



**Value Addition Courses Committee
University of Delhi
Delhi - 110007**

Two days Workshop on “Gītā for Holistic Life”

Venue: #207, Dream Building, University of Delhi, Delhi-110007

Report

VAC Capacity Building Workshop

On

Gītā for Holistic Life

Organised by

VAC Committee, University of Delhi

September 17-18, 2025

Course Committee

Course Coordinator

Prof. Om Nath Bimali

Course Committee Members

Dr. Pankaj Kumar Mishra, Dr. Shrutikant Pandey, Dr. Satyendra Shrivastav
Dr. Kamna Vimal, Dr. Ajay Jayaswal

VAC Workshop Committee

Prof. Rajni Sahni, Coordinator

Dr. Shobhana Sinha, Co-Coordinator

Dr. Ananya, Member

Dr. Shivani Jha, Member

Prof. Niranjana Kumar, Chairman

About VACs

In pursuance of the objectives outlined in the National Education Policy 2020, the Value Addition Courses (VACs) seek to fulfil the mandate of providing holistic education to the students. As the NEP elucidates, "the purpose of the education system is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, with sound ethical moorings and values." The Value Addition Courses will introduce students to the rich heritage of the nation as well as to important social concerns of the current times, helping them to make connections between what they learn and how they live. The courses have a sound theoretical base as well as appropriate hands-on components. At the same time, they clearly set out measurable and attainable Learning Outcomes. Knowledge, in essence, being integrated, these courses are essentially multidisciplinary in nature.

Course Objectives (Gītā for Holistic Life)

- To illustrate the values from the Bhagavad Gītā contributing to a holistic life: physical, psychological, social and spiritual.
- To help students relate to the wisdom in the Gītā for overcoming challenges.
- To develop clarity, purpose and achieve goals.

Objectives of the VAC Workshop

1. To train faculty in understanding all aspects of the course and each unit, ensuring timely and effective delivery to students throughout the duration of the course.
2. To discuss and design exercises, assignments, and experimental components, if any, to enhance the practical value of the course.
3. To review the overall course structure, gather constructive feedback, and suggest appropriate modifications for improvement.
4. To deepen subject knowledge and pedagogical insight through interactions with domain experts and experienced educators.

Workshop Schedule

Day	10:00 -11:30	12:00 -1:30 pm		02:00 - 03:30 pm	04:00 - 05:30 pm
1	Inaugural & Introduction of the Course	Technical Session-I	Luncheon	Technical Session-II	Practical Session
2	Technical Session-III	Technical Session-IV		Interactive Feedback Session	Valedictory

Day 1

Inaugural Session

Chairperson: Prof. Niranjan Kumar, Chairman, VAC Committee and Dean, Planning, University of Delhi

Chief Guest - Shri Suresh Jain, National Organising Secretary, Bharat Vikas Parishad

Guest of Honour - Prof. Sampadananda Mishra, Professor, Director, and Dean Culture, Rishihood University, Sonipat and Visiting Faculty, Hindu University of America, USA

Coordinator – Prof. Rajni Sahni

The first day of the seminar commenced with introduction of the dignitaries and guests of the session by the coordinator of the session, Prof. Rajni Sahni, followed by their felicitation. The session was focused upon the reiteration of the eternal relevance of the *Bhagavadgītā*.

The Chief Guest of the session **Shri Suresh Jain**, National Organising Secretary, Bharat Vikas Parishad spoke on the Gītā's timelessness, emphasizing that its wisdom precedes even Krishna himself. For him, the Mahābhārata is a universal text, practical rather than theoretical. The central human problem is petty *moha* (delusion), and its solution lies in patriotic zeal and social commitment. He insisted that transformation begins with small lamps of personal change (*vyakti-parivartana*), and true communication of the Gītā must be experiential - painful, emphatic communication - born of life, not scholarship alone. He emphasized the role of mother and teacher in the making of a person and inspired the teachers to reinstate the values in the next generation



through their conduct.

