Course 442 (3/4 credits)  
History of Ancient India

1. **Course Description:**

   This course is designed to give a survey of the political and cultural history of the sub-continent of India from the earliest times to circa 12th century A.D. An attempt is made to cover this vast span of time and space by presenting an outline of political history in terms of select personalities and major dynasties (e.g., the Mauryas, the Kushans, the Guptas), of social organization in terms of governing ideas and institutions, of religious systems, and of art and architecture.

2. **Lectures:** Twice a week. TR
   Honors available.

3. **Lecture Schedule:** See the attached list.

4. **Written Assignments and Exams:**

   Two term papers and a final examination (which could be a take-home). **First term paper** will be due by **October 10**. **Second term paper** by **November 16**. Term papers need not be more than 6 typed pages. **Final (Take-Home) Examination** will be due on **December 14**.

5. **Honors and Graduate Students:**

   Those who opt for Honors as well as the Grad students will be required to do a special essay (not more than 25 typed pages) on an assigned topic.

6. **Grading System:**

   For undergrads the grading will be based on the performances in the two term papers (60%; i.e. 30% for each paper) and the final examination (40%). For the Honors and Grad students on the quality and content of the special essay.

6. **Required and Recommended Readings:** See the list on the back page.
LIST OF REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED BOOKS

[Note: Books marked * are Required]


A. L. Basham: The Wonder that was India, Grove Press, Inc., New York, (or another paperback edition). There are other paperback editions of this also.

A. L. Basham (ed.): The History & Culture of India, Oxford University Press.

C. M. Bongard Levin: Mauryan India, Delhi, 1985.

* Ainslee T. Embree (ed.): Sources of Indian Tradition, Vol. I (From the Beginning to 1500 A.D.).


K. A. Nilakanta Sastri: A History of South India, Oxford University Press.

Bardwell L. Smith (ed.): Essays on Gupta Culture, Delhi, 1983.


NOTE: Some of the books listed above are out-of-print and not available in Madison bookstores. They may be borrowed from the U.W. Library or check with me for alternate readings or for readings on topics of special interest.

FOR REFERENCE:

R. C. Majumdar and A. D. Pusalkar (eds.), The History and Culture of the Indian People, Bombay. First four volumes, selected chapters.


NOTE: For more bibliographical information use the general bibliography as well as chapter-wise bibliographical notes on sources as given by Thapar, A History of India, vol. I.
LECTURE SCHEDULE [PROVISIONAL]

September

5: Introduction
7: Land, People, and Languages
12: Historiography: Sources, Methods, Problems, World Context
14: Indus Valley Civilisation/Harappa Culture: First Urban Settlements
19: Vedic Civilisation and the Indo-European Problems
21: Second Urban Growth: Republics and Monarchies of 6th Century B.C.
26: Rise of Magadhan Empire
28: Ashoka (3rd century B.C.) and Unification of the Indian Subcontinent

October

3: Disintegration of Mauryan Empire: External and Internal Factors
5: The Foreign Elements in the Political and Cultural History of India: The Greeks and the Sakas
10: The Kushanas and their Empire
12: Emergence of Centrifugal Tendencies in the Body-Politic of India
17: The Guptas and the "Classical Age" of India (6th-8th Centuries A.D.)
19: Growth of Regionalism and "Feudalism"
24: Harsha and Pulakesin: North vs. South
26: THANKSGIVING
31: Deccan and the South: Conflicts

November

2: Tripartite Struggles for Supremacy: Pala (Bengal) - Pratihara (North) - Rashtrakuta (Deccan)
7: The Great Periods of the South: Pallavas and Cholas
9: Regional States in the East, West, and South
14: Rise of Islam and Two Phases of Conquest in India: Sind and North West
16: Ancient India and Outside World: Cultural Impacts in Central Asia and Southeast Asia
21: Society: Ideology and Institutions
23: Varna-Jati (caste) and Ashrama Systems
28: Family: Women: Education
30: Religion: Hinduism
December

5: Religion: Buddhism and Jainism
7: Religion: Folk Elements and Tantra
12: Art: Iconography, Sculpture and Painting
14: Architecture - Temples

NOTE: 1. First Term Paper due on Tuesday, the 10th October.
2. Second Term Paper due on Thursday, the 16th November.
3. Honors Paper due on Tuesday, the 7th December.
4. Final Examination: (Take-home) due on Thursday, the 14th December.