Seminar: Ancient India and Ancient Greece
Professors Thomas Martin and Todd Lewis
Professor Martin: Fenwick 422; Office hours Tu/Thurs 1:30-2:30 PM
Professor Lewis: Smith 425; Office hours: Thurs 3:30-6 PM

Course Description:
An exploration of the historical connections that linked two of the ancient “axial age” civilizations, Greece and India. Beginning with the linguistic connections in prehistory, the seminar will move to consider the history of eastern expansion of Hellenistic culture, and the foundations of Indian civilization. Sessions will be devoted to connections made between Greeks and Indians, especially those forged by the conquests of Alexander the Great. Sessions will be devoted to important comparative themes such as the hero, the sage, sacrifice, and major gods. The seminar will conclude with a focus on the region called Gandhara (now Pakistan and Afghanistan) where Greeks and Buddhists coexisted, conversed, and converted to create new artistic and religious traditions. The course will culminate in the consideration of Buddhism in this important Greco-Indic contact zone.

This inter-disciplinary seminar will include presentations by leading scholars from Holy Cross and other major universities. A class field trip on Saturday April 16 will allow seminar members to view the extraordinary collections of art in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art) and coins (American Numismatic Society) is required.

Course Goals and Expectations:
The goals of the course are to enhance understanding of both Indian and Hellenic/Hellenistic civilizations, explore the history of socio-cultural interactions, and examine the nature of cultural similarities, especially in religion.
The nature of this seminar requires that all members raise issues for further discussion and clarification. Thus you need to complete all the readings and make a careful preparation before seminar for discussion. We expect you to bring creativity to find connections between the various course themes over the course of the term. Please bring the pertinent books and collective photocopied readings to class.
Attendance is mandatory, participation in discussion expected. Prepared remarks on assigned topics must be completed on the designated due dates. Informed participation is figured into the term’s grading.
Seminar Grading Standards: (Separate guidelines will be given for each.)
5 pts.   Map Assignment
5 pts.   Timeline Assignment
25 pts. Class participation, including assigned in-class presentations
40 pts. Term Paper, 10-15 pages (Due at then end of the term)
25 pts. Individual Oral Final. (20-30 minute session during the exam period)

100 pts.

Standards of Academic Integrity:
Ultimately all your work for this and any course is collaborative. Learning is a product of reading materials written by others, viewing images and films, and listening with others. When the work of others is utilized for written or design work, as it must be, it is essential that these sources be clearly acknowledged. The failure to do so – in citing passages from books or articles, including cutting and pasting any text from internet sources – is to break one of the central rules of academic life. The College of the Holy Cross, and we as scholars, take very seriously any occasion of plagiarism. This can be defined quite simply: the presentation of another’s work (ideas or words) as one's own. Be extremely careful in your research so that you do not inadvertently copy information without crediting the source. You must use proper citation form listed on the paper assignment guidelines.

Course Books
Arrian. The Campaigns of Alexander (Penguin edition)
Readings on Moodle/ERE-s  [Note: additional readings will be posted over the course of the term.]
Seminar Schedule and Readings

I. METHODOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Week 1. **Course Overview; Origins and Sources**
1/27 Problems and Possibilities Of Comparative History
Indo-European connections: language, trade, culture
“Europe” and “Asia” as Imagined Categories

Required Readings:
Jonathan Mark Kennoyer, “By Land and By Sea: [Indus Valley] Trade with the Near East” [ERES]
Thomas McEvilley, “Diffusion Channels in the Pre-Alexandrian Period” [ERES]

Week 2. **An Overview of Greek History (Origins-500 CE)**
2/3 Geography of Hellenism; Religions of Ancient Greece

Required Readings:
Lionel Casson, excerpts from *Travel in the Ancient World*. [ERES]

Week 3. **An Overview of Indic History (Origins-500 CE)**
2/10 Indus Valley and Extra-regional Connections;
Vedic Religion; Upanishad Thought

Required Readings:
Selections form Vedic Hymns [ERES]
The *Katha Upanishad* [ERES]
II. ANCIENT CULTURAL COMPARISONS