Prof. Niranjan Kumar, Chairman, Value Addition Courses Committee and Dean, Planning, University of Delhi addressed the gathering by underlining the significance of imparting values through education.

Prof. Sampadananda Mishra, Professor, Director, and Dean Culture, Rishihood University, Sonipat and Visiting Faculty, Hindu University of America, USA, was the Guest of Honour and the Resource Person of the session who initiated his concise and highly effective address by declaring - *Gītā may hrdayam* - his wholehearted dedication to the Gītā. Even a drop of its practice, he noted, is greater than volumes of theory (*svalpam apyasya dharmasya trāyate*





mahato bhayāt). He underlined the Gītā's role in "man-making," adding that education must be value-centered and building of a man's character and thus building of the nation's character should be its ultimate objective. He presented the Gītā, a representative of Indian tradition of dialogue-based imparting of knowledge, as a text of holistic pedagogy, relevant even for scientific and mathematical learning, leading from *smṛti-nāśa* (loss of true memory) to *moha-nāśa* (destruction of delusion).

Dr. Prabhat Mittal, Convenor of the workshop, described the various rules and regulations for participating in the workshop. While delivering the vote of thanks, Course Coordinator, **Prof. Om Nath Bimali**, Director, Centre for Hindu Studies, University of Delhi, declared each statement of Gītā to be an inspiration towards the higher consciousness that the Gītā must be a *cetana-parivartana*—an exercise in conscious transformation, moving from the micro to the macro. This became the guiding spirit for the day.



Technical Session 1 - Unit I: *Mentoring Your Life*

Resource Person - Prof. Sampadananda Mishra, Professor, Director, and Dean Culture, Rishihood University, Sonipat and Visiting Faculty, Hindu University of America, USA

Coordinator - Dr. Shruti Kant Pandey



The first technical session of the Workshop was coordinated by Dr. Shruti Kant Pandey and **Prof. Sampadananda Mishra**, Professor, Director, and Dean Culture, Rishihood University, Sonipat and Visiting Faculty, Hindu University of America, USA, was the Resource Person of the session. The session started with introduction of the theme by the Course Coordinator **Prof. Om Nath Bimali** who initiated the dialogue by stipulating three key questions:

1. **Know Thyself — Ko'ham?**: The self as a bundle of features, to be known and perfected.

2. **Directing the Mind:** Following Vyāsa's *Bhāṣya* on the Yoga Sūtra, the mind (*citta*) flows toward *pāpa* or *kalyāṇa*; the role of dharma is to steer it.
3. **Yoga as Karma-kausālam:** Efficiency in action as equanimity (*śamatvam*), leading to *lokasaṅgraha* (social welfare).

These remarks framed the following lectures as parts of a single philosophical arc.

In this session **Prof. Mishra** elaborated the realistic implications of adopting Indian sensibility. He linked practice to breath discipline (18 cycles per minute), likened the Gītā to nectar distilled from the Vedic cow, and highlighted *adhikāritva* (eligibility). Faith (*śraddhā*) was defined as “holding on to truth,” not mere belief. The truth is vain if it is not contributing to the real world. He emphasized upon the holistic approach by worshipping all aspects of being, from physical to spiritual by quoting - *sariram khalu dharmasadhanam* - He stressed body purification (*śarīra-śuddhi*), discipline (*brahmacarya*), and the journey from *viṣāda* (despair) to *prasāda* (clarity). He described *Brahmacarya* as the means to regulating wastage in the form of unnecessary actions causing *Viśada* and thus leading to *Prasada* – *hr̥syami ca muhurmuhuh*. He explained *abhyāsa* (constant remembrance) and *vairāgya* (detachment as love without attachment), culminating in three levels of *śamatā* (equanimity):

- endurance beyond dualities,
- witness-consciousness (*udāsīnatā*), and
- active surrender through *seva* as *yajña*.

Prof. Bimali's summative remark here distilled the essence: the Gītā teaches that the individual must grow from self-discipline to universal service, uniting inner steadiness with outer action.

