

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

M.A. Psychology

Structure-I (2- Year PG Program)

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE COURSE

SEMESTER I

**DSE 106: PHILOSOPHICAL AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF INDIAN
PSYCHOLOGY**

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION, ELIGIBILITY AND PRE-REQUISITE OF THE COURSE

Course Title & Code	Total Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility Criteria/ Prerequisite
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical	
DSE 106 Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Indian Psychology	4	3	0	1	Graduation in any stream

Marks:100

Hours: 60

Credit: 4 (Lectures + Internal Assessment + Practical)

Learning Objectives:

1. To generate a basic understanding of the historical and philosophical foundations of mainstream science, leading to a critical appraisal of what in it helps and what in it hinders a comprehensive understanding of human nature.
2. To outline the unique contributions that the Indian tradition can make towards a comprehensive understanding of human nature.
3. To elucidate different concepts of consciousness and ways of understanding reality and to highlight the need for integrality and a comprehensive synthesis.
4. To delineate Sri Aurobindo's concept of an 'on-going evolution of consciousness'.

Learning Outcomes:

After studying the course, the students shall be able to:

1. Appreciate the limitations of what the mainstream scientific approach can contribute to psychology
2. Identify the unique contribution that Indian psychology can make to the understanding of the human psyche
3. Have a deeper understanding of the debates and controversies around the concept of 'consciousness'.
4. Understand the concept of an 'on-going evolution of consciousness' which differs from Darwin's concept of physical evolution

Course Contents

Unit 1: Psychology in the context of our global civilization—The strengths and limitations of the European enlightenment; The social and philosophical foundations of modern science; American pragmatism and the rise of science and technology; The origin, strengths and limitations of physicalism; The origin, strengths and limitations of (de)constructionism.

(10 Hours)

Unit 2: Contribution of Indian tradition —The two main points: *Sachchidananda* as the foundation of reality (an understanding of reality that encompasses both matter and spirit; consciousness and joy at the roots); Yoga as technology of consciousness; A very short history of Indian thought; A critical evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the Indian tradition with regards to a comprehensive understanding of human nature
(10 Hours)

Unit 3: The need for integrality and a comprehensive synthesis—Different concepts of consciousness and ways of understanding reality; The need for integrality; Why an integral synthesis of the various yoga traditions is needed and how it is to be done; Why an integral synthesis of science and Indian thought is needed and how it is to be done; A critical evaluation of what stands in the way on the side of mainstream science; A critical evaluation of what stands in the way from within the Indian culture.
(10 Hours)

Unit 4: Sri Aurobindo's concept of an *on-going evolution of consciousness*—What Sri Aurobindo's *evolution of consciousness* adds to Darwin's purely physical evolution as background for our understanding of human existence; How an involution and subsequent emergence of such varieties of conscious existence could provide a credible third option between "evolution by design" and "evolution by chance."
(10 Hours)

Practicum: At least 2 (Two) practicals based on the above units
(20 Hours)

Essential Readings:

1. Aurobindo, S. (2005). *The life Divine*. In Complete works of Sri Aurobindo (Vols. 21–22). Pondicherry, India: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department.
2. Aurobindo, S. (2007). *A few representative short texts by Sri Aurobindo*. Pondicherry, India: Sri Aurobindo Centre of Consciousness Studies. Retrieved on February 16, 2025 from <http://www.saccs.org.in/texts/integralyoga-sa.php>
3. Aurobindo, S. (2008). *The integral yoga*. Pondicherry, India: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.
4. Aurobindo, S. (2010). *The synthesis of yoga*. Pondicherry, India: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.
5. Cornelissen, R. M. M., Misra, G., & Varma, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Foundations and applications of Indian Psychology*. Pearson.
6. Kumar, S. K. K. (2008). Indian thought and tradition: A psychohistorical perspective. In K.R. Rao, A.C. Paranjpe & A.K. Dalal (Eds.), *Handbook of Indian Psychology* (pp. 19-52). Cambridge University Press.
7. Rao, K. R., & Paranjpe, A. C. (2016). *Psychology in the Indian tradition*. New Delhi, India: Springer.
8. Rao, K. R., Paranjpe, A.C., & Dalal, A.K. (Eds.) (2008). *Handbook of Indian Psychology*. Cambridge University Press.

Recommended Readings:

1. Adhia, H., Nagendra, H. R., & Mahadevan, B. (2010). Impact of performance. *International Journal of Yoga, Jul-Dec, 3(2)*, 55–66.
2. Brunton, P. (2009). *The Maharshi and his message*. Tiruvannamalai, India: Sri Ramanasramam.

3. Chakraborty, S. K. (1995). Wisdom leadership: Leading self by the SELF. *Journal of Human Values*, 1(2),205-220.
4. Sinha, D. (1965). Integration of modern psychology with Indian thought. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 5(1), 6–17.
5. Sinha, D. (1981). Non-western perspectives in psychology: Why, what and whiter? *Journal of Indian Psychology*, 3, 1–9.
6. Sinha, D. (1996). Culturally rooted psychology in India: Dangers and developments. *International Journal of Psychology*, 30, 99–110.