircase. You will find yourself in the alleyway between Jaeger and Borders.

The fire doors are all alarmed and will activate the burglar alarm if opened.

### **Smoke alarms**

The office is fully equipped with smoke alarms. These can be activated by candles and sometimes by matches. They can also be activated by burnt food in the kitchen. Please take care not to activate the smoke alarms.

### **Exiting the building**

In the event of a fire, do not try to extinguish it but leave the building as quickly as possible. Ensure that the fire alarm is activated. All Centre members and visitors should assemble on the corner of Magdalen Street and Beaumont Street, outside the Randolph Hotel.

The building is shared by four separate occupiers over five floors. Please do not assume that because you cannot smell smoke it is a false alarm. When the alarm activates please exit the building immediately, if possible by the front exit.

located,