Buddhism and Asian Cultures
AS/HUMA 1855 9.0
Humanities Department
Faculty Of Liberal Arts And Professional Studies
Fall/Winter 2013-14

Times and Locations
Fall and Winter Terms 2013-2014
Lecture
Mon 12:30-2:30 TEL building 0010
Tutorials
1) Tues 12:30-2:30 Vanier College 105
   Prof. Turner
1) Tues 4:30-6:30 Curtis Lecture Hall 110
   Ms. Jing Xu
3) Mon 8:30-10:30 Founders College 105
   To be Determined

Course Secretary
Rita Parente, 210 Vanier College
rita729@yorku.ca

Professor
Alicia Turner
Office: 241 Vanier College
416-736-2100 ext. 66979 (rarely answered)
turnera@yorku.ca
Office Hrs: Tues 2:30-4:00 and by appointment

Tutorial Leaders
Jing Xu xujing12@yorku.ca
Office Hrs: Weds 3:00-4:00 Vanier 109A
Second Tutorial leader’s information will be available on Moodle.

Course Description
This course introduces the diversity of Buddhist ideas and practices in Asia. Exploring Buddhism as a living tradition, it focuses on the impact and interpretation of Buddhism in historical and contemporary cultures. After developing a background in basic Buddhist philosophy we explore Buddhism’s cultural impact in literature, art, ritual, ethics, economics, social interaction and politics.

Beginning with the biography of the Buddha and origins of Buddhism in ancient India, the course covers the development of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana schools. The first semester will focus on the development of Buddhist ideas and their interpretation in contemporary practice in Southeast Asia (Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia or Laos), South Asia (India, Nepal, or Sri Lanka) and East Asia (China, Japan or Korea). The first semester’s topics will include scripture and narrative texts, art, archaeology, film and studies of ritual, including issues of monasticism and meditation. The second semester will explore ethnographic accounts of Buddhist life and contemporary issues, including discussions of magic, alchemy, gender and sexuality, democracy, nationalism and war.

Required Texts

- Borchert, Thomas. *Educating Monks: Governing and Imagining Buddhism from China's Southwest Frontier*. (book manuscript).
- Various articles that can be downloaded from the library through links on Moodle.
Learning Objectives

- Students will gain an understanding of Buddhism as a living religion in Southeast Asia and be able to draw connections between points of doctrine and worldview and the daily practices of Southeast Asians.
- Students will learn to discuss religious ideas with peers in a simultaneously respectful and critically reflective manner.
- Students will gain an ability to critically investigate religious traditions from an analytical-critical and interdisciplinary perspective.
- Students will analyze how Buddhist narratives, symbols and rituals have been used to shape boundaries of community and social and political responses to changing historical circumstances.
- Students will critically reflect on changing constructions of identity and ‘the teachings’ (dhamma) historically and across ethnic groups in Southeast Asia.
Course Schedule

Sept 9th
Buddhist Lives
   Skills Practice
       🥀 Models for Learning

Sept 16th
The Universe
   Required Readings:
       ✤ Lopez, *Story of Buddhism*, “Introduction” 1-18,
          “The Universe” 19-36.
   Suggested Readings:
       ✤ Harvey, *Introduction to Buddhism*, “Buddha and His Indian Contexts” 8-31.
   Skills Practice
       🥀 Note Taking and Time Management

Sept 23rd
The Buddha and his Realization
   Required Readings:
       ✤ *The Questions of King Milander* pages 40-46 (green numbers)
   Suggested Readings:
       ✤ *The Illustrated History of Buddhism*
           http://www.thisismyanmar.com/nibbana/ymbabok.htm Read 1-5, 7-9, 11-15
   Skills Practice
       🥀 Map Quiz, Critically Reading a Religious Text

Sept 30th
Sila: Stories and Values
   Required Readings:
       ✤ *The Vessantara Jataka*, entire but skip 266-269, 274-279 of green numbered pages
       ✤ Glen Dundbridge, "Miao-Shan on Stone: Two Early Inscriptions," *Harvard Journal of
           www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/stable/2718945
       ✤ Lopez, *Story of Buddhism*, 82-83.
Oct 7th
Dharma: Theravada Texts and Traditions

Required Readings:
   http://www.thisismyanmar.com/nibbana/ymbabok.htm

Assignments Due

Critically Reading a Religious Text: The Vessantara Jataka

Skills Practice

Writing a Thesis

Oct 14th
Thanksgiving
Tuesday Tutorials are canceled

Oct 21st
Dharma: Mahayana Worlds

Required Readings:
✦ *The Lotus Sutra* Skim the forewords and Chapter 1, read 47-62.

