



Chinmaya International Foundation
Academia of Sanskrit Research Indology

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Certificate in Hindu Spiritual Care

Course, Schedule, and Tuition Details

Starting mid January 2027

[updated April 2026]

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME: Chinmaya International Foundation in Kerala, India, offers a 24 graduate-credit *Certificate in Hindu Spiritual Care (CHSC)* to train Hindu Spiritual Care Providers, designed for part-time completion within 18 months. Students may also opt for a lighter pace and take longer to finish the programme. The curriculum is created for the global Hindu diaspora, with class timings and content especially suited for those living in North America.

TUITION for the Certificate programme totals about US \$3,400.00 to be paid by the semester/course. Tuition is about \$140/credit. Hence, tuition for a 4-credit course is \$560. [Please note that in the US, similar programs are generally more than four times this tuition.]

VISION STATEMENT: The *Certificate in Hindu Spiritual Care (CHSC)* of Chinmaya International Foundation envisages training those who seek to serve the Hindu community with professional skills in the field of Spiritual Care. This will help the participant student live a meaningful life of service to the community leading to Self-unfoldment and inner fulfilment.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND SCHEDULE:

First Semester, January-June 2027

1. CHSC 501 Introduction to Spiritual Care

This four-credit core course, of 60 instructional hours, introduces students to the foundations of spiritual care provision (chaplaincy), for both volunteer and professional chaplains. This course offers an overview of core competencies and types of spiritual care, Hindu theories of spiritual care, and history of spiritual care. Through study of spiritual care models, ethics, listening skills, crisis response, and multifaith sensitivity, students learn how to serve individuals and communities with compassion and cultural grounding. The course includes a term paper assessing the needs of a Hindu community and developing a practical plan for service. Classes meet live on Zoom for 3 hours on twenty Saturday mornings (USA ET), with recordings available. *Prerequisite: admission to the Certificate Programme.* Tuition: US \$560.

2. CHSC 503 Foundation Vedanta and Hinduism

This 3-credit core course has two required components:

Part A) Self-Study: 24 hours of pre-recorded video talks, with readings and self-assessment questionnaires offered through CIF Home Study Courses. This course in Vedanta enables one to face the situations and problems of life, be it in profession, family, or interpersonal relationships, with clarity of thinking and a broad vision of life, leading to positivity and peace of mind. Spiritual seekers will be guided to develop their personal sadhana. This course is to be completed on one's own, asynchronously. *Prerequisite: There are no prerequisites to take this CIF Online Course.* Course Fee/Tuition is \$150.

Part B) Ten live Zoom classes provide students with structured training in articulating Hindu principles and practices in a clear and accessible manner. The course incorporates PowerPoint presentations on foundational Hindu beliefs, suitable for use in interfaith, university, and school settings. Notable guest speakers address contemporary issues such as the diversity within Hindu traditions, advocacy for the Hindu diaspora through textbook updates, and the presentation of Hindu festivals in interfaith contexts. Two-hour sessions are held on a designated weeknight for ten weeks. *Prerequisite: Admission into the Certificate programme.* Tuition is \$270.

Summer Interim

CHSC 505 Spiritual Retreat Reflection

For this 2-credit course, students participate in an in-person residential spiritual retreat of their choosing for 5–7 days at any time during the year. The retreat must include at least 30 hours of discourses, meditation, yoga, pūjās, ślokas, ārati, or other Hindu spiritual practices. Recommended options include Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Camps, Yoga Camps, Ramayana Camps, or other Bhakti or Vedanta-based retreats. The retreat teacher must certify the student's attendance and participation. A Reflection Paper is submitted following the retreat. *The retreat must be preapproved by the CHSC Department.* Retreat fees are the responsibility of the student. Course fee is US \$50.

Preparation for CHSC 607, Clinical Practicum

During the summer, students are expected to begin their search for and identify, apply to, and secure admission as a volunteer spiritual care provider in a clinical setting, such as a local hospital, hospice, or correctional facility. This placement is required to be concurrent with the final-semester Clinical Practicum (CHSC 607). The site should offer structured training, supervision, and appropriate insurance coverage in Spiritual Care. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), typically offered in hospital environments, is the ideal form of internship; however, CPE placements are competitive and often require early applications.

