

# **Sanskritam As a Foreign Language (SAFL)**

Sanskrita Bharati, 2068 Walsh Avenue, Suite B2, Santa Clara, CA 95050  
408-752-2182 <http://safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org> [safl@sanskritabharatiusa.org](mailto:sagl@sanskritabharatiusa.org)

## **SAFL2017-2018 Academic Year**

### **Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ**

#### **1. General Program Info**

##### **1a) What is SAFL?**

Sanskritam As a Foreign Language (SAFL) is a three-year online program for high school students who wish to learn Sanskritam (aka Sanskrit). The three-year program has three levels: SAMS100 (Beginner level), SAMS200 (Intermediate level), and SAMS300 (Advanced level). Students may enroll in the SAMS100 level courses without any prior knowledge of the language.

SAFL Program consists of three years of two semesters each. Admission (or progression) to each subsequent semester or academic year requires completion of each semester or residential camp during the summer before the start of the academic year respectively. Please see below.

a) Level 1 Residential Camp (SAMS 099) required for admission to first year SAFL (100 level courses, SAMS 101 and SAMS 102). SAMS101 should be completed successfully to progress in to SAMS102.

b) Level 2 Residential Camp (SAMS 103) required for admission to second year SAFL (200 level courses, SAMS 201 and SAMS 202). SAMS201 should be completed successfully to progress in to SAMS202.

c) Level 3 Residential Camp (SAMS 203) required for admission to third year SAFL (300 level course, SAMS 301 and SAMS 302). SAMS301 should be completed successfully to progress in to SAMS302.

d) Level 4 Residential Camp (SAMS 303) is considered as Honors Program and is optional. Please note that a minimum 75% score in the cumulative 301 and 302 semesters is necessary to attend this camp.

##### **1b) Why SAFL?**

SAFL is a great way to introduce high school students to the rich language of Sanskritam. With permission from their schools, students can pursue this course and obtain school credits. SAFL is designed solely for high school students and thus tailors to their specific learning needs. Through multimedia, online materials, instruction and residential camps, opportunities are provided for students to interact in Sanskritam. Upon completion of the SAFL program, students are prepared for further study at the university level.

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## **1c) Who is eligible to participate in this program?**

Students who will be enrolled in eighth to twelfth grades at the start of the 2017 academic school year are eligible.

## **1d) When did SAFL start?**

SAFL started in September 2009. SAFL will enter its ninth consecutive year in September 2017.

## **2. Registration Details**

### **2a) If a student is interested, how does s/he register?**

Registration is online at [safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org](http://safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org). Students must submit the registration form online and pay the fees in order to complete the registration process. Students receive a confirmation email with course information once they have completed registration. Registration is open only once a year. Students must begin their studies in the fall and are required to register for the whole academic year.

### **2b) Is there an application process?**

There is no special application process for admission in to the SAFL program. Only online registration is required. For some courses, pre-requisites may be required, in which case the pre-requisites must be fulfilled before the start of the course.

We advise potential students to discuss about the SAFL course with their school counselors in advance if they would like to get independent study or elective credits, or use this program to satisfy a part of their foreign language requirement, or have SAFL credits reflected in their high school transcripts. Please contact us for more information ([safl@sanskritabharatiusa.org](mailto:sagl@sanskritabharatiusa.org)).

### **2c) Are there any fees?**

Yes, there is an annual fee for the course (two semesters). It is \$750/- for the full academic year 2017-2018. The fee is to be paid in full at the time of registration. This covers course fees, online materials, books and exams. Please note that this does not cover any fees for the residential immersion programs (see question 3k). Registration and fees for the residential immersion programs are handled separately during the spring semester. **If registration is completed by May 31, 2017 then a \$50 discount will be applied to the fee.** Please note that there is a separate non-refundable fee of \$150/- for SAMS099/SAMS103/SAMS203 course waiver or SAMS200 Direct Entry Exam

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### **2d) Can I withdraw from the course and get a refund?**

Yes. If the withdrawal is done on or before **July 24, 2017**, then the refund would be 100% of the fees minus \$50/-. If the withdrawal is done after **July 24, 2017** but before or during the first week of classes, there is a 100% refund of the fees minus \$100/-. For those who withdraw in the second week of classes, there is a 75% refund. For those who withdraw in the third week of classes, there is a 50% refund. If the withdrawal is made in the fourth week, the refund is 25%. All withdrawals made after the fourth week are not eligible for any refund.