Technical Session II - Unit II (*Self-Management*)

Resource Person - Dr. Mala Sinha, Professor (Superannuated), Organizational Behavior & Business Ethics, Faculty of Management Studies (FMS), University of Delhi

Coordinator - Dr. Satyendra Srivastav



Dr. Mala Sinha, Professor (Superannuated), Organizational Behavior & Business Ethics, Faculty of Management Studies (FMS), University of Delhi expounded the theory of the three guṇas imbibed Gītā's Chapters 2, 4, 14, 18):

- **Sattva:** ordered clarity, *daivī-sampad*.
- **Rajas:** energy and motivation, but prone to self-centeredness.
- **Tamas:** inertia, ignorance, and domination by

uncontrolled emotions.

She emphasized that action is always holistic—beyond outward activity, it includes energetic and psychological alignment. In this context, she explained the various case studies to be shared with the students. She referred many scriptures and contemporary secondary literature on Gītā, like Eknath, Chinmaya Mission, Devidutt Patnaik, Vinoba Bhave, Vivekananda, aurobindo, etc. to understand the depth of Gītā’s teachings. The session was conducted by Dr. Satyendra Srivastav and vote of thanks was delivered by Prof. Bimali.

Practical Session

Resource Person –Dr. Pankaj Kumar Mishra, Associate Professor and Head of the Department, St. Stephen’s College, University of Delhi

Coordinator – Dr. Kamna Vimal



Dr. Pankaj Mishra addressed the practical challenges of teaching the Gītā. For him, the Mahābhārata must be approached *ad fontes* (at the source), not through popular culture. He stressed character-building through dramatization and reflective exercises: diaries, reviews of dilemmas, *guṇa*-profiling – *gunah gunishu varante*, and creative activities. He argued that every student must realize: “We are all in the Mahābhārata.” Moral dilemmas are central, and no character is simply right or wrong—context shapes choices, and sympathetic

imagination is essential. The session was coordinated by Dr. Kamna Vimal.

Prof. Bimali, closing the session, remarked that these discussions show the Gītā as both mirror and mentor. Its task is not to resolve dilemmas by providing ready-made answers, but to transform the seeker into one who can dwell in equanimity amidst dilemmas. He described the examination of the virtues and achievement of the *Satviki* to be objective of education. The Gītā’s exemplary pedagogical structure based upon the Indian tradition of *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana* and *Pratipat*, *pariprasna* and *seva* can be employed to evoke the *Krisna-cetanya* and thus grooming a complete being which is the ultimate objective of the education.

Conclusion of Day 1

Day 1 was devoted to the foundations: self-knowledge and self-management. Speakers emphasized discipline, equanimity, and the psychology of practice. Prof. Bimali’s essence-notes reminded participants throughout that the Gītā is a conscious-transformative exercise: moving from inner discipline to universal service, from despair to clarity, from theory to lived practice.

Day 2

Technical Session III — Unit III: Dilemmas of Contemporary Life

Resource Person –Dr. Pankaj Kumar Mishra, Associate Professor and Head of the Department, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

Coordinator – Dr. Satyendra Srivastav

Dr. Pankaj Mishra opened the second day by situating modern human existence within the Gītā's frame of dilemmas. He reminded participants that poetry and epic have a suggestive, symbolic power—citing Nachiketa as an example of how a single character can illuminate entire philosophical worlds. Similarly, the Gītā must be read metaphorically: Dhṛtarāṣṭra, for instance, is not only a blind king but also a symbol of inner blindness.

He underlined that the *tatva-jñāna*—the primal ground—makes such texts perennial and inexhaustible. Interpreted symbolically (*pratīkātmaka vyākhyā*), the Gītā remains relevant to every age. Yugas, he noted, are not inherently good or bad; rather, it is people who embody good and evil in every era. Human traits are essential, universal, and enduring, which explains why the dilemmas of the Mahābhārata mirror the crises of our age.

