Yoga History, Theory, and Philosophy

Yoga is one of the six classical "outlooks on the nature of being" (Shat Darshana) of Hinduism. Yoga has a five-thousand-year history, its teachings passed from one generation to the next through a written and oral tradition. All yoga traditions, though varied and diverse, share a fundamental aspiration: self-realization. This class surveys the fascinating history of yoga and explores the theories and philosophies underlying its practices, from asana (poses) to dhyana (meditation), from tapas (discipline) to santosha (contentment). This class examines the main schools of yogic philosophy, reviews its main epochs of development, and delves into some of its most influential texts, including the Vedas, Upanishads, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, the Bhagavad-gita, and select texts from the Tantras. Open to second-, third-, and fourth-year students only.

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