### **2e) Are there any registration requirements?**

Yes. The general requirements are:

- The student must be enrolled in eighth to twelfth grades at the start of the 2017 academic school year.
- The student must pay the fee at the time of registration.

In addition, requirements exist for each level of classes. The registration requirements are as follows:

For students entering SAMS101 in Fall 2017: Students must complete SAMS099 before the start of classes for SAMS101. SAMS099 involves attending one of the six-day residential immersion camps (see question 3k). In the case that a student cannot attend a residential camp, she/he may apply for a waiver (see question 3l).

For students entering SAMS201 in Fall 2017: Students must complete SAMS101 & SAMS102, and SAMS103 before the start of classes for SAMS201. SAMS101 & SAMS102 are the first-year courses. SAMS103 involves attending one of the six-day residential immersion camps (see question 3k). New SAFL students who wish to skip SAMS101 and SAMS102 may take SAMS200 Direct Entry Exam (see question 3f).

For students entering SAMS301 in Fall 2017: Students must complete SAMS201, SAMS202 and SAMS203 before the start of classes for SAMS301. There are no waivers available for this level.

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### **2f) What is the time frame for registration?**

Online registration begins by early March 2017 and ends on **July 24, 2017**. Students requesting waivers for SAMS099/SAMS103/SAMS203, and requesting direct entry to SAMS200 level must register by **April 28, 2017**. Please note that the class sizes are limited and registration may close early if the maximum capacity for each class is reached. So, please register at the earliest.

### **2g) When does the program start? When are classes?**

The 2017-2018 academic year starts in September 2017 and runs till May 2018. Please check the course calendar available at [safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org](http://safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org) for class times.

### **2h) Is the student registering for the entire academic year?**

Yes. Once the student is registered for an academic year, he/she is not required to re-register for the second half of that year.

### **2i) Can the student change the class day/time mid-year?**

No. Once the student is registered per his/her class preference at the beginning of the academic year, he/she continues with the same class throughout the year.

## **3. Program Details**

### **3a) How does the class meet?**

The class meets online in a virtual classroom. All the students and teachers join the online classroom at the designated class time.

### **3b) How many times a week does the class meet?**

The class meets once a week.

### **3b) Is class attendance required?**

Yes, attendance at the weekly classes is mandatory. Students who miss classes may be penalized per the policy set by the class instructor.

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### **3c) Is homework assigned?**

Yes, homework is an integral part of the course, carrying a significant percentage of the final grade.

### **3d) Are course grades given? If so, how is a student graded?**

Yes, students are provided grades. Grades are based on various factors such as class participation, performance on quizzes, projects, homework assignments, midterm and final exams.

### **3e) Is homework graded? Do you check homework? If so how does a student get his/her homework to the teacher?**

Yes, homework is graded by the instructors and contributes significantly towards the final grade. Homework is distributed to the students through the course website. Similarly students are expected to submit a soft copy of their homework through the course website by the deadline.

### **3f) Are there different levels of proficiency? Can a student who already has some knowledge of Sanskritam test into a higher class? Please describe.**

Yes, there are different levels of proficiency. New students with prior knowledge of Sanskritam can register directly for SAMS201. However, students who wish to do so, must enroll by **April 28, 2017** (for academic year 2017-18) and pass SAMS200 Direct Entry Exam which will be administered during **May 13/14, 2017**.

### **3g) Do you follow a syllabus? If so, please give a sample syllabus.**

Yes, there is a set syllabus. Please visit [safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org](http://safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org) to view the syllabus for each class. For example, since the main focus of SAMS100 level courses is conversational Sanskritam, students will study conversational Sanskrit by using the textbook Mukulam which is published by Sanskrita Bharati. There is also supplementary audio & video material and a script-writing book.

### **3h) What are the technical requirements for this course?**

To successfully complete this course, students need access to a computer with internet access, a web cam, microphone, a web browser, word processing software, audio recording software, and a scanner.

