

UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

CNC-II/093/1/Misc./2026/41

Dated: 22.05.2026

NOTIFICATION

Sub: Amendment to Ordinance V

Following addition be made to Appendix-II-A to the Ordinance V (2-A) of the Ordinances of the University;

Add the following:

The syllabus of Discipline Specific Core paper titled "Ancient and Medieval Political Through" in BA (Hons.) Political Science for Semester-III based on UGCF 2022, has been revised and is notified for the information of all concerned as per *Annexure-1*.



REGISTRAR

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The following is the revised version of the Discipline Specific Core Course 8: "Ancient and Medieval Indian Political Thought" of BA (Hons.) Political Science Sem-III that was previously approved vide CNC-II/093/1(25)/2023-24/ Dated: 31.05.2023, Amendment to Ordinance V [E.C Resolution No. 60/ (60-1-3) dated 03.02.2023] under Appendix-II-A to the Ordinance V (2-A).

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC CORE COURSE – 8: Ancient and Medieval Indian Political Thought

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION, ELIGIBILITY AND PRE-REQUISITES OF THE COURSE

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
Ancient and Medieval Indian Political Thought DSC-8	4	3	1	-	NA	NA

Learning Objectives

The political thought which constitutes the dominant element of political Science is essentially euro genetic and Eurocentric. What we study in our universities are ones which evolved and developed with European and Anglo-American tradition. The conceptual framework and discourses were product of societies and the forces amidst which they took birth and the shape. That does not mean that India had no tradition of political thinking. This paper seeks to critically engage with writers of ancient India who produced wonderful treatise on the statecraft and several elements of government and governance. This includes the concept of monarchy, the forms of government, the role of the state and state individual relationship.

Learning outcomes

After reading the course the students would be able to answer

- What were the major institutions of government in ancient India and how did they function?
- How thinkers like Shukra, Brihaspati and Kautilya perceived the role of statecraft in society?

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- What was the Nitisar tradition? How did it mark a difference from the Arthashastra tradition?
- The students will be able to answer how Kabir epitomised the syncretic traditions of India.
- What was the political and economic ideas of Tiruvallur and what was his take on ethics?

SYLLABUS OF DSC- 8

UNIT – I (5 Hours)

Foundations of Indian Political Thought:

- An Overview on Sources of Indian Political Thought
- Cultural and Territorial conception of India
- Distinctive Features of Indian Political Thought

UNIT – II (4.5 Hours)

Brihaspati: Statecraft, Justice, Inter-state Relations

UNIT – III (4.5 Hours)

Shukra/Usana

- Talking Point: Debate on the authenticity of Shukra-Niti
- The Concept of Kingship and Statecraft in Shukra-Niti

UNIT – IV (4.5 Hours)

Kautilya: Theory of State

UNIT – V (4.5 Hours)

Aggannasutta (Digha Nikaya): Theory of kingship

UNIT – VI (4.5 Hours)

Tiruvalluvar: Ethical Life and Politics

UNIT – VII (4.5 Hours)

Basavanna

UNIT – VIII (4.5 Hours)

Adi Shankracharya: Advaita

UNIT – IX (4.5 Hours)

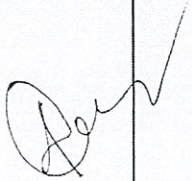
Kabir and Guru Nanak: Syncretism

UNIT – X (4 Hours)

Abu'l Fazl: Monarchy

Essential/recommended readings

Unit 1: Foundations of Indian Political Thought:



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V. R. Mehta (1992) Introduction, in *Foundation of Indian Political Thought*, Delhi, Manohar, pp. 1-11.

Brown, D. M. (1953). *The Premises of Indian Political Thought*. *The Western Political Quarterly*, 6(2), 243-249.

Suda, J. P. (1970). *Dharma: Its Nature and Role in Ancient India*. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 31(4), 356-366.

Varma, Vishwanath Prasad (1953). *Studies in Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations*, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi.

Flood, Gavin (2003). *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd, UK.

Unit 2: Brihaspati: Statecraft, Justice, Inter-state Relations

Vajpeyi, Raghavendra (1966) *Barhaspatya Rajya-Vyavastha: Political and Legal System of Brhaspati*. Chaukhamba Vidyabhawan, Varanasi.

Chousalkar Ashok S. (2018). *Revisiting the Political Thought of Ancient India: Pre-Kautilyan Arthashastra*: SAGE Publications Pvt Ltd, Delhi.

Kane, P.V (1940). "Rajyashastras of Brihaspati, Usanas, Bhardwaj and Vishalaksh". *Journal of the University of Bombay*.

