LAS 199: Globalization and Ethnic Tensions: Learning from a Changing India
(A course starting on campus in November 2008 and culminating in New Delhi, India, on
January 13, 2009)

Instructor: Rajmohan Gandhi, Research Professor, Center for South Asian & Middle Eastern
Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Course Aim: An intellectual and cultural enhancement that will make participants more capable
of comprehending, coping with, and contributing to a swiftly changing world; in particular,
obtaining knowledge of a changing India and improving skills in working with a culture different
from and yet important to the American.

Course Design: On the Champaign-Urbana campus: Six hours of classes in Nov.-Dec. 2008
(dates, timings, and venues TBA) will cover

• India’s independence movement and Constitution, and India’s ethnic map
• India’s economic advance, globalization, and environment
• the Hindu-Muslim question plus India’s relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh, both in
the context of globalization
• Dalit history and today’s relationships (social, economic, cultural and political) between
Dalits and non-Dalits in the context of globalization
• The African-American and Dalit stories: A comparison
• the Sikh story in the context of globalization
• women in India and in particular in village and local government
• U.S.-India relations and Indian-Americans in the USA

Readings. A course packet will be made available before these campus classes start and should
be carried to New Delhi. This will contain

• Selected texts from Tagore, Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Savarkar, and Ambedkar
• A text of current Indian politics
• Excerpts from Sunil Khilnani, The Idea of India, Ramachandra Guha, India After
Gandhi: The History of the World’s Largest Democracy, and Rajmohan Gandhi, Revenge
& Reconciliation: Understanding South Asian History (New Delhi: Penguin, 1999)
• Texts from Dalit leaders including Kanshi Ram and Mayawati
• A text about Sikhs and Sikhism
• A text about interaction between African-Americans and India
• Texts on India’s economic advance, globalization, and environment; women in India and
in village government; and on U.S.-India relations

Schedule in New Delhi from December 28 to January 13 (Arrival New Delhi the night of Dec.
27. Venue for living and classes: Indian Social Institute, 10 Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New
Delhi 110003).
• A morning class that would include a time for students to share reactions to Delhi’s day-to-day impact and to reflect on the reactions
• A brief daily class in spoken Hindi
• Research daily by students individually or in pairs
• Every other day a guest lecturer. Probable lecturers would include
  o Ms. Selja, Minister in the Government of India, a Dalit from Haryana state
  o Wajahat Habibullah, India’s chief information commissioner
  o Ms. Neerja Chowdhury, leading media personality (print and broadcast)
  o Amit Singh Chadha, leading lawyer, and Rima Chadha, poet, on the Sikh religion & culture
  o Ms. Tanya Chatterjee on American business outsourced in India

• A daily instructive, stimulating, or enriching experience from a special site and/or person(s) visited, such as
  o A location where Dalit families live
  o A Sikh temple
  o The new Akshardham (Hindu) temple
  o A college to meet Indian students
  o A school where Dalit children study
  o An interaction with women in local government
  o Interactions with environmental, cultural heritage, and right-to-information activists
  o The Taj Mahal (in Agra, three hours away)
  o The 13th-century Qutb Minar
  o The 15th-century Lodi Gardens
  o The 16th-century Humayun’s Tomb
  o The site of Mahatma Gandhi’s 1948 assassination

Requirements

Each student would have to (a) attend every class and common event and (b) write a research paper on a subject agreed with me before departure for India or during the opening days in Delhi