South Asian Studies

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Harry Blair, Rm. 210, 34 Hillhouse Ave., 432-5687; harry.blair@yale.edu; southasia.macmillan.yale.edu/

The program in South Asian Studies combines the requirements of a discipline-based first major with significant course work in South Asian Studies. South Asian Studies can be taken only as a second major. The major is intended to provide students with a broad understanding of the history, culture, and languages of South Asia, as well as the region’s current social, political, and economic conditions. Work in a discipline-based major coupled with a focus on South Asia prepares students for graduate study, employment in nongovernmental organizations, or business and professional careers in which an understanding of the region is essential.

Requirements of the Major

In addition to fulfilling the requirements of the primary major, a student choosing South Asian Studies as a second major must complete seven term courses in South Asian Studies numbered 200 or above. At least two of the seven courses must address premodern South Asia, and at least two should be seminars. Students may petition the director of undergraduate studies to include one relevant course from another department or program; approval may require additional course work on South Asian topics. Students must also complete the senior requirement and meet the major’s language requirement.

Language Requirement

One South Asian language must be studied at the advanced level (L5). Students who matriculate with advanced proficiency in a South Asian language (excluding English), as demonstrated through testing, are encouraged to study Sanskrit, or to study a second modern language through Yale courses or the Directed Independent Language Study program. Students may request substitution of another appropriate language (e.g., Persian or Arabic) for the core language requirement, and they are encouraged to pursue intensive language study through courses or work abroad.

Credit/D/Fail

A maximum of one course taken Credit/D/Fail may count toward the major.

Senior Requirement

The senior requirement may be fulfilled by completion of a seminar that culminates in a senior essay. Alternatively, the requirement may be fulfilled by completion of a one-credit, two-term senior research project in SAST 491, 492, or by completion of a one-credit, one-term directed study in SAST 486 that culminates in a senior essay. The senior essay should be a substantial paper with a maximum length of 8,000 words for one term, and 10,500 words for two terms. The use of primary materials in the languages of the region is encouraged in senior essay projects. The DUS must approve senior essay plans early in the student’s senior year.

Advising

The South Asian Studies major permits students to choose courses from a wide range of disciplines. Individual programs should have a balance between courses in the humanities and those in the social sciences. The proposed course of study must be approved each term by the DUS. Students should also identify an adviser from the South Asian Studies faculty in their area of specialization as early as possible.

Two Majors

Permission to complete two majors must be secured from the Committee on Honors and Academic Standing. Application forms are available from the residential college deans and must be submitted prior to the student’s final term.

Courses in the Graduate School

Graduate courses in South Asian Studies are open to qualified undergraduates. Course descriptions appear in the online Graduate School bulletin and are also available in the South Asian Studies program office. Permission of the instructor and of the director of graduate studies is required.

Study Abroad

Up to three course credits from approved study abroad programs may be applied toward the requirements of the major, with permission of the DUS.

Requirements of the Major

Prerequisites

None

Number of courses

7 term courses (not incl senior req or lang req)

Distribution of courses

7 courses in South Asian Studies numbered 200 or above, 2 in premodern, 2 sems

Substitution permitted

One relevant course in another dept, and/or up to 3 study abroad credits with DUS permission

Language requirement

Study in a South Asian lang through L5 level

Senior requirement

Senior essay in sem, or research project in SAST 491, 492, or senior essay in SAST 486

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

Professors

Akhil Amar (Law School), Tim Barringer (History of Art), Nihal de Lanerolle (School of Medicine), Michael Dove (Anthropology, Forestry & Environmental Studies), Phyllis Granoff (Religious Studies), Inderpal Grewal (Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Mushfiq Mobarak (Economics and Management), Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan (Anthropology, Forestry & Environmental Studies), Shyam Sunder (School of Management), Steven Wilkinson (Political Science)
Language and Literature Courses

* HNDI 110a, Elementary Hindi I  **Staff**
An in-depth introduction to modern Hindi, including the Devanagari script. A combination of graded texts, written assignments, audiovisual material, and computer-based exercises provides cultural insights and increases proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing Hindi. Emphasis on spontaneous self-expression in the language. No prior background in Hindi assumed.  
L1  1½ Course cr

HNDI 120b, Elementary Hindi II  **Staff**
Continuation of HNDI 110. After HNDI 110 or equivalent.  
L2  1½ Course cr

HNDI 130a, Intermediate Hindi I  **Swapna Sharma and Seema Khurana**
The first half of a two-term sequence designed to develop proficiency in the four language skills. Extensive use of cultural documents including feature films, radio broadcasts, and literary and nonliterary texts to increase proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing Hindi. Focus on cultural nuances and Hindi literary traditions. Emphasis on spontaneous self-expression in the language. After HNDI 120 or equivalent.  
L3  1½ Course cr