Against the backdrop of today's "polycrisis," Dr. Mishra stressed that the fundamental dilemma is still dharma versus adharma. Modernity, he suggested, is not a strict temporal notion but a relative one: life is always a battlefield. Emotions weave a web around us, but decision-making must not be captive to emotion; rational clarity is what enables victory. He urged every listener to "find your Kurukṣetra" and "find your Krishna"—a metaphor for locating one's personal field of struggle and source of guidance.

Prof. Bimali, drawing together these reflections, remarked that dilemmas are not obstacles to life but the very conditions in which dharma is tested. The task of the Gītā, he said, is not to abolish dilemmas but to help one live within them, with equanimity and courage.



Technical Session IV — Unit IV: Three Modes of Navigation

Resource Person – Prof. Rajnesh Mishra, Professor, School of Sanskrit and Indic Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Coordinator – Dr. Ajay Jaiswal

Prof. Rajnesh Mishra then guided the seminar into Unit IV, exploring how the Gītā teaches us to navigate life through karma, jñāna, and bhakti.



He presented the Gītā as a revealer of both inner and outer worlds. Situating it within broader Indian thought, he noted parallels with Advaita, Dvaita, and the integrative vision of the Śaiva āgamas. He reminded participants that the *Ārṣa-kāvya* tradition of the Mahākāvya is at once narrative (*ākhyāna*) and philosophical exposition (*vyākhyāna*).

On the question of liberation, he provocatively noted that even being bound to a religious identity could become an obstacle—true freedom

(*mukti*) lies beyond such limits. The Gītā’s triad of karma, jñāna, and bhakti must be seen in *anvīti*—as mutually sustaining rather than competing. Abhinavagupta’s reading of the Gītā was introduced here, where escapism is rejected: “escaping mind escapes everywhere.” Instead, one must ripen (*niṣṭhā, paripakvatā*) through sustained *sāadhanā*.

He explored the depth of *karma*: right action (*karma*), misdirected action (*vikarma*), and transcendence of action. He linked this with *śāstra*, *śastra*, and *sāadhanā*—text, discipline, and practice—forming the triad of Indian culture. Knowledge (*jñāna*) purifies, while ignorance (*ajñāna*) restricts; faithless and unstable minds (*śaṅkayukta manasa*) cannot succeed in *sāadhanā*.

Interactive Session

Coordinators – Dr. Pankaj Kumar Mishra & Dr. Kamna Vimal



The discussion that had started before the session continued after the speaker’s session also. The participants commented upon the various ways of understanding Gita’s teachings and shared their ideas and insights regarding enhancing the efficacy and impact of VAC on Gita for Holistic Life on learners. In the discussion that followed, an audience member asked: *How can bhakti be inculcated in students?* Prof. Rajnesh replied that it must begin from childhood, when faith and receptivity can be naturally nurtured.

Prof. Bimali, summing up, emphasized that karma, jñāna, and bhakti are not three separate paths but three modes of navigation within one voyage. They meet in the same harbor: transformation of self and service to the world.

Valedictory Session

Chief Guest – Prof. Anil Kumar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DU Foundation & Professor (Finance & Corporate Governance) at Department of Commerce, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi

Coordinator - Dr. Ananya Barua

The seminar concluded with a valedictory session moderated by **Dr. Ananya Barua**. Prof. Anil



Kumar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DU Foundation & Professor (Finance & Corporate Governance) at Department of Commerce, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi was the Chief Guest at the occasion. The participants were distributed certificates of participation. In their closing words, participants expressed a sense of enrichment and renewal. Teachers and students alike felt recharged, carrying away not only philosophical insights but also practical ways of integrating the Gītā into pedagogy and life.

Prof. Bimali's final essence-note captured the spirit of the two days: the Gītā is a mirror of life's dilemmas and a map of life's navigation. From self-knowledge to social action, from inner discipline to universal compassion, it teaches that transformation begins within and extends outward to the welfare of all.



Reporting by

Dr. Shruti Kant Pandey
Dr. Satyendra Srivastav
Dr. Kamna Vimal
Dr. Ajay Jaiswal