Suggested Readings:
✦ Harvey, *Introduction to Buddhism*, “Mahayana Philosophy" 114-150.

Assignments Due

First Analytical Essay Thesis

Oct 28th
Sangha: Ordination and Practice

Required Readings:

Suggested Readings:

Skills Practice

Reading Footnotes, Using Quotations and Paraphrasing
Nov 4th
Dāna: Donation and Devotion
Required Readings:
Skills Practice
❖ Critically Analyzing a Ritual
Assignments Due
❖ First Analytical Essay Due

Nov 11th
Bhavana: Vipassana and Burmese Culture
Required Readings:
Assignments Due
❖ Critically Analyzing a Religious Ritual: Ordination, Meditation or Pilgrimage

Nov 18th
Bhavana: Chan, Zen and Japanese Culture
Required Readings:
Assignments Due
❖ Second Analytical Essay Thesis

Nov 25th
Vajrayana in Tibet
Required Readings:
Suggested Readings:

Dec 2nd
How are we doing so far?
Test
❖ Second Analytical Essay

**** December Break****
Jan 6th
Complicated Real Life: Monks and Ghosts in Thailand
Required Readings:

Jan 13th
Thailand: Texts of all Types
Required Readings:
Skills Practice
 надо
Digital and Library Research Skills Practice
★ Tutorials Meet in Library Room 531

Jan 20th
Thailand: Images and Things
Required Readings:
Skills Practice
 tentang
Evaluating the Authority of a Source

Jan 27th
Gender: Who can be a *Real Nun*?
Required Readings:
Assignments Due
研究中心
Research Paper Topic

Feb 3rd
Gender: How Does Buddhism Shape Being Female?
Required Readings:

Assignments Due

Research Paper: From Questions to Problems Sheet (not marked)

Feb 10th

**Burma: Sāsana, Democracy and the State**

Required Readings:

- To be Announced

Skills Practice

*The Chicago Manual of Style* formatting footnotes and bibliography

Assignments Due

Evaluating an Author’s Argument

Feb 17th

**READING WEEK**

Feb 24th

**Japan: Death of Buddhism or Buddhism and Death?**

Required Readings:

- Rowe, *Bonds of the Dead*, Intro and chap 1.

Assignments Due

Research Paper Bibliography

Mar 3rd

**Japan: Buddhism and Death continued**

Required Readings:

- Rowe, *Bonds of the Dead*, chaps 2 and 3.

Mar 10th

**Sipsongpanna: Monks on the Borders of China**

Required Readings:


Assignments Due

Research Paper Thesis and Argument Outline

Mar 17th

**Sipsongpanna: Buddhism Ethnicity and the State**

Required Readings:

Mar 24th
Buddhism and Problems of Modernity
   Required Readings:
   Individual meetings on papers in Tutorials

March 31st
What did we get out of all this? What is Buddhism?
   Test
   Assignments Due
   ✨ Final Research Paper
Evaluation:

Reading Questions (weekly) 10%
Critical Skills Assignments (8) 25%
Short Analytical Papers (2 first semester) 25%
Research Paper (1 second semester) 20%
Tests (2) 15%
Participation 5%
Total 100%

Reading Questions 10%
After completing the reading each week, students will log onto Moodle and complete the reading questions. Reading questions must be completed before lecture each week. No credit will be given for completing the questions after lecture.

Critical Skills Assignments 25%
There are 8 assignments, 4 per semester, that practice specific critical skills. The assignments will be posted on Moodle and are due in tutorial. Skills include:
- Critically Reading a Primary Religious Text
- Critically Assessing a Ritual
- Writing a Thesis (2)
- Evaluating an Author’s Authority and Argument
- Research Paper Topic
- Research Paper Bibliography Annotated with Reading Notes
- Research Paper Thesis and Argument Outline
In addition there will be a number of critical skills assignments done in tutorial that are not marked for credit.

Short Analytical Papers 25%
During the first semester students will write two short (6 page~2100 word) analytical essays worth 12.5% each. The first essay, due on in tutorial on Nov 4-5, will analyze two primary Buddhist texts. The second essay, due in lecture on December 2nd, will analyze a Buddhist ritual. Students must follow the writing conventions laid out in the assignments and must submit both an electronic copy on Moodle and a paper copy.

