

Course Syllabus
EMT 2630HF – Buddhist Ethics
Emmanuel College
Toronto School of Theology
Fall 2016

Instructor Information

Instructor: Cuilan Liu, PhD, Assistant Professor
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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00 am – 11:00 am or by appointment

Course Identification

Course Number: EMT 2630HF
Course Name: Buddhist Ethics
Course Location: Room 205, Emmanuel College
Class Times: Wednesdays, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Prerequisites: None

Course Description

This course provides a systematic introduction to the foundations of Buddhist ethics to explore a wide range of contemporary ethical issues from a Buddhist perspective. Students will acquire a thorough understanding of key concepts in Buddhist ethics as well as its historical development from its homeland in India to other parts of Asia. By the end of the course, students will be able to apply the acquired knowledge on Buddhist ethics to critically analyze complex ethical issues in our world today for social and personal needs.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

- Keown, Damien. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. 147 pages.
- Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 478 pages.
- Additional readings will be available in PDF on Blackboard.

Course Website

- Blackboard <https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>.

Course Outcomes

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following outcomes. By the end of this course, students can expect to:

Content

- Become familiar with the historical development of Buddhist ethics in major traditions;
- Be able to define core concepts in Buddhist ethics;
- Be able to recall major contemporary ethical issues discussed in the Buddhist world;
- Be able to articulate how Buddhist ethics differ and similar to ethical issues discussed in other religious traditions.

Practical Skills

- Become capable of critically analyze contemporary ethical issues from a Buddhist perspective;
- Be confident in discussing contemporary issues with the Buddhist traditions;
- Be able to provide an alternative perspective from the Buddhist tradition to help those in need;
- Become more competent in serving multi-religious communities in pastoral practices.

Scholarly Tools and Skills

- Demonstrate competence in locating and utilizing library sources for scholarly writing;
- Demonstrate competence in formulating research questions, identifying primary and secondary sources, and making convincing arguments.

Policies

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. Students will be assumed to have read the document

“Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges
(http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations of the following aspects. All written materials must use Times New Roman font, size 12, double-spaced. Footnotes and bibliography must follow the style of *Journal of American Oriental Society*. Written assignments must be emailed to the instructor at cuilan.liu@utoronto.ca by 5 pm on the due day. Unless approved in advance due to medical or family emergency, late submission of assignments will not be accepted.

1. Class participation (10%). Attendance is required. Students who cannot attend the class due to medical reasons must inform the instructor in advance.
2. 3-minute report (15%). Each student will only report once in this class. At the beginning of each class, one student will prepare a 3-minute report on a topic related to Buddhist ethics. When it is your turn to report, you must email your topic (one sentence or just a keyword will be enough) to the instructor by 5 pm on the Tuesday before your report.
3. Term paper proposal (25%). A written paper proposal (max. 3 pages) is due on October 19, 2016. In this proposal, 1) identify your topic; 2) identify and summarize primary sources and secondary scholarship available on your topic; 3) explain your methodology (textual analysis, interview, survey, photo, and audio/video), and 4) include a timeline for your research. All four sections are required for grading.
4. Final paper (35%). The final paper shall not exceed 20 pages (double-spaced, Times New Roman font, size 12), including bibliography. The proposal and the final paper will be graded according to a four-point rubric: grammar and style, clarity of thesis, structural organization, and appropriate use of textual quotations.
5. Oral presentation of term paper (15%).

Grading System

- A+ (90-100)
- A (85-89)
- A- (80-84)
- B+ (77-79)
- B (73-76)
- B- (70-72)
- F

Course Schedule

Week 1

Wed, 9/14

Introduction

- Harvey (2007). "Introduction." Pp. 1-7.

Part One: Foundations of Buddhist Ethics

Week 2

Wed, 9/21

Buddhist Canon Law

- Keown (2005). "Buddhist Morality." Pp. 3-16;
- Harvey (2007). "Keeping the Lay Precepts." Pp. 66-88.

Week 3

Wed, 9/28

*Deadline to sign up for 3-minute Report

Mahāyāna Moral Codes

- Keown (2005). "Mahāyāna Morality." Pp. 17-20;
- "Harvey (2007). "Mahāyāna Emphases and Adaptations." Pp. 123-149.

Week 4

Wed, 10/5

Tantric Moral Codes

- Tsongkhapa (2005). "Root Downfall." In Gareth Sparham (trans.), *Tantric Ethics* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2005), pp. 79-113.

Part Two: Special Issues

Week 5

Wed, 10/12

Thanksgiving Holiday (No Class)

Week 6

Wed, 10/19

*Term paper proposal due

Warrior Monks: Compassion and Violence

- Keown (2005). "War and terrorism." Pp. 69-83;
- Harvey (2007). "War and Peace." Pp. 239-285.

Week 7

Wed, 10/26

Reading Week (No Class)

Week 8

Wed, 11/2

Living: Celibacy and Family Matters

- Keown (2005). "Sexuality." Pp. 53-68;
- Clarke, Shayne. "The Rhinoceros in the Room: Monks and Nuns and Their Families." In *Family Matters in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), pp. 1-36; "Nuns who Become Pregnant." Pp. 120-149.

Week 9

Wed, 11/9

Abortion

- Keown (2005). "Abortion." Pp. 84-99;
- Hughes, James. "Buddhism and Abortion: A Western Approach." In Damien Kewon (ed.), *Buddhism and Abortion* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), pp. 183-198.
- Keown, Damien. "Buddhism and Abortion: Is There a 'Middle Way'?" In Damien Kewon (ed.), *Buddhism and Abortion* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), pp. 199-218.

Recommended

- Hardacre, Helen. "The Practice of Mizuko Kuyō and the Changing Nature of Abortion," in *Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 55-100.

Week 10

Wed, 11/16

Suicide, Euthanasia, and Organ Donation

- Keown (2005). "Suicide and Euthanasia." Pp. 100-115;
- Harvey (2007). "Suicide and Euthanasia." Pp. 286-310;
- Benn, James A. "Fire and Sword: Some Connections between Self-Immolation and Religious Persecution in the History of Chinese Buddhism." In Cueva, Bryan and Jacqueline I. Stone (eds.), *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses, Representation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), pp. 234-265;
- Kewon, Damien. "Suicide, Assisted Death and Euthanasia: A Buddhist Perspective." *Journal of Law and Religion* 13.2 (1998-1999): 385-405;

- Lesco, Philip A. "The Bodhisattva Ideal and Organ Transplantation." *Journal of Religion and Health* 30. 1(1991): 35-41.

Week 11

Wed, 11/23

Rebirth

- "Rebirth." In Robert E. Buswell and Donald S. Lopez (eds.), *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 708-709;
- Becker, Carl B. "Rebirth in Early Buddhism." In *Breaking the Cycle: Death and the Afterlife in Buddhism* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), pp. 1-22;
- Sogyal Rinpoche. "Death and Rebirth." In *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2012), pp. 263-342.

Week 12

Wed, 11/30

Stem Cell and Human Cloning

- Edinger, W. J. "The Koan of Cloning: A Buddhist Perspective on the Ethics of Human Cloning Technology." *Second Opinion* 1 (1999): 44-56.

Recommended

- Huimin. "Buddhist Bioethics: The Case of Human Cloning and Embryo Stem Cell Research." *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 15 (2002): 457-470. (In Chinese).

Week 13

Wed, 12/7

***Term paper due in class**

Final Paper Presentation