



## RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA UNIVERSITY

(Declared by Government of India under Section 3 of UGC Act, 1956)

PO Belur Math, Dist Howrah 711202, West Bengal, India

### Call for Applications to the Ph.D. Program in Philosophy at Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University

The Department of Philosophy is now accepting applications from students interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in Philosophy (starting July 2017) at Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University. Students must have an M.A. or M.Phil in Philosophy or a related field in order to be eligible for admission to the Ph.D. program. For our first batch, we will be taking a maximum of four students (either four Ph.D. students or three Ph.D. students and one M.Phil student).

The Department of Philosophy at Vivekananda University emphasizes critical thinking rather than rote learning and memorization. Students will be trained to think for themselves, to analyze and interpret philosophical arguments from a variety of perspectives, and to write clear and effective research papers in philosophy. We will also provide rigorous training in research methodology and conduct Writing Workshops that will help students to improve their English skills and to write research papers that can be published in international peer-reviewed journals.

At the moment, the Department is quite small and has particular strengths in cross-cultural philosophy of religion, Indian philosophy (especially Vedānta), ancient Indian scriptures, the philosophical ideas of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Sri Aurobindo, Continental philosophy, German philosophy (especially Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Adorno), and aesthetics. Students interested in pursuing doctoral research on Vedānta, comparative and cross-cultural philosophy, German philosophy, and the philosophical ideas of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are especially encouraged to apply.

The Department of Philosophy has two faculty members at the moment, but we plan to recruit more faculty in the near future. Brahmachari Ayon Maharaj, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, received his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley (USA) and also studied at the University of Oxford (UK) and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Germany). His current research focuses on cross-cultural philosophy, philosophy of religion, German philosophy, Indian philosophy, Indian scriptural hermeneutics, and the philosophies of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Sri Aurobindo. He has published numerous articles on Indian and German philosophy in international journals such as *Philosophy East and West*, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, *Journal of Religion*, *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, *Sophia*, and *Journal of the History of Ideas*. He is also the author of the book, *The Dialectics of Aesthetic Agency: Revaluating German Aesthetics from Kant to Adorno* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013). He is currently working on a second book project, tentatively titled "God's Infinitude: Sri Ramakrishna and Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Religion." For a full list of his publications, please visit his academic website: [rkmvu.academia.edu/AyonMaharaj](http://rkmvu.academia.edu/AyonMaharaj)

Harold Sjursen, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Global Ethics at New York University, serves as an Adjunct Faculty Member of the Department of Philosophy. He will teach one semester per academic year and also supervise student theses. Professor Sjursen received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from the New School for Social



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Research in New York. He studied with Hannah Arendt and Hans Jonas and is completing a book on the philosophy of Hans Jonas. His current research focuses on comparative philosophy, Chinese philosophy, history of philosophy, global ethics, and the philosophy of science and technology. Please visit his academic website for more details: <http://harold-sjursen.org>

The Philosophy Department actively collaborates with the Department of Sanskrit at Vivekananda University, so students enrolled in the Ph.D. Program in Philosophy can also enroll in Sanskrit-medium courses on Indian philosophy offered by the Sanskrit Department (assuming they have sufficient knowledge of Sanskrit). Philosophy students will also have the opportunity to work with reputed scholars in philosophy affiliated with the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture (Golpark).

### **Course Structure**

(Ph.D. program - 2 semesters for coursework and remaining semesters for Ph.D. thesis)

During the first year of the Ph.D. program in Philosophy, students are required to enroll in four philosophy courses (two per semester). Students will be expected to participate actively in class, complete weekly writing assignments, and submit a final research paper for each of the four courses.

Upon successful completion of their coursework, students will research and write a Ph.D. thesis on a philosophical topic of their choice. (Please note that the topic of the Ph.D. thesis must be *substantially different* from the topic of his/her M.Phil thesis). The Ph.D. thesis, rather than being a mere summary of a philosopher's ideas, must advance an original and controversial argument based on extensive research of secondary sources.

### **Eligibility**

1. All applicants must hold B.A. and M.A. degrees in Philosophy or a related field in the humanities (minimum 55% marks) from UGC recognised Universities. (5% relaxation in percentage of marks for SC/ST candidates)
2. At the moment, we are only accepting male candidates at the Belur Math Campus of Vivekananda University.
3. Applicants with a UGC NET-JRF (Junior Research Fellowship)/NET/SET-qualified candidates are strongly preferred, but applicants without a JRF will also be considered.
4. The medium of instruction is English, so all applicants must be able to read, write, and converse in English.



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### **How to Apply**

Send an email to Dr. Ayon Maharaj (ayon.maharaj@rkmvu.ac.in) by 15 May 2017 with the subject line "Application for the Ph.D. Program in Philosophy" and with the following THREE attachments:

1. The Application Form for the Ph.D. Program in Philosophy
2. A detailed CV
3. A one-page (single-spaced) Statement of Purpose

[The one-page Statement of Purpose should explain why you want to pursue the Ph.D. Program in Philosophy at Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University. You should specify your field(s) of interest and briefly outline the Ph.D. topic you would like to explore. You should edit the Statement of Purpose very carefully and ensure that the English is correct and readable.]

### **Selection Procedure**

1. All applicants will be invited to appear for a written exam on a date selected in June 2017.
2. Based on the results of the written exam, selected applicants will be called for an interview. Applicants must bring the original copies of their educational degrees to the interview. Applicants should also be prepared to answer questions about their educational background, their research interests, and their Statement of Purpose.
3. Successful applicants will be notified within 24 hours of the interview. The first semester will begin in July 2017.