* HNDI 132a, Accelerated Hindi I  **Swapna Sharma**
A fast-paced course designed for students who are able to understand basic conversational Hindi but who have minimal or no literacy skills. Introduction to the Devanagari script; development of listening and speaking skills; vocabulary enrichment; attention to sociocultural rules that affect language use. Students learn to read simple texts and to converse on a variety of everyday personal and social topics.  
L3

HNDI 140b, Intermediate Hindi II  **Swapna Sharma and Seema Khurana**
Continuation of HNDI 130. After HNDI 130 or equivalent.  
L4  1½ Course cr

* HNDI 142b, Accelerated Hindi II  **Swapna Sharma**
Continuation of HNDI 132. Development of increased proficiency in the four language skills. Focus on reading and higher language functions such as narration, description, and comparison. Reading strategies for parsing paragraph-length sentences in Hindi newspapers. Discussion of political, social, and cultural dimensions of Hindi culture as well as contemporary global issues.  
L4

HNDI 150a, Advanced Hindi  **Seema Khurana**
An advanced language course aimed at enabling students to engage in fluent discourse in Hindi and to achieve a comprehensive knowledge of formal grammar. Introduction to a variety of styles and levels of discourse and usage. Emphasis on the written language, with readings on general topics from newspapers, books, and magazines. Prerequisite: HNDI 140 or permission of instructor.  
L5

* HNDI 158b, Writing in Independence and Post-Independence  **Seema Khurana**
Development of language skills through selected readings in Hindi literature and the study of popular culture of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Focus on the works of Munshi Premchand, Mannoo Bhandhari, Mohan Rakesh, and Amrita Pritam. Debates on political, social, and cultural topics.  
L5

* MTBT 110a, Elementary Modern Tibetan I  **Staff**
Introduction to the fundamentals of Modern Tibetan in the Lhasa dialect. Development of basic speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills through the application of communicative methods and the use of authentic learning materials. Some attention to central aspects of Tibetan culture. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information. Credit only on completion of MTBT 120.  
L1 RP  1½ Course cr

* MTBT 120b, Elementary Modern Tibetan II  **Staff**
Continuation of MTBT 110, with further development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Prerequisite: MTBT 110 or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  
L2 RP  1½ Course cr
* MTBT 130a, Intermediate Modern Tibetan I  Staff
The main focus of this course will be on using the language to communicate. The goal of the course is to further develop proficiency in speaking, listening, writing and reading, while acquiring some knowledge of Tibetan culture that are necessary for language competency. MTBT 120, or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L3  RP  1½ Course cr

* MTBT 150a, Advanced Modern Tibetan I  Staff
Holistic study of modern Tibetan to deepen communicative abilities and develop oral fluency and proficiency. Students improve reading comprehension skills through reading selected modern Tibetan literature. Prerequisite: MTBT 140, or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L5  RP

* MTBT 160b, Advanced Modern Tibetan II  Staff
Modern Tibetan as a medium of instruction and interaction to develop oral fluency and proficiency, with as much complete immersion as possible. Prepares interested students for future work and research in Tibetan communities. MTBT 150, or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L5  RP

* PNJB 130a, Intermediate Punjabi I  Staff
The important target of this course is to develop basic Punjabi Language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). This is approached through the theme-based syllabus, discussion in small groups and paired activities on the cultural background of Punjabi or Punjabi culture. As well as, the listening and speaking skills would be developed by using the media such as educational material, Punjabi movies, music and computer lab sessions. The usage of the textbooks would lead us to learn grammatical rules of the Punjabi language. The students are approached individually, since the class typically consists of students in the various backgrounds. Prerequisite: PNJB 120 or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L3  RP  1½ Course cr

* PNJB 140b, Intermediate Punjabi II  Staff
The important target of this course is to develop basic Punjabi Language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). This is approached through the theme-based syllabus, discussion in small groups and paired activities on the cultural background of Punjabi or Punjabi culture. As well as, the listening and speaking skills would be developed by using the media such as educational material, Punjabi movies, music and computer lab sessions. The usage of the textbooks would lead us to learn grammatical rules of the Punjabi language. The students are approached individually, since the class typically consists of students in the various backgrounds. Prerequisite: PNJB 130 or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L5  RP

* SKRT 110a / LING 115a, Introductory Sanskrit I  David Brick
An introduction to Sanskrit language and grammar. Focus on learning to read and translate basic Sanskrit sentences in Devanagari script. No prior background in Sanskrit assumed.  L1  1½ Course cr

