

SREE NARAYANA GURU OPEN UNIVERSITY
ONE YEAR DIPLOMA PROGRAMME IN
SREE NARAYANA GURU’S LIFE AND PHILOSOPHY
(2026 – 27)
SYLLABUS
Total Credits – 24

ABOUT THE DISCIPLINE

The Discipline focuses on critical reading of texts to understand, critically explore and effectively employ Sree Narayana Guru’s biographical, social, religious, cultural and philosophical distinctions and potential implications in various dimensions of history. It also postulates a framework to recognise their relevance and significance in the contemporary world

COURSE- I

Credits -6

SREE NARAYANA GURU’S LIFE AND TIMES

Course Outcome

After the successful completion of this Course, the learner will be able to:

- understand the social and political background of Kerala society before the Guru
- understand the critical biography of Sree Narayana Guru
- analyse and evaluate Kerala history and socio-cultural changes during the life and times of the Guru and ever after.

Block I

Kerala Before the Guru

A brief history of Travancore, Kochi and Malabar in the nineteenth century
–Missionary movements - Channar rebellion and breast cloth struggle
Uzhiyam vela – Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal – Arattupuzha Velayudha

Panikkar – Malayali memorial – Ezhava memorial – Travancore, Kochi and Madras - Renaissance organisations – Movements for social justice.

Block II

Life of the Guru

Guru's ancestors and family– birth, childhood, education, wandering, avadhoota vritti– meeting Chattambi Swamikal–meeting Thaikkattu Aiyavavu–Tapas–installation of Aruvippuram Temple and messages – Foundation of SNDP Yogam – The Great Universal Message for education and organisation. Established Sivagiri Mutt at Varkala- Idea of Mata Maha Padasala – Established Educational Institutions.

Block III

Guru and Other Social and Spiritual Personalities

Sri Ramakrishna–Swami Vivekananda – Dayananda Saraswati- Atmaram Panduranga – Raja Rammohan Roy -Aurobindo Ghosh- Ayya Vaikundhar. Guru and world philosophers and masters of humanity – Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus, Prophet, Sikh Gurus, Tamil Siddhas, Sufis, Kabir, Phule, Periyor, Ayyothee Thasar, Ambedkar. Famous personalities who visited Guru: Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, C.F. Andrews. Meeting with contemporary spiritual Gurus – Chattambi Swamikal - Ramana Maharishi and Vagbhatananda, Ayyankali – Daivatan (through Mooloor) – Kesavasastri - mobilising the poets, literary and cultural interventionists – Mooloor, Karupan, Asan, Sahodaran.

Block IV

Legacy of Narayana Guru

Ascetic Disciples - Sivalinga Dasa Swamikal - Satyavrata Swamikal - Bodhananda Swamikal - John Dharmatirtha Swamikal - Nataraja Guru -

Govindananda Swamikal - Ernest Kirk - Swami Anandatirtha - Vidyananda Swamikal - Chaitanya Swamikal - Household Disciples - Dr Palpu - Kumaranasan - Sahodaran Ayyappan - T. K. Madhavan - Mooloor S. Padmanabha Panicker - C. V. Kunjiraman - C. Kesavan - Mitavadi Krishnan - T. T. Kesava Sastri - Kuttippuzha Krishnapillai.

COURSE II

Credits -6

RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL REFORMS OF SREE NARAYANA GURU

Course Outcome

After the successful completion of this Course, the learner will be able to: · familiarise the various challenges and stages of religious reforms and social reforms · understand the impact of Sree Narayana guru's reforms in the creation of a modern Kerala, understand the values of liberty, equality and fraternity

Block 1

Sree Narayana Guru and Temple installations

Aruvippuram Message – Concept behind temple installations through Guru's words - Role of temple installations in eradicating the untouchability – Freedom of worship through temple installations.

Block II

The Social reforms of Sree Narayana Guru and his Movement in Kerala

Reformation of rituals and customs – Kettukalyanam – Tirandukalyanam – Pulikudi – Evil worship – New marriage custom – Abandonment of alcohol – Propagation of modern education – Vidyakundu Prabuddharakuka.

Block III

Sree Narayana Movement and Other Reformatory Organisations

Samghatanakundu saktharaakuka – Formation of SNDP Yogam – Role of SNDP Yogam in Kerala Renaissance - SNDP Yogam leaders in legislative councils – Struggle for social justice through legislative councils –Role of Sree Narayana Guru and SNDP Yogam in Vaikom Satyagraha movement – Sree Narayana Guru and National movement – Sree Narayana Guru’s approach to British rule – Sree Narayana movements and other renaissance movements – Sadhu Jana Paripalana Samgham, Ayyankali, Arayavamsa Paripalana Yogam, Velukkutti Arayan -Vala Samudaya Parishkarini Sabha, Pandit Karuppan-Kochi Pulaya Mahasabha - Nair Service Society, Mannath- Padmanabhan - Yoga Kshema Sabha – Reformation in Namboothiri Community, V. T. Bhattathiripad – Sahodara Samgham, Sahodaran Ayyappan - Ananda Maha Sabha, Brahmananda Sivayogi – Atma Vidya Samgham, Vagbhadananda – Pratyakhsa Raksha Daiva Sabha, Poikayil Sree Kumaragurudevan (Poikayil Appacchan) – Brahma Prathyaksha Sadhujana Sabha, Kavarikkulam Kandan Kumaran. Travancore Labour Union, Vadappuram

T. K. Bhava - Economical view of Sree Narayana Guru, vyavasaayam kondi abhivridhippetuka.

Block IV

Sree Narayana Guru and Religious Harmony

“Matham ethayalum Manushyan Nannayal Mathi” - Sarvamatha Sammelanam at Aluva in 1924 – Guru’s message, “Vaadhikkanum jayikkanum alla Ariyaanum Ariyikkanumaanu – Organisers - Participants –

Welcome speech – Guru’s ideology on all religious teachings – Essence of major religions – Hinduism – Christianity – Buddhism – Islam – Foundation of Brahma

Vidhyalaya at Sivagiri - C. V. Kujiraman’s interview with Sree Narayana Guru - Sivagiri Pilgrimage – Message to Sivagiri Pilgrimage – Its eight goals – Conversation with Vallabhasseri Govindan Vaidyer and T. K. Kitten Writer - Guru’s Pancha Dharma and Panchaseela for Pilgrimage - Symbolism of the yellow robe-Sahodarya Sammelanam 1921.

