

CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, CALCUTTA



Multidisciplinary Social Science Courses March-April 2025

The Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta offers multidisciplinary social science courses as part of its Research Training Programme (RTP). In addition to the students enrolled in the full RTP, interested students may also take individual courses being offered under it as auditors. The list of courses on offer in the March-April 2025 slot (Slot 4) along with the fees and the deadline for application is given in Table 1. The outlines of courses are given after the table. **Deadline for application is 24 February.**

Each course will run for seven weeks, with two 2-hour classes each week (that is, a total of 28 teaching hours). Class timings will be 11.30 am to 1.30 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Course will start on 6 March and end on 29 April 2025 (dates are tentative). All courses will be taught off-line. The medium of instruction and assignments will be English.

Eligibility criteria for auditors is a Masters degree or equivalent in any discipline with at least 50 percent marks. Applicants will directly apply to course coordinator via email (addresses given in the table) and should be copied to the Research Cell (researchcell@cssscal.org). Once the application is approved by the course coordinator, further processing will be done by the Research Cell.

Auditors will be awarded a certificate for the course they take if they complete all course requirements (including attendance and written assignments). Auditors cannot miss more than five classes in the course.

Table 1: Names and details of courses on offer in March-April 2025

No	Name of the Course	Course Coordinator and email contact	Fees
1	Critical Caste Studies	Satish satishchennur@cssscal.org	3,000
2	Situating 'Science': Making of a Discipline	Anirban Das anirban@cssscal.org	3,500
3	South Asia and the Early Modern World	Prachi Deshpande pdeshpande@cssscal.org	4,000
4	Introduction to softwares for data mining, data representation and data analysis <i>Prerequisite: Knowledge of mathematics and statistics upto secondary level.</i>	Sattwik Santra sattwik@cssscal.org	5,000

Course outlines

CRITICAL CASTE STUDIES

Course Coordinator and Instructor: Satish

This interdisciplinary course will study the metamorphosis of caste, foregrounding more on the issues unfolded in contemporary times. It critically engages with two sets of literature, focusing on the articulations around privileges and the sources to retain them, and secondly, the resistance towards these privileges. This course attempts to bring them together while engaging at three levels: theoretical, methodological, and substantial. Some of the research themes that are going to be discussed in this course are domination and exploitation, redistribution and recognition, hermeneutics of suspicion, and hermeneutics of faith through the writings of/on MK Gandhi, BR Ambedkar, Karl Marx, Pierre Bourdieu and others.

More particularly, this course would address questions such as:

How are categories and practices of "caste" constructed and contested over time and across geographies?

What are the key institutional sources for caste identities, positions, and sources of power?

How are caste identities and positions subjected to social positions based on other institutions based on social identities?

How have social movements framed and challenged caste discrimination and identities?

How does "caste" in its various representations compare to other hierarchical systems globally?

SITUATING 'SCIENCE': MAKING OF A DISCIPLINE

Course Coordinator: Anirban Das

This course will address the history, sociology and philosophy of the sciences and will trace the contours of the changing paradigms—both in the western tradition and the Indic space—in thinking about knowledge and matter. Students will be introduced to a set of debates regarding methodology for the study of science (for example, Popper, Kuhn, Feyerabend, Lakatos on the one hand and Bachelard, Canguillhem, Foucault on the other). Two or more of the following themes will be discussed in each year – (a) perspectival conflicts between realism and relativism (b) tensions between sociological, anthropological, historical and conceptual analyses of the sciences (c) the Marxian and the poststructuralist turns that induced, in opposition or in unison, the multiple forms of questioning the authority of Science (d) Sciences in the context of colonization and decolonization (e) science's relation with technology on the one hand and with the social sciences and humanities on the other (f) the Feminist interventions in the study of science. The course will lay an especial emphasis on the self-definition of 'modern science' and subject it to a critical scrutiny.

INTRODUCTION TO SOFTWARES FOR DATA MINING, DATA REPRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

Course coordinator and instructor: Sattwik Santra

This course provides an introduction to the fundamental concepts and tools used in data mining, data representation, and data analysis. Through a combination of lectures, hands-on

exercises, and real-world examples, students will gain the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of modern data analysis software.

Course Objectives:

- To understand the principles and techniques of data mining, data representation, and data analysis.
- To familiarize students with popular software tools used for data mining and analysis.
- To develop practical skills in manipulating, visualizing, and interpreting data using software.
- To enable students to apply data mining and analysis techniques to real-world problems.
- To cultivate critical thinking and problem-solving abilities in the context of data analysis.

SOUTH ASIA AND THE EARLY MODERN WORLD
Course Coordinator and Instructor: Dr. Prachi Deshpande

This course focuses on the Indian subcontinent during the 'Early Modern Period', roughly the period from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. This was a period of great expansion in global scale, with the emergence of large empires such as the Mughals, Safavids and Ottomans, the discovery of new sea by European explorers, and the establishment of new trading relations and networks across different regions of the globe. People, plants, animals, manufactured goods, raw materials, as well as ideas, manuscripts, words, and skills moved along these routes and networks, and set off many changes in agriculture, language, community, social relations, and political and cultural practices. India and South Asia played a critical role in the making of this expanded, 'connected' world. The Mughal empire was established, along with many regional states such as the Marathas, Sikhs, and others. There was much ferment in political and bureaucratic systems, in linguistic and cultural practices, as well as in community formation at different local, regional, and transregional levels. We will read the recent scholarship on this period, which has drawn on multiple historiographical approaches, such as microhistory, art history, and global history. It has also focused on many different groups from scribes, mercenaries, merchants, and explorers to Sufis, painters, legal scholars, and weavers. The course objective is to introduce students to this diverse historiography, with a view to understanding South Asia on the eve of colonialism, and the complexity of the Indian subcontinent's connections to the wider early modern world. There will be plenty of reading for every class, and students will be required to critically engage in discussions and comment on the readings. The final assignment will comprise a 10-12-page review essay.