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### **3i) Approximately how many hours a week should the student be devoting to this Sanskritam class?**

The class duration is one and one-half hours a week. In addition, we expect students to spend around three and a half hours on homework, self-study and quizzes per week.

### **3j) Does a student need to know how to write and read Devanagari letters in order to enroll in this course?**

Students are not expected to know how to read and write Devanagari script before enrolling in the SAMS100 level courses. During the first year, students are trained in reading and writing with the use of textbooks. By the end of 100 level courses, students are expected to write using Devanagari script. Students enrolling in the 200 level course are required to know how to read and write in Devanagari.

### **3k) I see that there is a residential requirement for all the courses. Please describe.**

Each student is required to attend a Sanskrita Bharati youth residential camp four times during the course of the three-year SAFL program. The youth residential camps (for academic year 2017-18) are:

- Prajnaa – Sunnyvale, California. 2017 dates: **June 17 – 23.**
- Shraddhaa – Ewing, NJ. 2017 dates: **July 9 – 15.**
- Medhaa – Bengaluru, India. 2017 dates: **July 16 – July 30.**

Below, the course codes for the residential courses are listed as well as the expected time frame for their completion:

- SAMS099\* – attendance at Shraddhaa/ Prajnaa before beginning SAMS101
- SAMS103\* – attendance at Shraddhaa/Prajnaa immediately after completing SAMS102
- SAMS203\* – attendance at Shraddhaa/Prajnaa immediately after completing SAMS202
- SAMS303 – attendance at Medhaa camp in India after completing SAMS302 (optional)

Residential camps are held during the summer each year. Residential camps allow for students to have classes in-person and participate in a Sanskritam language immersion experience. Fees for the residential camps in 2017 are in the range of \$350 to \$450 per student. Please contact [saf1@sanskritabharatiusa.org](mailto:saf1@sanskritabharatiusa.org) for more details.

\*Indicates a requirement which can be waived. Please see question 3l for more info.

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### **3l) What are my options if I cannot come to a residential camp?**

A prospective student may opt for waiver of some of the prescribed SAFL courses. However, the following five courses will be mandatory for completion of SAFL program.

- a) Semester courses 201, 202, 301 and 302
- b) Completion of either SAMS103 or SAMS203

### **3m) Under what conditions can I get a waiver for a course/camp?**

- a) SAMS200 Direct Entry Exam for courses SAMS101 and SAMS102

Students wishing to enter directly into 200 level courses need to apply during open registration period (mid Mar to mid May) for and successfully complete SAMS200 Direct Entry Exam (held during **May 13/14, 2017**). A non-refundable exam fee of \$150 (separate from SAFL or summer camp registration fees) will apply.

- b) Waiver for Summer Camp SAMS099

Students who complete at least four months of a weekly Sanskritam class are eligible for a waiver of SAMS099. This can be either a specifically designated Pre-SAFL class or any other class that is part of local children's or adults' classes. A non-refundable waiver fee of \$150 (separate from SAFL registration fee) will apply. In addition, a signed letter from the instructor will be required. In addition, the student will need to complete and submit assigned study packet by **August 14, 2017**.

- c) Waiver for either Summer Camp SAMS103 or Summer Camp SAMS203

i) Continuing SAFL students may opt for getting a waiver for either Summer Camp SAMS103 or Summer Camp SAMS203 but NOT both. A non-refundable waiver fee of \$150 (separate from SAFL registration fee) will apply. In addition, the student will need to complete and submit assigned study packet by **August 14, 2017**. Please note that a student needs to score a minimum of 80% (B Grade) in the final grade in SAMS102 (or in SAMS202) to apply for SAMS103 (or SAMS203) waiver in Summer 2017.

Note: From Summer 2018, the requirement will be a combined minimum of 80% (B Grade) in the final grades of SAMS101 & SAMS102 (or SAMS201 & SAMS202) to apply for SAMS103 (or SAMS203) waiver

ii) New SAFL students (who have successfully completed SAMS200 Direct Entry Exam and have registered directly for 2nd year SAFL) are NOT eligible for applying for a waiver for Summer Camp SAMS103. In essence, a student can apply for only one waiver in a given academic year.