COURSE III

Credits -6

WRITINGS AND SPEECHES OF SREE NARAYANA GURU

Course Outcome

After the successful completion of this Course, the learner will be able to:

- understand Sree Narayana Guru through his own words and writings

- familiarise Guru’s important works
- evaluate Guru’s works role in the formation of modern Kerala

Block I

Selected Sthotra Works of Sree Narayana Guru

Daiva Dasakam- Sivaprasada Panchakam – Vasudevashtakam – Ardha Nareeswarastava – Janani navaratna manjari – Kalinatakam – Subrahmanya Kirtanam – Guru’s poetic skills – Vritha and Alankara in Sree Narayana Guru’s works.

Block II

Edifying Works and Speeches: Anti-Caste Secular Humanism of the Guru

Critique of Chaturvarnya and Caste in Sree Narayana Guru's vision – Jatilakshana – Jatinirnaya- Acharaparishkaram and Jathi (Sree Narayana Guru Vaikhari: 6 & 12) Concept of Religious harmony through Athmopadesha Sathakam, Matha meemamsa (Verses 44-47), Matham (Sree Narayana Guru Vaikhari: 18) Jivakarunyapanchakam – Anukampa Dasakam – Concept of Ahimsa in Narayana Guru's conversations – Ahimsa (Sree Narayana Guru Vaikhari: 4), Concept of Aparapriya (Concern for others) Athmopadesa Kathakam (Verses 21-25) - Sahodaryam (Sree Narayana Guru Vaikhari: 29). Ethics and the Other- Cherai Speech

Block III

Concept of God and Atma in Narayana Guru's Works

Daivadasakam - Arivu – Athmopadesa Satakam - Concept of God – Srishti – Maya – Satyam Jnanam Anandam – Arivu – Indriyas – Aham – Triputi – Dharmam – Dharmi – Sama- Anya – Atmasukham – Prakriti – Aham - Advaitam (Sree Narayana Guru Vaikhari: 2)

Block IV

Prose and Translation Works of Sree Narayana Guru, Tamil works

Gadyaprarthana – Isavasyopanishad (Bhashya) – Tirukkural (Vanchirappu, Nittharperumai)- Ozhuvil Odukam, Tevara Patikangal.

COURSE IV

Credits -6

PHILOSOPHY OF SREE NARAYANA GURU

Course Outcome

After the successful completion of this Course, the learner will be able to:

- familiarize the philosophical notions of Sree Narayana Guru
- understand its background, relation with other schools of thought, and humanistic values

Block I

A Brief Introduction to Western Philosophy and Indian Philosophies

Classical Western philosophy – modern world philosophy – empiricism and rationalism – positivism -Epistemology (Theory of Knowledge)- Sources of knowledge in Guru's thought- Metaphysics- Theory of Causation- Ontological Proof - Realism vs. Idealism - Non-Dualism - Monism or Pluralism- Astika and Nastika Systems of thought in India – Bauddha – Jaina – Charvaka – Samkhya – Yoga – Nyaya – Vaisesika- Purvamimamsa – Vedanta - Different schools of Vedanta – Advaita of Sree Sankara – Dvaita of Madhva – Visishtadvaita of Ramanuja.

Block II

Advaita of Sree Narayana Guru

Vedantasutra of Sree Narayanaguru (Selections) – Atha yadathmano jijnasu tadidam brahmaiva aham – Darsanamala – Advaitadipika – Nirvritipancakam – Homamantram. 1918 statement in Sri Lanka that ours is also Buddhism, citing the Amarakosa: “Advaya Vadi Vinayaka...” Advayavada or Anityavada or Samudayavada of the Buddha and Guru

Block III

A Comparative Study of Guru's Philosophy with Other Schools

Guru's Advayavada and Buddha's Anitya or Samudayavada ("Sarala Advaya Bhashyakaranam Guruvo..." Anukampa Dasakam - Guru's Advaita and Sankara's Advaita

Vedanta – Guru's Advaita and Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita – Guru's Advaita and Madhva's Dvaita – Saivism in Guru's literary works – Saiva Sidhanta and Tamil Siddha legacies- Tiruvalluvar, Tirumular, Pampatty Chitar and Guru. Siddha or Chita and Tamil Tantric Buddhism.

Block IV

Sree Narayana Guru's Secular Polyphonic Humanism

Guru's approach to Christianity, Buddhism and Islam (Sree Narayana Guru Vaikhari and Gurudevasuktas) Sree Narayana Guru and his contemporary world philosophers – An analysis of Sree Narayana Guru's views on Mahatma Gandhi regarding Varnasrama system - Brahmananda Sivayogi and Vagbhadananda regarding idol worship - Swami Vivekananda regarding religion - Rabindra Nath Tagore regarding Nationalism - Sahodaran Ayyappan regarding Rationalism – Ramana Maharshi and Aurabindo regarding non-dualism.

References

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