Second Semester, Sept-December, 15 weeks

3. CHSC 601 – Bhagavad Gita

This 4-credit core course enables students to apply the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita in daily life and within spiritual care contexts. It offers a holistic and insightful study of the text in a clear and accessible manner, encouraging thematic understanding, textual engagement, contemplation, and internalization of the Gita's teachings. Selected lessons from the Mahabharata illustrate approaches to conflict resolution, acceptance of tragedy, and navigating adharmic situations and moral dilemmas. The course consists of two components:

Part A) Self-Study: The CIF Bhagavad Gita Online Course includes 30 hours of prerecorded video talks, readings, and self-assessment questionnaires completed asynchronously. Students may begin this component in advance by registering through CIF's Home Study Courses. Course fee/tuition is US \$240.

Part B) Live online classes on the Bhagavad Gita with practical applications to spiritual care. This component must be taken synchronously in 15 weekly 2-hour Zoom classes held Wednesday evenings from 7:00–9:00 pm ET (USA Eastern Time). Class recordings will be available. *Prerequisite: Admission to the CHSC programme.* Tuition is US \$320.

4. CHSC 605 Indian Psychology

This 3-credit core course provides a foundational understanding of Indian psychological concepts and theories related to consciousness, mind, health, and well-being. From the extensive corpus of Indian psychological thought, selected ideas are examined and grounded in contemporary research evidence from modern psychological science. The course offers an alternative perspective to mainstream psychological principles and theories. Students study the Ayurvedic model of health, yogic and Vedantic perspectives on well-being and consciousness, and the application of these frameworks to spiritual care. This course must be taken live in a weekly three-hour Zoom class conducted over fifteen Saturday mornings from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET. Class recordings will be available. *Prerequisites: Admission to the CHSC programme and completion of Introduction to Spiritual Care.* Course tuition is US \$420.

Third, Final, Semester (January-June 2028)

5. CHSC 603 Rites, Rituals, & Vedanta

This 4-credit core course provides an in-depth study of major Vedantic concepts and key Hindu practices. Its primary aim is to bring clarity and depth to one's Vedantic understanding through a systematic exploration of the principal ideas presented in the *Prakarāṇa-granthas*. Classes include a detailed study of Hindu ceremonies and rituals—such as pūjās, the sixteen saṃskāras, weddings, memorial services, the significance of Hindu festivals, and mantras and pūjās for healing—all examined through the lens of Hindu spiritual care. The course has two components:

Part A) Self-Study: The CIF Advanced Vedanta Course Online, consisting of 24 video classes, readings, and self-assessment questionnaires on Vedanta topics. This component is studied asynchronously. Registration is through CIF Vedanta Courses. *Prerequisites: None for this Home Study Course.* Course fee/tuition is US \$150.

Part B) Thirty-six hours of live classes covering the study of pūjās, Hindu saṃskāras, festivals, and mantras for healing. This component is taken synchronously in a weekly two-hour Zoom class held on 18 Wednesday evenings from 8:00–10:00 pm ET. Class recordings will be available. *Prerequisites: Admission to the CHSC programme and completion of Introduction to Spiritual Care.* Course tuition is US \$410.

6. CHSC 607 Clinical Practicum (offered in both Spring and Autumn semesters)

This final 4-credit core course requires students to participate in a fieldwork placement in their local community—such as a hospital or hospice—that provides training, supervision, and insurance within the clinical setting. Students should complete approximately 4–5 clinical hours per week, totaling 55 hours. (CIF and CMW are not able to arrange internship placements for students.)

The class meets weekly on Zoom in small groups with a CIF Hindu Supervisor, who reviews verbatims and supports the development of the student's Hindu identity as a spiritual caregiver. Classes are offered on either Saturday or Sunday mornings. *Prerequisites: Completion of four core courses prior to enrolling in the Clinical Practicum. This course is taken in the student's final semester, either Spring or Autumn. Students must be enrolled concurrently in a local clinical setting with onsite training and supervision.* Course tuition is US \$600.