

Semester III

Debates in the History of Ideas I: Society, Culture & Language

Objectives:

The objective of 'Debates in the History of Ideas I & II' papers is to get students to engage in debates about ideas in discourses of society, politics, culture, business and technology. The teacher will engage students in a series of discussions that allows students to discover the relevance of these debates to their personal and public life. The students will then be introduced to essays, articles, literary narratives and popular fiction and cinema texts that open debating points. The teacher will then help the students to frame their responses by way of writing essays and making presentations based on the classroom discussions, readings and activities. The students will ultimately have to place their responses in public domain and invite counter-responses and thus become participants in public discourses.

Desired learning outcomes:

The student should develop the following abilities during this course:

- Be able to grasp the basic concepts in the mentioned discourses
- Follow the debates and identify the important questions in the mentioned discourses
- Develop connections between ideas, facts and experiences
- Create coherent and logical arguments based on evidences
- Use imagination, develop sensitivity and practice empathy in responding to issues

Classroom Engagement:

The papers will have to be taught keeping the objectives and the desired learning outcomes in mind. The teacher will have to engage students in discussions and debates and then slowly direct them towards formulating responses. The use of texts in the classroom by the teacher should aid the achievement of the desired learning outcomes and may not become the central focus in the class.

Themes to be engaged with:

Under the 'Society, Culture and Politics' paper the teacher will have to compulsorily engage with the below mentioned themes along with any other related themes:

- The colonial experience and the idea of the nation
- Democracy as a way of life
- Identity politics of language, religion and ethnicity
- Caste and gender politics in India

Tasks and Activities:

The CIA tasks to be given by the teacher could be blended with the regular tasks. The regular tasks could act as a preparation for CIA tasks and the students should get an idea of the nature of work that they are supposed to do as part of their CIA tasks. Classroom activities may vary from teacher to teacher, but any teacher teaching the paper should ensure that the activities and tasks lead to the achievement of the desired learning goals.

Texts:

1. Extracts from 'Annihilation of Caste' - B R Ambedkar
2. Selections from 'Steel Nibs Are Sprouting'
3. Fandry (movie) - Nagaraj Manjule
4. Extracts from 'Hind Swaraj' - M K Gandhi
5. Selections from 'The Argumentative Indian'
6. Selections from 'India Dissents: 3000 Years of Difference, Doubt and Argument'
7. Mona's Story - Urvashi Bhutalia
8. Selections from 'Unbound: 2000 Years of Indian Women Writing'
9. The Kannada-English Combat - D R Nagaraj

Semester IV

Debates in the History of Ideas II: Business, Politics & Technology

Objectives:

'Debates in the History of Ideas II' is designed to motivate students to engage in debates on the contemporary developments in society that revolve around politics, culture, business and technology. The facilitator, through a series of interactive lectures, discussions, screenings and both written and oral assignments would encourage learners identify the resonance of contemporary socio-cultural and political debates in their personal and public life. In this Course, learners will be introduced to key social thinkers, and their works, particularly essays, news articles, case study reports, film texts, and online lectures by acclaimed authors. The study materials mentioned above will act as a springboard for reflection. The facilitator will then help students to articulate their responses by way of writing essays, and classroom presentations with an emphasis on personal experiences. Each presentation session will be followed by a Q&A session and discussion.

Desired learning outcomes:

After the completion of this Course learners will be able to:

- Develop an understanding of the ideas included in the syllabus and how they influence personal experiences
- Follow contemporary debates and ask thoughtful questions to themselves and institutions before conforming
- Establish connections between ideas, facts and experiences related to politics, business, and technology in the context of regional, national, and global cultures
- Articulate coherent and logical arguments on substantial socio-political developments
- Use imagination to develop sensitivity and practice empathy while responding to issues in speaking, writing
- Understand the importance engaging with political discourses
- Critically evaluate the immediate society and promptly respond to situations

Classroom Engagement:

All the classroom activities, including assignments need to be designed keeping in mind the objectives and the desired learning outcomes. The teacher shall expose the learners to the world of the history of ideas, in the contexts of society, politics, business and technology through the recommended and other reading and viewing materials. It would be ideal to begin the Course by engaging students in discussions and debates and then gradually guide them towards formulating responses. The use

of study materials in the classroom should only facilitate the achievement of the desired learning outcomes and needn't be the central focus.

Themes to be engaged with:

Under the 'Society, Culture, Politics, Business and Technology' Course, the teacher will have to engage with the below mentioned themes along with other supplementing ideas:

- Ideas and debates in the contemporary regional, national and global cultures
- Ethical concerns in the evolution of economic ideologies and business practices in the context of technology
- The nexus between business, politics and society, and how it paves way to the formation of dominant cultures
- Technology, creativity and the contemporary work culture
- Life and its challenges amidst surveillance capitalism
- Should humans develop a firewall to resist technology? How much technology is too much!
- Internet, privacy and personal freedom
- The machine, me and my choices

Tasks and Activities:

The CIA tasks needs to be blended with the regular classroom tasks. The regular tasks assigned by the facilitator should act as a preparation for CIA components and the learners should be familiarised with the nature of work that they are expected to complete as part of the internal assessment modules. Classroom activities may vary from teacher to teacher, however, the course objectives and desired learning goals need to be kept in mind while designing the classroom activities and CIA modules.

Reading and Viewing Materials

1. A Carnival for Sciences - Shiv Visvanathan (Extract from Carnival for Science)
2. Home or Exile in the Digital Future - Shoshana Zubof (Extract from the Age of Surveillance Capitalism)
3. How the Facebook-Reliance Combine and the Farm Laws Pave Way for Digital Colonization - Daniel Block - The Caravan
4. Beyond the Apocalypse: An Unfinished Meditation on Ethics - Rana Dasgupta (Extract from Sarai Reader 03)
5. Where Our Path Has Led - Tim Wu

6. Resisting Technology – Ravi Agarwal (Extract from Sarai Reader 03)
7. Monsanto, Government of India, and the Bt Cotton Conundrum (Extract from A Frayed History: The Journey of Cotton in India)
8. Middlemen: Mr. Fix-it Down the Street – Josy Joseph (Extract from A Feast of Vultures)

Documentaries

1. The Corporation - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpQYsk-8dWg>
2. Surveillance Capitalism - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIXhnWUmMvw>

Talks

1. The Attention Merchants - Tim Wu
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmR7tztA28k>
2. The Curse of Bigness - Tim Wu -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kg41tOGzjg
3. The Net Delusion - Evgeny Morozov -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oqab5Y0u60M>
4. Bureaucratic Technology and Future as Dream-Time - David Graeber -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Q84ar89Oxo>

Movies

1. Thank you for Smoking (2005)
2. Margin Call (2011)
3. Wall Street (1987) & (2010)
4. Banker Margayya

Recommended Reading

1. Traditions of Technology – Ashis Nandy (Extract from Traditions, Tyranny and Utopias: Essays in the Politics of Awareness)
2. Of Flying Cars and Declining Rate of Profit – David Graeber (Extract from The Utopia of Rules)
3. Internet Freedoms and Their Consequences – Evgeny Morozov (Extract from The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom)