Instructor Information

Instructor: Cuilan Liu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Office Location: Room 002, Emmanuel College
Telephone: Office – (416) 585-4518
E-mail: cuilan.liu@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12-1pm
Meeting in person in my office, or over the phone during my office hour.

Course Identification

Course Number: EMT 2630HF
Course Name: Buddhist Ethics
Course Location: Emmanuel College
Class Times: Tuesdays, 4:15pm-6:15pm
Prerequisites:
Note: Basic understanding of Buddhist doctrines, practices, and traditions are expected for students to participate in critical analysis of the reading materials.

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.

In this course, we will discuss difficult social issues (including but not limited to violence, death, abortion, suicide, euthanasia, organ donation, human cloning, and et cetera) to ready students for providing spiritual care and counseling to those who are in need of help and support in these areas. As such, students are invited to be prepared in advance for discussion on or reference to reading materials and other assignments that may be culturally, socially, and personally challenging, uncomfortable, disturbing, or offensive. As a courtesy to your colleagues, all participants who are presenting, reporting, or commenting on sensitive issues are also encouraged to be mindful about how to introduce challenging textual and/or visual materials in the classroom.
Course Resources

1. Students are encouraged to purchase the following two texts books in advance because the Crux bookstore where copies of textbooks used to be available for purchase at the beginning of the semester, is now closed. If you’re comfortable reading PDF files, most of the readings required for this course will be made available on the course’s website Blackboard.

   • Additional readings will be available in PDF on Blackboard.

Course Website

- This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at https://q.utoronto.ca/ and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the My Courses module, where you’ll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701. Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask the Registrar for further help.

Writing Resources

For advice on academic writing, go to http://www.writing.utoronto.ca. If you wish to book an appointment with a writing instructor for individual help, go to http://www.vic.utoronto.ca/students/tutorialservices/Writing_Centre.htm. Make sure you book your appointment as early as possible. Please ensure that you make good use of the writing centre.

Key Dates for Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly summary of readings</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3 pm on the Mondays before class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>For further instructions, see the section on</td>
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<td>evaluation below.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>---------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Evaluation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Project Proposal</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>February 26, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hard copy due in class + Electronic copy (in Word, not PDF) due by 5 pm on the due date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation of Course Project</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>April 2, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 minutes per presentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of Course Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>April 2, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hard copy due in class + Electronic copy (in Word, not PDF) due by 5 pm on the due date.</td>
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**Evaluation**

**Requirements**

1. The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in the following areas.

2. Attendance (5%).

   Emmanuel Attendance Policy: Academic credit for a course requires regular class attendance, unless otherwise indicated in the course syllabus (e.g. for intensive courses, attendance is mandatory). Attendance means being present in the class for the entire scheduled class meeting, not just part of it.

   Each student has pre-approved permission to miss one class so please use yours wisely. Any absence beyond that requires a formal written request.

   In the event of any kind of the above-mentioned absence, students are expected to inform the professor prior to class, and are responsible for course materials missed.

   If attendance is poor due to extenuating circumstances, students are recommended to drop the course before the last day to withdraw without academic penalty. For students who miss three regular classes (including the pre-approved session), or 25% of an intensive course, this may result in a lower grade or even a failing grade for the course. If attendance is poor due to extenuating circumstances, students may petition the Basic Degree Committee to drop a course without academic or financial penalty. Each student is allowed to miss one class for any reason without informing the instructor in advance so use your opportunity wisely. Students expecting additional absence from class must inform the instructor in advance with officially approved reasons.
3. **Class participation (10%).**
   Your participation grade will reply heavily on your familiarity with the readings, your critical and insightful engagement with them in the classroom. When you disagree during class discussion, we invite you to express your disagreements respectfully to your interlocutors.

4. **Weekly 3-sentence summary of one reading (20%).**
   For readings between week 2 and week 12, each student must submit a summary of one reading for that class in three sentences in the open Discussion Board on the course’s website. Use the first two sentences to summarize one or more readings assigned for that session; use the third sentence to raise a critical question regarding the summarized reading.

   For the days when a student has obtained permission to be absent, the student must provide a longer (max. 700 words) summary of the readings on that day as that will be the student’s opportunity to demonstrate a proper understanding of the theme of the missed session.

   Grading of these summary entries will be based on your understanding of the reading, as well as the effort and sophistication of your critical thinking.

   Optional (recommended but un-graded): The time we have in class will be limited so students who were unable to share (all of) their thoughts in class are invited to add comments/reflections on the readings and classroom discussion after class as journal entries.

