



Indraprastha College for Women University of Delhi

Work Plan for ODD SEMESTER – 2026

Course Name:	BA(H)English
Paper Title:	Indian Classical Literature
Unique Paper Code:	
Semester:	1
Faculty:	Bithika Gorai
Year:	2026

Work Plan			
Unit No.	Learning Objective	Lecture No.	Topics to be Covered
I	Context, Narrative and Structure	1	Introduction to Indian epic tradition; Mahabharata as itihasa; authorship, transmission, composition and narrative frame.
I	Context, Narrative and Structure	2	The framing narratives: Ugrashrava Sauti, Janamejaya and the story-within-a-story structure.
I	Context, Narrative and Structure	3	The Kuru genealogy; Shantanu, Bhishma, Satyawati and the dynastic crisis.
I	Context, Narrative and Structure	4	Pandavas and Kauravas: childhood, rivalry, education and the politics of succession.
I	Context, Narrative and Structure	5	Dice game, exile and the transformation of the central conflict.
I	Context, Narrative and Structure	6	The Mahabharata as a multi-layered narrative: sub-stories, speeches, digressions and competing perspectives.
II	Dharma, Ethics and Human Conflict	7	The idea of dharma: duty, moral ambiguity and conflicting obligations.
II	Dharma, Ethics and Human Conflict	8	Krishna and the Bhagavad Gita: action, detachment, duty and ethical choice.
II	Dharma, Ethics and Human Conflict	9	Arjuna's dilemma and the relationship between individual conscience and social duty.
II	Dharma, Ethics and Human Conflict	10	Bhishma, Karna and Duryodhana: loyalty, honour, allegiance and moral complexity.

II	Dharma, Ethics and Human Conflict	11	Draupadi and the dice-hall episode: dignity, justice, gender and power.
II	Dharma, Ethics and Human Conflict	12	War and its ethical paradoxes: vows, strategy, violence and the cost of victory.
III	Politics, Gender and the Aftermath of War	13	Kingship and statecraft: power, legitimacy, succession and political negotiation.
III	Politics, Gender and the Aftermath of War	14	Women in the Mahabharata: Kunti, Gandhari, Draupadi and the negotiation of agency.
III	Politics, Gender and the Aftermath of War	15	The Kurukshetra war: major turning points and the collapse of the Kuru order.
III	Politics, Gender and the Aftermath of War	16	Aftermath of war: grief, repentance, responsibility and Yudhishtira's crisis.
III	Politics, Gender and the Aftermath of War	17	The ending of the epic: renunciation, ascent and the significance of the final journey.
III	Politics, Gender and the Aftermath of War	18	Revision and critical discussion: epic form, dharma, gender, politics and continuing relevance.

Unit	Contents/Syllabus
I	Context, narrative structure and major episodes; origins and transmission; Kuru genealogy; rivalry of Pandavas and Kauravas; dice game and exile.
II	Dharma and ethical conflict; Draupadi and the dice hall; characters, vows, loyalty and the ethics of war.
III	Kingship and politics; gender and agency;
S. No.	Name of Authors/Books/Publishers
1.	Vyasa. The Mahabharata. Trans. Bibek Debroy. Penguin Random House India.
2.	R.K. Narayan. The Mahabharata. Indian Thought Publications.
3.	J.A.B. van Buitenen, trans. The Mahabharata. University of Chicago Press.

4.	Alf Hildebeitel. Rethinking the Mahabharata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King.
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	Paper Components		
Credits	Lecture (L)	Tutorial (T)	Practical (P)
	1	1	
Assessment Scheme			
S.No.	Component	Marking Scheme	Total Marks
1	Internal Assessment - Assignment - Class Test - Attendance	12+12	
2.	Continuous Assessment (Tutorial) - Activity 1 - Activity 2 - Attendance	20+15	
3.	Practical - Continuous Assessment - End Term Written/Practical Exam - Viva		
4.	End Semester Examination		