Fall 2018

HNU 111 – Elementary Hindi/Urdu I
CRN: 96356 – MWF 12:00-12:50 – Kirby 102
Elementary Hindi/Urdu is an introductory language course that assumes no previous knowledge of these languages or South Asia culture. Hindi and Urdu share a common grammar and are nearly identical in their colloquial registers. Taken together, Hindi and Urdu are spoken by well over 500 million people across North India and Pakistan where they are used as the languages of government, media, education, business, as well as arts and entertainment (including Bollywood film). Hindi and Urdu also function as link languages throughout the Indian subcontinent and the South Asian diaspora.

In this course all students will learn Hindi’s Devanagari script. The primary goal of this course is to provide a practical foundation in Hindi-Urdu grammar and vocabulary, as well as the cultural awareness necessary for basic communication in spoken and written Hindi-Urdu. Upon completing this course, students will have achieved a basic proficiency necessary for many real-world interactions with Hindi-Urdu speakers.

MES 310C – Special Topics: Devotional Literature of South Asia
CRN: 96389 – MW 2:00-3:15 – Location: TBD
This course will introduce students to the rich heritage of devotional literature in South Asia, an area comprising the territories of modern-day India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Although this course will include examples from ancient India and from a variety of languages and regions, our focus will be the medieval and early-modern periods (1200-1800), and the devotional literature composed in the languages Hindi, Urdu, Panjabi, and Bengali. Topics will include the bhakti poetry of Kabir, Mirabai, and Surdas, the Ramayana of Tulsidas, the hymns of the Sikh Gurus, Sufi romances, Shi’i elegies, and Urdu ghazals. We will consider works in their original historical contexts, and in relation to their role in modern South Asian literature and film.

Students will explore such questions as what makes literature devotional. How does this literature embody encounters between different cultural, religious, and aesthetic traditions? How has this body of literature been read from both secular and sacred perspectives? How does devotional literature contribute to the construction of religious identity and community? How have medieval literary traditions in South Asia been appropriated for modern uses such as nation-building?