

Course Syllabus
EMT 2631HF – Foundational Tenets and Practices of Buddhism
Emmanuel College
Toronto School of Theology
Fall 2017

Instructor Information

Instructor: Cuilan Liu, PhD, Assistant Professor
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Course Identification

Course Number: EMT 2631HF
Course Name: Foundational Tenets and Practices of Buddhism
Course Location: EM302, Emmanuel College
Class Times: Wednesdays, 9am-11am
Prerequisites: None

Course Description

This course surveys the diverse ideals, practices, and traditions of Buddhism in its formative period in India. By reading primary and secondary sources central to Buddhism, we will examine key concepts, doctrines, and practices in the Theravāda, Mahāyāna, and Tantric traditions. Having acquired a solid understanding of the history and doctrine of Buddhism, students will learn to apply these understandings to critically analyze contemporary issues from a Buddhist perspective.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

- All reading materials will be made available in PDF on Blackboard.

Course Website(s)

- 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 the following outcomes:

Content

- Familiarity with the historical development of Buddhism;
- Ability to articulate the formation and development of three major Buddhist traditions;
- Familiarity with major schools of Buddhist philosophy;
- Experiences in reading primary Buddhist sources.

Practical Skills

- Religious literacy in the Buddhist tradition;
- Capability of critically analyze religious issues in a major Eastern religious tradition;
- Confidence in discussing contemporary issues within the Buddhist traditions;
- Competence in serving multi -religious communities in pastoral practices.

Scholarly Skills

- Competence in locating and utilizing library sources for scholarly writing;
- 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. 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* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>. 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 in the following areas.

1. Attendance and participation in class (10%).
2. Three-minute report on a Buddhist term (15%). Each student will chose one Buddhist term and will have three minute to explain it at the beginning of the class.
3. Proposal of term paper (25%). A written paper proposal (max. 3 pages) is due on November 8, 2017. 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. Term 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%).

Note: All written materials must use Times New Roman, Font size 12, double-spaced. The term paper may not exceed 20 pages, including bibliography. Citation, footnotes, and bibliography must follow the style sheet of *Journal of American Oriental Society* or in accordance with the convention in your field. On the due day, 1) submit a hardcopy to the instructor in class; AND 2) email copy in word to cuilan.liu@utoronto.ca by 5pm on the due day. The electronical version of your written assignments must be titled in the following format: Last Name, First Name_Foundational Tenets_x. For instance, Liu, Cuilan_Foundational Tenets_Paper Proposal; Liu, Cuilan_Foundational Tenets_Final Paper.

Grading System

- A+ (90-100)
- A (85-89)
- A- (80-84)

B+ (77-79)

B (73-76)

B- (70-72)

Failure

Course Schedule

Week 1

9/13

Introduction

- Gombrich, Richard. "Introduction." In *The World of Buddhism* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1984), pp. 9-14.

Part One: Foundation of Buddhism

Week 2

9/20

The Buddha

- Mitchell, Donald W. and Sarah Jacob. "1. The Life of Gautama Buddha." In *Introducing Buddhist Experiences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 1-30;
- Olivelle, Patrick. "The Birth of the Lord." In *The Life of the Buddha by Āśvaghosa* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), pp. 1-33.

Week 3

9/27

Dharma: The Four Noble Truths

- Mitchell, Donald W. and Sarah Jacob. "2. The Teachings of the Buddha." In *Introducing Buddhist Experiences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 31-64;
- Cantwell, Cathy. "2. The Dharma." In *Buddhism: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 56-92.

Week 4

10/4

Samṅha: The Buddhist Clergy

- Cantwell, Cathy. "4. The Sangha." In *Buddhism: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 107-140;
- Gethin, Rupert. "4. The Buddhist Community: Monks, Nuns, and Lay Followers." In *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 85-111.

Part Two: Essence of Buddhist Philosophy

Week 5

10/11

Abhidharma

- Buswell, Robert E. and Donald S. Lopez. "Abhidharma." In *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), p. 4;
- Gethin, Rupert. "8. The Abhidharma: The Higher Teaching." In *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 202-223;
- Mitchell, Donald W. and Sarah Jacob. "5. The Development of Buddhist Thought in India." In *Introducing Buddhist Experiences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 149-176.

Week 6

10/18

Madhyamaka: Middle Way

- Buswell, Robert E. and Donald S. Lopez. "Madhyamaka." In *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), p. 487;
- Siderits, Mark and Shōryū Katsura. "Introduction." In *Nāgārjuna's Middle Way Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2013), pp. 1-10.

Week 7

10/25

Reading Week (No Class)

Part Three: Major Buddhist Traditions

Week 8

11/1

3-page term paper proposal due

Therāvāda Tradition

- "Thervada Buddhism." In Oxtoby, Willard G., Roy C. Amore, and Amir Hussain (eds), *World Religions: Eastern Traditions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 210-217.

Week 9

11/8

Mahāyāna Tradition

- Mitchell, Donald W. and Sarah Jacob. "4. The Great Vehicle." In *Introducing Buddhist Experiences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 115-148;
- Gethin, Rupert. "9. The Mahāyāna: The Great Vehicle." In *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 224-252.

Week 10

11/15

Tantric Tradition

- Powers, John. "Ch. 9 Tantra." In *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1995), pp. 249-323.

Week 11

11/22

Film Screening

Little Buddha (1993), 123 minutes.

Week 12

11/29

Final Paper Presentation (*Term Paper Due in Class)

Week 13

12/6

Review Session