SKRT 120b / LING 125b, Introductory Sanskrit II  David Brick
Continuation of SKRT 110. Focus on the basics of Sanskrit grammar; readings from classical Sanskrit texts written in Devanagari script. After SKRT 110.  L2  1½ Course cr

SKRT 130a / LING 138a, Intermediate Sanskrit I  David Brick
The first half of a two-term sequence aimed at helping students develop the skills necessary to read texts written in Sanskrit. Readings include selections from the Hitopadesa, Kathasaritsagara, Mahabharata, and Bhagavadgita. After SKRT 120 or equivalent.  L3

SKRT 140b / LING 148b, Intermediate Sanskrit II  David Brick
Continuation of SKRT 130, focusing on Sanskrit literature from the kavya genre. Readings include selections from the Jatakamala of Aryasura and the opening verses of Kalidasa’s Kumarasambhava. After SKRT 130 or equivalent.  L4

* SKRT 150a or b, Advanced Sanskrit: Readings in Indian Philosophy and Aesthetics  David Brick
This advanced language course introduces the jargon of the philosophical disciplines (theory of knowledge, metaphysics, philosophy of mind and language, philosophical theology, hermeneutics) and aesthetics in the several systems of learning in ancient and classical India, across the traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Additionally, the course introduces topics of philosophical significance in foundational texts such as the Upaniṣads, portions of the Mahabharata and the Purāṇas, and the Buddhist sūtra literature. Special attention is given to matters of style, scholastic techniques, and advanced morphology and syntax. The course, thus, combines advanced language instruction with learning intellectual and cultural content, and it facilitates training in primary research in one of the classical languages of South Asia. Prerequisite: SKRT 140 or equivalent, or instructor permission.  L5
* SNHL 110a, Elementary Sinhala I  Staff
First half of a two-term sequence focusing on all four language skills. Basic grammar, sentence construction, simple reading materials, and use of everyday expressions. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Cornell University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L1  RP  1½ Course cr

* SNHL 120b, Elementary Sinhala II  Staff
Second half of a two-term sequence focusing on all four language skills. Basic grammar, sentence construction, simple reading materials, and use of everyday expressions. Prerequisite: SNHL 110. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Cornell University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L2  1½ Course cr

* SNHL 130a, Intermediate Sinhala I  Staff
Further development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in Sinhala. Communicative approach to the exchange of ideas and information, with early emphasis on oral skills and reading comprehension. Prerequisite: SNHL 120 or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L3  RP  1½ Course cr

* TBTN 110a, Elementary Classical Tibetan I  Staff
The first half of a two-term sequence designed to develop proficiency in comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing through the use of visual media, newspapers and magazines, modern fiction and poetry, and public communications such as pamphlets, advertisements, and government announcements. Prerequisite: TBTN 120 or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L1  RP  1½ Course cr

* TBTN 130a, Intermediate Classical Tibetan I  Staff
Improvement of high-level language proficiency. Introduction to the long and continuous literary history of Tibetan through the reading of non-contemporary Tibetan writings, as well as ancient Tibetan literary works. Texts may include various genres. Prerequisite: TAML 140 or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L3  RP  1½ Course cr

* TBTN 110a, Elementary Classical Tibetan I  Staff
The first half of a two-term introduction to classical Tibetan. The script and its Romanization, pronunciation, normative dictionary order, and basic grammar. Readings from Tibetan literature and philosophy. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L1  RP  1½ Course cr

* TBTN 130a, Intermediate Classical Tibetan I  Staff
Continuation of TBTN 120. Introduction to more complex grammatical constructions. Further development of reading ability in various genres of Tibetan literature written prior to 1959. Prerequisite: TBTN 120 or equivalent. Course taught through distance learning using videoconferencing technology from Columbia University. Enrollment limited; interested students should e-mail minjin.hashbat@yale.edu for more information.  L3  RP  1½ Course cr

General Courses in South Asian Studies

* SAST 057a / RLST 015a, Gods and Heroes in Indian Religions  Phyllis Granoff
The basic doctrines and practices of India’s three classical religions, Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism, explored through close reading of texts in translation. Lives of the founders, great monks, nuns, and lay followers of Buddhism and Jainism; myths of the major Hindu gods; heroines and goddesses in the three traditions. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU

SAST 224b / HIST 396b, India and Pakistan since 1947  Rohit De
Introduction to the history of the Indian subcontinent from 1947 to the present. Focus on the emergence of modern forms of life and thought, the impact of the partition on state and society, and the challenges of democracy and development. Transformations of society, economy, and culture; state building; economic policy.  HU