Unit 3: Shukra/Usana:

Nagar, Vandana (1985). *Kingship in Shukra-Niti*, Pushpa Prakashan, Delhi, India.

Varma, Vishwanath Prasad (December 1962). "Some Aspects of Public Administration in The Sukraniti". *Indian Journal of Political Science*. 23 (1/4): 302-308.

Puntambekar, S. V. (1948). *Some Aspects of Sukra's Political Thought*. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 9(2/3), 1-12.

Unit 4: Kautilya: Theory of State

Kautilya (1997) 'The Elements of Sovereignty' in R. Kangle (ed. and trns.), *Arthashastra of Kautilya*, New Delhi: Motilal Publishers, pp. 511- 514.

V. Mehta (1992) 'The Pragmatic Vision: Kautilya and His Successor', in *Foundations of Indian Political Thought*, Delhi: Manohar, pp. 88- 109.

R. Kangle (1997) *Arthashastra of Kautilya-Part-III: A Study*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, pp. 116- 142.

Unit 5: Aggannasutta (Digha Nikaya): Theory of kingship

S. Collins (ed) (2001) *Agganna Sutta: An Annotated Translation*, New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, pp. 44-49.

S. Collins (2001) 'General Introduction', in *Agganna Sutta: The Discussion on What is Primary (An Annotated Translation from Pali)*, Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, pp. 1- 26.

B. Gokhale (1966) 'The Early Buddhist View of the State', in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXVI (1), pp. 15- 22.

Unit 6: Tiruvalluvar: Ethical Life and Politics

Maharajan, S. (2017), *Makers of Indian Literature: Tiruvalluvar*, Sahitya Akademi Publication, New Delhi.

K. V. Nagarajan *Thiruvalluvar's Vision: Polity and Economy in Thirukkural*, *History of Political Economy* 37:1, 2005 by Duke University Press.

C.S. Srinivasachari, *The Political Ideology of the Kural*, *Indian Journal of Political Science*, Oct-Dec 1949, pp 15-23

Norman Cutler, *Interpreting Thirukural: The Role of the Commentary in the Creation of a Text*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, October- December 1992, Vol 112, No 4, pp 549-556

Unit 7: Basavanna

H. Thipperudraswamy, *Basaveshwara*, Sahitya Akademi, 1975.

Julia Leslie, *Understanding Basava: History, Historiography, and a Modern Kannada Drama*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, university of London*, 1998, Vol 61, No 2, pp 228-261.

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M. P. Samarth, Basava's Spiritual Struggle, Religious Studies, Cambridge University Press, Sept 1977, Vol 13, No 3, pp 335-347.

Unit 8: Adi Shankracharya –Advaita

Koller, John, M. (2012) 'Shankara', in Chad Meister & Paul Copan (eds.), The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion, pp. 99 - 108.

Manilal Divedi, The Advaita Philosophy of Shankara, pp. 95-113. (Published by Department of Oriental Studies, University of Vienna).

Chatterjee and Dutta (2007), An Introduction to Indian Philosophy, New Delhi: Rupa Publications, pp 317 - 382.

Swami Mukhyananda (2006), Shri Shankaracharya: Life and Philosophy, Kolkata: Advaita Ashram, pp. 1 - 64.

Unit 9: Kabir and Guru Nanak: Syncretism

Kabir. (2002) The Bijak of Kabir (translated by L. Hess and S. Singh), Delhi: Oxford University Press, No. 30, 97, pp. 50- 51 & 69- 70.

V. Mehta (1992) Foundation of Indian Political Thought, Delhi: Manohar, pp. 157- 183.

G. Omvedt (2008) 'Kabir and Ravidas, Envisioning Begumpura', in Seeking Begumpura: The Social Vision of Anti Caste Intellectual, Delhi: Navayana, pp. 91- 107.

Unit 10: Abu'l Fazl: Monarchy

A. Fazl (1873) The Ain-i Akbari (translated by H. Blochmann), Calcutta: G. H. Rouse, pp. 47- 57.

V. Mehta (1992) 'The Imperial Vision: Barni and Fazal', in Foundations of Indian Political thought, Delhi: Manohar, pp. 134- 156.

Additional Readings:

V.R.Mehta, Foundations of Indian Political Thought. Delhi: 1992, Manohar

U.N.Ghoshal, A History of Indian Political Ideas: the ancient period and the period of transition to the middle ages . OUP, Bombay, 1959

Himanshu Roy & M.P.Singh (eds.), Indian Political Thought, Pearson, Second edition, 2017.

Ankit Tomar & Suratha K Malik (eds.), Ancient and Medieval Indian Thought: Themes and Traditions. Sage. 2020

Note: Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, University of Delhi, from time to time.

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