

PROSPECTUS OF YOGA-VEDANTA COURSES

An Inter-disciplinary Institution for Study,
Instruction and Research in all aspects of
Yoga, Vedanta and Indian Culture

THE YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY

(Department of The Divine Life Society)

P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR, DISTT. TEHRI-GARHWAL,
UTTARANCHAL, INDIA Pin: 249 192

PROSPECTUS

Location: The Academy is situated at Shivanandanagar in the Tehri-Garhwal District of Uttaranchal, India, within the Sivanandashram which is beautifully laid out on the sylvan Himalayan foothills on the right bank of the holy Ganga. The Ashram serves as a haven of peace to spiritual seekers from all over the world. Here live and work a band of dedicated monks and seekers trained by the great Master Swami Sivananda for the service of humanity. The Academy is at a distance of about 3 kilometres from Rishikesh town and is served by auto-rickshaws and taxis. Rishikesh itself is 24 kilometres away from the renowned pilgrim centre, Haridwar, and is linked by rail and road. Regular buses, autos and taxis are available throughout the day. Haridwar is also on the banks of the river Ganga at a distance of 263 kilometres to the north of Delhi on the Delhi-Haridwar-Dehra Dun rail route.

This unique institution was formally consecrated by its holy founder, most Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in 1948—His Sannyasa Silver Jubilee Year. Regular classes were commenced from the 3rd of July, 1948.

Aims and Objects: Widest possible dissemination of spiritual and cultural knowledge is the primary object of The Divine Life Society, under which the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy functions. All its activities are tuned to this one aim: its Branches and members work for furthering this lofty object. Its illustrious Founder, Sri Swami Sivananda tirelessly worked for three decades from his single hermitage on the bank of the Ganga, in pursuance of this worthy goal. The Divine Life Society which came into existence in a humble way in 1936 has now grown into a huge International Organisation.

The aim of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy is not merely an academic equipment of students, but a providing of the requisite training to enable them in their endeavour to blossom

into truly humane, serviceful, integrated personalities, so that they succeed, at least in an appreciable measure, in living a life of goodness and wholeness personally, and of dedication, unselfish cooperation and constructive work socially. It needs no special

mention that this achievement in one's own person and in society is obviously rooted in the extent to which one's practical life is attuned to the Ultimate Reality of the Universe. Philosophical discipline, thus, is the precondition to leading a perfectly sociable, ethical and progressive life of an onward expansion towards the realisation of the Supreme Goal of existence. The Teachers of the Academy will strive to hold aloft this objective set before the students, and are not just instructors in the well-known intellectual sciences. The basic spiritual foundation of all life is the principal motif governing the curriculum of the Academy, and students with this elevated spirit of quest will seek admission.

As it would be clear from what is stated above, the objective of the Academy is to prepare the person for a successful life in the world and to facilitate the living of a wholesome life with an integrated personality. As such, applicants will kindly note that the intention of the Academy is not merely to provide them with scriptural learning or textual information, though the lessons will also include profound studies in the essential scriptures such as the Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita, the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali, etc.

Founded with a view to bringing about an effective revival of the grandest inner aspect of Bharatvarsha's great Adhyatmic and Dharmic Culture, the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy (formerly Yoga-Vedanta Forest University) chiefly aims at teaching one and all the way of attaining Perfection of life through the well-established and time-honoured methods of Yoga-Sadhana.

It seeks to give to all students a comprehensive knowledge of developing their inner nature, their mental faculties and physical health as well. The students are also trained in the practical methods of Yoga-Vedanta.

Therefore the Course conducted in the Academy is of the nature of a discipline and not merely an occasion for Darshan or Satsanga with Saints and Mahatmas, though the latter too will be an advantage of which the students can avail themselves simultaneously with the training imparted during the Course.

Indian Male citizens can join the Academy, if he is really eager to practise Sadhana and attain Perfection. He must be able to adapt, adjust and accommodate, to the circumstances that prevail here. He must be willing, ready and eager to do service as Sadhana. He must be active, peaceful, kind and mindful of his own development. He must be humble, simple and eager to learn. He must be obedient and imbued with a spirit of self-sacrifice. Such a one will surely profit by his stay here.

Number of Courses Conducted: The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy will be conducting regular courses in Yoga-Vedanta on a systematic basis. Arrangements have now been made to conduct 3 Courses in a year, each of two months' duration.