5. **Term Project**
   Design a project based on a Buddhist text discussed in the class to serve a wider community (this community can be on campus, at an institution, the public, private clients and et cetera). If you are using a Buddhist text not covered in the class, please discuss it with your instructor for approval.

   Accompanying your project, write a **max. 900-word statement** discussing how this proposed project demonstrates your understanding of a particular Buddhist text.

   **Project proposal (20%)**
   In this proposal, clearly describe what you propose to do in this project; where you plan to implement this project; why is the proposed project important; and your timeline for completing the project.

   **Final Submission of Project (30%)**

   **Grading rubric of the project:** 1) Have you demonstrated your project’s connection with the course materials? 2) Do you have a clear rational in your designing of this project? 3) How can others benefit from your project/Whom can your project serve? 4) Is your project feasible for implementation? 5) Have you reached out to a potential partner/collaborator/sponsor to discuss ways to implement your project?
6. **Oral presentation** (10%).

7. **Course evaluation.** (5%). Students will receive an email from Shawn Houston with a link to a survey on the course. Please complete that survey and email a confirmation of your completion of the survey to the instructor by **April 12, 2019**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

- **Note:** All written assignments must use Times New Roman, Font size 12, double-spaced. For writing project, footnotes and bibliography must follow the style sheet of *Journal of American Oriental Society* or in accordance with the convention in your field (students using other styles must specify the style followed in the writings).

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**Classroom Etiquette**

In this course, students are invited to critically read, analyze, and evaluate in order to see more in a text than the text explicitly states. The critical analysis may involve but is not just the act of criticizing.

You may and will likely disagree with your classmates and professor, but do not disrespect any of them.

Students anticipating note-taking assistance are encouraged to make arrangements in advance. Digital recording of the course is not allowed. Students with demonstrated need to record the course are responsible for obtaining written permission from the professor and all participants (enrolled students, auditors, and visitors if applicable) in the class.

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**Policies**

**Accessibility**

Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at [http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/). The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**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. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST Basic Degree Handbook and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871. A student who plagiarizes in this course 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.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaviorac.htm.

Late work

Students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course syllabus. The penalty for late assignments is 2% reduction in mark per day of lateness. Assignments will not be accepted after one week of the due date. This penalty is not applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties; students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor. The absolute deadline for the course is the last day of classes. Students who for exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred“) beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar’s office in the student’s college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Instruction on a petition for an extension from the Registrar’s office at Emmanuel College:

“All students (basic degree or graduate) who cannot submit the final assignment by the due date listed in the course syllabus must petition for an extension. For medical reasons, a UofT verification of illness form is required. A doctor’s note is invalid.”

Back-up copies

Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.
Obligation to check email

At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered into the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or another type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Email communication with the course instructor

The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address. Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to an email from non-utoronto addresses.

*TST Grading Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Equivalents</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Grasp of Subject Matter</th>
<th>Other qualities expected of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Profound and Creative</td>
<td>Strong evidence of original thought, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound and penetrating critical evaluations which identify assumptions of those they study as well as their own; mastery of an extensive knowledge base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FZ</td>
<td>0-69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Failure</td>
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**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.
### Course Schedule

#### Week 1

**Jan. 8**

**Introduction**

- Syllabus

### Part One: Foundations of Buddhist Ethics

#### Week 2

**Jan. 15**

**Canon Law**


#### Week 3

**Jan. 22**

**Mahāyāna and Tantric Moral Codes**


### Part Two: Special Issues

#### Week 4

**Jan. 29**

**Animal Releasing**


#### Week 5

**Feb. 5**

**Buddhism and Violence**

Week 6  
*Feb. 12*  
**Celibacy and Family Matters**


Week 7  
*Feb. 19*  
**Reading Week (No Class)**

Week 8  
*Feb. 26*  
**Religious Property**


**Recommended**


Week 9  
*Mar. 5*  
**Abortion**


**Recommended**

Week 10  
Mar. 12  
**Suicide, Euthanasia, and Organ Donation**


Week 11  
Mar. 19  
**Death and Rebirth**

- Becker, Carl B. "Rebirth in Early Buddhism." In *Breaking the Cycle: Death and the Afterlife in Buddhism* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), 1-22;

Week 12  
Mar. 26  
**Stem Cell and Human Cloning**

Recommended

- Film: *Gattaca* 1997. 121 minutes.

Week 13  
April 2  
Oral Presentation