“All things are subject to change; all things flow; tomorrow we will not be what we were yesterday or we are today.” ~ Ovid

“View this fleeting world as: a star at dawn, a bubble in the stream, a flash of lightning in a summer cloud, a flickering lamp, a phantom in a dream.” ~ Shakyamuni, the Buddha

Week 4: Sages and their Teachings I: Pythagoras/TM
2/17
Required Readings:
Life of Pythagoras: versions by Iamblichus, Porphyry, Photius, and Diogenes Laertius (http://www.completepythagoras.net/mainframeset.html)

Weeks 5: Sages and their Teachings II: the Buddha /TL
2/24
Required Readings:
Johannes Bronkhorst, Buddhist Teaching in India, 1-60.
Selections from the Samnyasa Upanishads [ERES]
“Skepticisms of Ancient India” [ERES]

Week 6: Comparisons in Religious Beliefs and Practices
3/3
Seminar Members Construct Indo-European Comparisons
I. SKY GODS: ZEUS & INDRA
Readings:
Indra Hymns, Rig Veda
Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound
"Hymn to Zeus" in Agamemnon

II. DIONYSUS & SOMA
Readings:
Soma Hymns, Rig Veda
Dionysus, Euripides, Bacchae

III. THE RITUAL SACRIFICE
Readings:
Agni hymns, Rig Veda

IV. DOCTRINES OF REINCARNATION
Readings:
Katha Upanishad
Plato, Republic Book 10.608d-621d [immortality of soul; myth of Er]
Plato, Phaedo 106b-115a, Phaedrus 245c-250c [immortality of soul]

3/10: No CLASS, SPRING BREAK
III. CONQUERORS and their LEGACIES

Week 7. History of Alexander; Legacy in North India /TM

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Required Readings:
Arrian. The Campaigns of Alexander Books 4-6 (Penguin edition) and Indica (Harvard Univ. Press, Loeb Classical Library edition)
Plutarch, Life of Alexander, sections 57-66 (Alexander in India and his dialogue with Indian philosophers).
Strabo. Geography (Harvard Univ. Press, Loeb Classical Library edition)
Book 15.1.1-73 (India as described by Greeks from Alexander's expedition, including the encounter with "naked sophists").
Recommended:

Week 8. Chandragupta Maurya & Ashoka: Conquest, Conversion /TL

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3/24 Ashoka in the Asian Imagination

Required Readings:
Edicts of Ashoka [ERES];
Excerpts from the Ashoka Avadana

Week 8.2 Special Lecture: Popular Narratives: Folklore

Possible guest: Fr. Greg Carlson (http://www.creighton.edu/aesop/)

Required Readings:

IV. GRECO-INDIAN CONVERGENCE: BUDDHISM IN GANDHARA

Week 9. Ancient Buddhism: Origins, Diaspora; Yonas /TL

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3/31 Sources for Buddhist tradition in Gandhara

Required Readings:
Johannes Bronkhorst, Buddhist Teaching in India, 61-114
Week 10. Art and Architecture in Gandhara  
4/7  Guest Scholar: Mika Natif, Visual Arts Department, Holy Cross  
Required Readings:  

Week 11.1 Encounter: Greek King Menander, Nagasena the Monk  
4/14  Seminar Examines Cases from The Questions of King Milinda  
Required Readings:  
http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/milinda.htm (excerpts TBD)

Week 11.2 Field Trip to New York:  
Sat 4/16  Metropolitan Museum and American Numismatic Society  
Required Readings:  

4/21: NO CLASS

Week 12. Greek Skeptics and Buddhist Deconstructionists  
4/28  Pyrrhonian Tradition and Buddhist Madhyamaka Philosophy  
Required Readings:  
Johannes Bronkhorst, Buddhist Teaching in India, 115-200.

Week 13. Later Buddhist Traditions in Gandhara  
5/5  Guest Scholar: Professor Gregory Schopen, UCLA  
Required Readings:  
Mark Allon and Richard Solomon, “New Evidence for Mahayana in Early Gandhara” [ERES]

EXAM PERIOD TIME: Students Present their Term Papers