



WEDNESDAY EVENING SEMINAR

Education Program Presents

From Pedagogy to Positive Peace: The Beauty and Humor of Creative Learning

Sai Bhatawadekar

Assistant Professor, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Wednesday, March 5, 2013

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Wailana Room, Imin International Conference Center

Dr. Sai Bhatawadekar’s presentation will start with a glimpse into the evolution of 25 years of language learning and teaching experience; from the grammar-based learning of Sanskrit, English, German, and Russian in and after school, to the popular communicative approach when she taught German, to the seamless incorporation of culture and organically blossoming creative pedagogy that has characterized her Hindi languages classes. Sai will bring in various examples to show how she incorporates film, theater, music and dance, and creative writing and performance in her teaching to transform the classroom into a vibrant, dynamic, and hilarious learning space. She will illustrate how she uses songs and interpretive dance to teach new vocabulary; how poetry writing and recital even in beginning classes can help students express complex ideas simply and beautifully; and how her Bollywood inspired spoofs of Titanic, Romeo and Juliet, and Hindi blockbusters have been an absolute riot! These are not only effective tools for language learning and long term retention, but they foster joyous and genuine intellectual, personal, artistic, and even romantic connections that can last a lifetime. Sai will conclude the talk with a discussion with Nada McClellan, co-founder of the Aaja Nachle dance group, about how their dance group has served as an example of Positive Peace. Sai and Nada will perform a dance piece.

Dr. Sai Bhatawadekar is Assistant Professor of Hindi and Urdu at the University Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Her Master’s degree is in German Film Studies for which she looked at film adaptations of German literature. Her PhD is in German-Indian Comparative Philosophy. Her book manuscript and several published articles examine 19th century German philosophers including Hegel and Schopenhauer and their interpretation of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. Professor Bhatawadekar has studied eight languages and taught German for several years at Ohio State University. While completing her PhD there, she created the Hindi language and South Asian culture program, designed its curriculum, multimedia teaching material, and taught and ran the program for six years before coming to UHM. Along with her experience and scholarly pursuits, she brings her theater, music and dance background to UHM, where she has revamped the Hindi program. In 2013, she received the Board of Regents Medal for Excellence in Teaching for her innovative and inspiring pedagogical practices. Last year she and Nada McClellan co-founded a Bollywood dance group called Aaja Nachle (Come Dance). They have been choreographing, rehearsing, teaching and performing Bollywood dances all over Honolulu.

To help make WES a sustainable gathering, please bring your own cup for a beverage and small plate for light refreshments. The public is invited to attend.