The details are as follows:

First Course: March to April

Second Course: May to June

Third Course: September to October

(These details are tentative and can be changed as and when necessary)

The Lectures and Classes will be for five days in a week, from Monday to Friday, leaving two days for special lectures, group discussions, homework and reflection by students.

Number of Seats: 40

Age Group: Normally between 20 years and 65 years.

Qualifications: Preferably a Graduate. Good knowledge of English, keen spiritual aspiration and sound health are necessary.

Medium of Instruction: The medium of instruction is English

Conditions: Smoking, use of intoxicants and drugs and such other dissipating habits are strictly forbidden. Students are expected to live an austere life in the Ashram and should be mentally prepared and physically sound to stand the rigour of the Course.

The selected candidate alone is expected to come. He is not permitted to bring along any other family member or relative with him.

Accommodation: Double-seated room or dormitory will be provided.

Food: Strictly vegetarian food will be provided.

Fee: No fee will be charged for training, boarding and lodging, but any voluntary donation will be gratefully accepted.

DAILY TIME TABLE

Morning:

4-00 a.m. Wake up.

5-00 a.m. Get ready for the early morning class.

5-00 a.m. to 6-00 a.m. Vedic Chanting and meditation.

7-35 a.m. to 10-45 a.m. 4 Lectures of 45 minutes each.

Evening:

3-15 p.m. to 4-00 p.m. One Lecture of 45 minutes.

4-15 p. m. to 5-00 p. m. Karma Yoga

5-15 p.m. to 6-15 p.m. Asana, Pranayama

The above schedule is provisional and will be adjusted suitably depending on seasonal conditions and exigencies. Each student will be expected to keep a 'DAILY DIARY' of all practicals done and study made during the hours other than those set aside as detailed in the programme, from the time of the beginning of the Course to the time of its termination. Group discussion and special lectures will form part of the Course.

Final Examination:

Written and viva voce tests will be held at the end of the Course. Certificates will be awarded on successful completion of the Course, along with a set of The Divine Life Society Publications as Jnana Prasad.

SUBJECTS CONSTITUTING THE SYLLABUS FOR THE COURSES

THE COURSE OF STUDY SHALL COMPRISE THE FOLLOWING PAPERS:

I. History of Indian Philosophy:

The Vedas, the Upanishads, Jainism, Buddhism, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, Yoga, Vedanta (Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva).

II. History of Western Philosophy:

1. Socrates (Concept of Virtue).
2. Plato (Doctrine of Ideas).
3. Aristotle (Metaphysics and Causation).
4. St. Augustine
5. St. Thomas Aquinas
6. Kant (Critique of Reason, Ethical Norms). 7. Hegel

Indian Ethics:—Four Purusharthas, Varna, Ashrama, Dharma, Karma, Moksha.

III. Philosophy of Swami Sivananda.

IV. Studies in Religious Consciousness.

V. Study of the Bhagavadgita:

- (i) The Despondency of Arjuna.
- (ii) The Three Yogas:—Karma, Bhakti and Jnana.
- (iii) Daivi Sampat and Asuri Sampat.
- (iv) The Concept of Svadharma.
- (v) Nature of Sthitaprajna.
- (vi) God, World and Soul.

VI. Study OF Upanishad.

VII. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

VIII. Narada Bhakti Sutras.

IX. Asana, Pranayama, and Meditation.

X. Karma Yoga (Practical)

Text-Books: The Book Bank attached to the Academy will lend books to the students for the duration of the Course.

Library: A well-equipped library is available for reference purposes.

Equipment: Students will come equipped with necessary clothing, bedding, etc. A detailed list of articles to be brought will be provided along with the admission card.

The climatic conditions during the different seasons here in the Himalayan region and the equipments necessary are given for the guidance of the students.

July to September—Monsoon rains. Rain coat or an umbrella is necessary but light bedding and clothings will suffice.

October to March—Winter season. Very cold weather. Hence warm (woollen) clothings and winter bedding necessary.

April to June—Hot summer. Light bedding and light clothings will do.

SELECTION

Application on the prescribed form, accompanied by a 500-word note covering the individual's spiritual background and aspirations and plans for his future alongwith Medical Certificate of fitness and Photostat copy of educational certificates should be submitted, so as to reach the undersigned at least one month before the date of commencement of the Course. All students will be interviewed personally by the Registrar of the Academy before the commencement of the Course. Final selection will be made only on personal interview.

In case, during the period of the course, the presence of any student is considered undesirable for any reason, he will be asked to withdraw from the Course immediately by the register without giving any reason or prior notice.

Shivanandanagar

FOR THE YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY,
REGISTRAR