Research Paper 20%
Much of the work of the second semester will be researching and writing a major (14 page~5000 word) paper on a topic of the student’s choice. We will work on research skills in lecture and tutorial, building on the readings from The Craft of Research and many of the critical skills assignments will build towards writing this paper. Students must follow the writing conventions laid out in the assignment and must submit both an electronic copy on Moodle and a paper copy.
Tests 15%
On the last lecture day of each semester (December 2nd and March 31st) we will have a short test covering the knowledge and skills that we have gained. The test will be identical to the critical skills assignments and the reading tests--so don’t panic, you will be well prepared.

Participation 5%
Much of the work of learning to analyze religion is done through active practice: trial and error of analyzing Buddhist ideas and practices in class discussion. Therefore attending both lectures and tutorials, and actively participating is essential. Please make a serious effort to attend every class and participate in class discussions. If there are reasons you are not able to speak in class regularly, please contact me outside of class.
Grades and Grading Scheme

Except for courses taken under the pass/fail option, courses in the undergraduate Faculties represented in this publication are graded according to the following scale. The grade point values are used to compute averages. For information regarding the pass/fail option regulations, refer to the Grading information available in your Faculty's section of the Calendar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Percent Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Description of Grading Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
<td>Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques &amp; exceptional skill or great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Fairly Competent</td>
<td>Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>Passing</td>
<td>Slightly better than minimal knowledge of required concepts and/or techniques together with some ability to use them in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>Marginally Passing</td>
<td>Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(marginally below 50%)</td>
<td>Marginally Failing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(below 50%)</td>
<td>Failing</td>
<td></td>
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Note: All of the above-noted grades are used to calculate averages and credits.
Policies

Course Enrollment and Withdrawal Dates:
- Last date to enroll without the permission of the professor: Sept 22
- Last date to enroll with the permission of the professor: Oct 25
- Last date to drop course without receiving a grade: Feb 14

Academic Integrity: Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies regulations on Academic Dishonesty are set out in the York University Undergraduate Calendar. Please read these carefully. Note that “a student accused of academic dishonesty may not drop or be deregistered from the course in question until a final decision is reached.” All students are required to read the pamphlet ‘Beware – Says who? Avoiding plagiarism’ and complete the York Academic Integrity Tutorial online. (http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/). Proof of a 100% score is required before the first assignment is due. You may repeat the tutorial as many times as necessary to obtain a 100% score.

Religious Observance Days: If any of the dates for assignments pose a conflict with a religious observance date, please contact Prof. Turner during the first three weeks of class to make accommodations.

Attendance and Late Assignments: Class attendance and participation are essential; chronic absence will severely impact your grade. Plan your time well in the advance. If your schedule will not allow you enough time to do the reading and writing required for this course, I recommend that you register for another course. The grade for a paper or assignment that is less than one week late without an excuse from a doctor or therapist or an obituary will be lowered one letter grade (e.g. B→C). No credit will be given for work more than one week late.

Disability Accessibility: Students with physical, learning or psychiatric disabilities who require reasonable accommodations should consult Prof. Turner early in the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to access Counseling & Disability Services.

Problems During the Semester:
If you are encountering problems please talk to Prof. Turner or your tutorial leader as soon as possible. This includes both difficulty understanding the material or completing the assignments and personal problems that impede you ability to complete course work. We cannot always make accommodations, but if you do not come to us we will not be able to help. There are many services on campus that may be able to assist you and we can direct you to the appropriate office.

Email and Etiquette
Email is often the best way of reaching the professor or tutorial leaders, but please be aware that a professional email is not the same thing as a text message. Email requires a salutation (Dear Professor . . .) and a signature (Thank you, Your Name). Plan ahead and do not expect an immediate reply to an email. Prof. Turner attempts to reply to all student emails within 4 days.
Drop In Open Office Hours:
Prof. Turner, Ms. Xu and Ms. all hold weekly office hours, listed on the front of the syllabus. You do not need to make an appointment to meet with us during these hours. Normally students meet with the professor for 10 to 15 minutes to discuss a question, interest or concern. While students are not required to come to office hours, we consider regular contact beyond the classroom to be part of active participation. Those students who come office hours less than once per semester receive lower participation marks.

Moodle:
This course will make extensive use of the Moodle online course website. All marks will be posted on Moodle and students will be required to complete reading questions and submit assignments on Moodle, which may be submitted to Turnitin as well. All students must learn how to use the website and are responsible for checking Moodle regularly for announcements and changes to the syllabus. If you do not have a York Passport Id and password, please contact helpdesk@yorku.ca immediately.