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### **3n) Do students work collaboratively on projects in a group?**

Students are asked to complete a few projects (i.e. conversations, enactments of scenes from a movie, etc.) in pairs. Students are given each other's contact information and asked to coordinate via phone or e-mail. All group projects are designed so that students can collaborate and complete the projects via phone without meeting in-person. Group projects provide a nice opportunity for students to converse in Sanskritam and get to know each other outside of class time.

### **3o) What is the average class size?**

Average class size is around fifteen students.

### **3p) Is there a parent teacher conference every semester?**

There are no scheduled parent-teacher conferences. However, if a student is having difficulty in a class, a SAFL instructor may request a parent-teacher conference. Parents, at any point, may request a parent- teacher conference.

## **4. School Equivalency**

### **4a) Is this program accredited by a professional organization, or recognized by any US universities as meeting a foreign language requirement?**

Yes. As of July 2016, the SAFL program has been accredited as a supplementary education program by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC - <http://www.acswasc.org>), one of the accrediting agencies in the United States.

### **4b) In the previous years, students from which states have enrolled in SAFL?**

Students from the following states enrolled in SAFL: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, North Dakota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and Ontario, Canada.

### **4c) Can a student receive school credit for this course?**

Students may receive credits (as Independent Study, elective or towards Foreign Language requirements) for this course with the permission of their school. We provide students and parents with the necessary material to petition for school credit, however the final decision to grant or deny credit of any type to students is made individually by each school.

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### **4d) Are there currently enrolled students who are getting credit for the course? If so how and what type of credit are the students receiving?**

Yes, a few current and past students have obtained credit for this course either as foreign language credit, elective credit or independent study credit which was reflected in their school transcripts.

### **4d) The schools offering some form of credit – are they public or private schools?**

There are both public and private schools that are recognizing this course and offering credit to the students.

### **4f) What can a parent do to see if his/her child can get credit for this program?**

Various states and school districts have different rules and requirements. However, in all cases, the first step is for the parent or student to submit the three-year course syllabus (available at [safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org](http://safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org), or as a part of the SAFL enrollment packet) to the student's school counselor and discuss the possibility of the school recognizing this course towards Foreign Language credit or as an elective or Independent Study. Based on our experience, if students express interest in wanting to undertake this course directly to their counselors, the counselors and schools are quite receptive.

### **4g) What will the student receive after completing the SAFL program from Sanskrita Bharati?**

The student will receive a certificate of completion from Sanskrita Bharati after completing SAMS302. Students who successfully complete SAMS303 will also receive a certificate and a congratulatory letter from the University of Pennsylvania South Asia Studies Department.

## **5. Teaching**

### **5a) Who will be teaching?**

SAFL classes are taught by Sanskrita Bharati trained teachers.

### **5b) What is the teaching style? What do you emphasize?**

Students in this program are taught Sanskritam similar to the way young children learn their mother - tongue. The beginner level courses emphasize listening and speaking, while introducing a few grammatical topics. Students listen to clips of daily conversations and practice phrases useful in daily conversation.

In the intermediate level courses, students are taught elementary grammar, reading, and writing skills. These topics are taught through the medium of Sanskritam.

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In the advanced level courses, students develop advanced writing and reading skills to prepare them for Sanskritam study at the college level. Throughout the program, we emphasize the study of Sanskritam through Sanskritam.

### **5c) What books will be used?**

We have prescribed textbooks for all three levels: Mukulam for 100 level, Kusumam for 200 level and Saurabham for 300 level. In addition other Sanskrita Bharati books, videos and reference material are provided for all the students.

### **5d) Does a student individually order books prior to class or will they be provided?**

Students do not have to individually order books. They are included in the course fee and mailed to the participants before the start of classes.

For any other SAFL related questions, please contact us at: [safl@sanskritabharatiusa.org](mailto:s afl@sanskritabharatiusa.org)  
OR contact:

Giri Bharathan: 978-761-1142

Geetha Santhanam 408 685 2540

For additional information and activities in your area, please visit Sanskrita Bharati's website:  
<http://www.sanskritabharatiusa.org>.