Course Title: Indian Cities in Literature (Mumbai)

2. Credit Structure (L-T-P-Cr): 3 0 0 3

3. Course Code: HM320

4. Program/Semester:

5. Category: Open Elective

6. Prerequisites: Nil

7. Foundation for: Nil

8. Abstract Content:

Primary: Mumbai is the setting and subject matter of more number of written texts and films than any other city in India. Every Indian has a certain image of Mumbai whether or not they’ve ever visited the city. We will begin this course by examining the stereotypes we associate with Mumbai. We will then read literary works, films, historical accounts, essays, and journalistic findings to see which of these texts corroborate our stereotypes and to what extent but more so to evaluate the stated or implied ramifications of these “realities” or conditions.

The purpose of this course is to unravel the magic of a city that inspires the imagination of a whole nation and of the world at large, as also to determine how all kinds of texts—fictional and non-fictional—contribute to creating the city in the popular imagination. In the process, I hope we will consider how thin or not so thin the lines between fiction and non-fiction are, and reflect on why representations of “reality” are made to assume different forms.

9. Suggested Text/s:

Non-Fiction / History / Journalism

Excerpts from


**Fiction**

Manil Suri, *The Death of Vishnu* (2001)

**Poetry**

Selected poems by
Dilip Chitre
Namdeo Dhasal
Eunice D’Souza
Nizzim Ezekiel
Adil Jussawala
Arun Kolatkar
Arundhati Subramaniam

**Films**

*Salaam Bombay* (1988)
*Bombay Boys* (1998)
*Chandni Bar* (2001)
*Black Friday* (2004)
*Life in a Metro* (2007)
*Shootout at Wadala* (2007)
*A Wednesday* (2008)
*Once Upon a Time in Mumbai* (2010)
*Bombay Talkies* (2013)

**10. Detailed Contents:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic Name</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>No. of Lectures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The People</td>
<td>The class will read excerpts from <em>Mumbai Fables</em>, a few stories from <em>Love and Longing in Bombay</em> and <em>Breathless in Bombay</em> and all of Mistry’s <em>A Fine Balance</em>. The students will be asked to view <em>Life in a Metro</em>, <em>Bombay Talkies</em>, <em>A Wednesday</em>, <em>Salaam Bombay</em> and <em>Slumdog Millionaire</em>, read excerpts from Katherine Boo and all of Kiran Nagarkar’s <em>Ravan and Eddie</em></td>
<td>7-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Slums</td>
<td>The class will view <em>Salaam Bombay</em> and <em>Slumdog Millionaire</em>, read excerpts from Katherine Boo and all of Kiran Nagarkar’s <em>Ravan and Eddie</em></td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Underworld
For this section the class will view *Satya*, *Shootout at Wadala*, *Once Upon a Time in Mumbai*, read excerpts from *Maximum City* and from *Dongri to Dubai*. 3-4

The Shiv Sena
The class will read *The Moor’s Last Sigh*, excerpts from *Maximum City*, articles about the Sena. 5-6

The Dance Bars
Students will be made to read excerpts from *Beautiful Thing* and *Maximum City* and view *Chandni Bar*. 2-3

11. Outcomes and Objectives:
The objective of this course is that students get exposed to some fascinating contemporary writing by writers of Indian origin, develop the habit of critically evaluating the texts to which they’re exposed all the time, and begin to think of the consequences of the sexual, economic and political realities of the spaces they inhabit.