SAST 260b / HSAR 145b / RLST 188b, Introduction to the History of Art: Buddhist Art and Architecture, 900 to 1600  Mimi Yiengpruksawan
Buddhist art and architecture of East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Tibet from the tenth century to the early modern period. Emphasis on cross-regional engagements including the impact of Islam.  HU

SAST 267a / EAST 125 / RLST 125a, Introduction to Buddhist Thought and Practice  Eric Greene
Significant aspects of Buddhism as practiced mainly in India and South Asia, including philosophy and ethics, monastic and ascetic life, meditation and ritual practices, and the material culture of Buddhist societies. The Mahayana tradition that emerged in the first century B.C.E.; later forms of esoteric Buddhism known as tantra; the development of modern Buddhism in Asia and its manifestation in the West. Readings from Buddhist texts in translation.  HU
SAST 278b / ECON 211b / GLBL 211b, Economic Performance and Challenges in India  Rakesh Mohan
India’s transition from being one of the poorest countries in the world to having one of the fastest-growing economies. Economic reform processes, trade and policy implications, and changes within the agriculture, industry, and service sectors. Prerequisites: introductory microeconomics and macroeconomics.  SO

SAST 280a / HIST 342a / RLST 180a, Mughal India, 1500–1800  Supriya Gandhi
Exploration of religion and the state in Mughal India, focusing on the period between 1500–1800. Topics include sacred sovereignty, orthodoxy, Sufism, vernacular literary and religious cultures, and the early colonial encounter.  HU

* SAST 306a / ANTH 322a / EVST 324a, Environmental Justice in South Asia  Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan and Luisa Cortesi
Study of South Asia’s nation building and economic development in the aftermath of war and decolonization in the 20th century. How it generated unprecedented stress on natural environments; increased social disparity; and exposure of the poor and minorities to environmental risks and loss of homes, livelihoods, and cultural resources. Discussion of the rise of environmental justice movements and policies in the region as the world comes to grips with living in the Anthropocene.  SO

* SAST 323a / HIST 313Ja, British Raj and the Indian Nation (1757–1947)  Rohit De
Drawing on a wide genre of primary sources, this seminar explores the consolidation of British rule over the Indian subcontinent; the transformations brought about by colonial policies; the subsequent rise of resistance movements; the growth of mass nationalism and partition and independence.  WR, HU

* SAST 362a / RLST 321b, Hindus and Muslims in South Asia  Supriya Gandhi
Study of engagements between Hindu and Muslim traditions in South Asia from medieval to modern times. Exploration of historical case studies of Hindu-Muslim relations and the formation of religious identities, as well as how memories of the past intersect with modern discourses on religion and politics.  HU

* SAST 368a / RLST 185a, The Mahabharata  Hugh Flick
Examination of the religious and cultural significance of the world’s longest epic poem within the Hindu bhakti religious tradition. Emphasis on the core narrative, the embedded narratives, and the internal philosophical discourses, including the Bhagavad Gita.  HU, TR

* SAST 372b / FILM 299b, A Thousand and One Nights at the Cinema  Samhita Sunya
Investigation of the prolific, longstanding, global screen histories of A Thousand and One Nights, also known as The Arabian Nights. Study of the way which they have congealed into a cinematic genre in their own right; a catapult for explorations of the fantastic, iterated as the wonders of technology/medium and sensuality; a contested site of negotiating Orientalist desires and stereotypes, themselves inextricable from histories of colonialism and (neo) imperialism; a platform for reflection upon the question of storytelling itself.  HU

* SAST 456b / LING 111b / LITR 152b, Sanskrit Classics in Translation  David Brick
The chief genres of Sanskrit secular literature set against the background of the cultural history of ancient India. Various literary styles compared with those of other world literary traditions.  HU, TR

* SAST 467a / RLST 127a, Visual Worlds of Himalayan Buddhism  Andrew Quintman
The role of images and imagining in the religious traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. How Tibetan Buddhist cultures produce religious images; ways of visualizing those images to invest them with meaning. Topics include specific modes of visual representation, relationships between text and image, social lives of images, and processes of reading and interpretation.  HU

* SAST 486b, Directed Study  Harry Blair
A one-credit, single-term course on topics not covered in regular offerings. To apply for admission, a student should present a course description and syllabus to the director of undergraduate studies, along with written approval from the faculty member who will direct the study.

Senior Essay Courses

* SAST 491a and SAST 492b, Senior Essay  Staff
A yearlong research project completed under faculty supervision and resulting in a substantial paper. Credit for SAST 491 only on completion of SAST 492.  ½ Course cr per term