

RELIGION 323: Buddhism

Spring 2011
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Course Description:

The focus of this class will be on key traditional Buddhist teachings, with a focus on the teaching of the historical Buddha, the two major schools of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism (Madhyamaka and Yogācāra), and the Buddhist encounter with the West. We hope to achieve two main objectives: to acquire basic knowledge of core Buddhist doctrines, such as the Four Noble Truths, dependent origination, not-self/no-self, emptiness, and the storehouse consciousness within their historical contexts, and to have some exposure to the engagement between Buddhism and Western modernity. The primary orientation of this class is philosophical and historical.

Course Requirements:

Two Exams	70%
* One Book Report	30%

* You are required to write a five-page (double-spaced, size 12 font, Times New Roman font) book report on either one of the two last textbooks by the end of the semester. Basically, you should follow this structure: identify the central thesis and summarize how the author presents it through several sub-theses. It should be treated as a summary of the book, NOT an opinion piece. You must use Microsoft Word, or if you use some other software you need to convert it to either word or pdf format before submitting it. You must submit it online at sakai.rutgers.edu by May 5th, 2011. Late submission will result in 5-point-per-day reduction of the paper grade.

Course Policies:

- * Attendance will be taken randomly. Every two sessions missed will result in a 5% reduction of the final grade unless a medical proof or a written proof of an emergency is provided.
- * You are expected to attend all classes fully prepared: complete the reading assignment for each class with written notes, and be ready to raise specific questions and discuss points about the assigned reading.
- * The class strictly follows the university policy on academic integrity. It is available at <http://TeachX.rutgers.edu/integrity/index.html>

Required Texts:

- (A) *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction*, by Mark Siderits. Hackett.
- (B) *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, translated by Jay Garfield. Oxford.
- (C) Jiang, Tao. *Contexts and Dialogue: Yogācāra Buddhism and Modern Psychology on the Subliminal Mind*. Hawaii.
- (D) *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, by David McMahan. Oxford

Important Dates:

1st exam: Feb. 22 2nd exam: April 5 Book Report Due: May 5

Tentative Schedule:

The following schedule is tentative and subject to change. The format of the course would be a combination of lectures and class discussions. Since some materials in the lecture are not necessarily covered in the required texts, it is highly recommended that you take notes during the lecture. Of course, questions are always welcome.

Jan. 18	Intellectual background at the time of the historical Buddha
Jan. 25	A 1-2
Feb. 1	A 3-4
Feb. 8	A 6
Feb. 15	A 7-8
Feb. 22	1 st Exam; Introduction to Madhyamaka (B pp.87-99)
March 1	B pp.100-123
March 8	B pp.178-182, pp.275-283

Spring Break

March 22	B pp.293-321
March 29	B pp.322-334
April 5	2 nd Exam; C Intro – Chapter 1
April 12	C 2-5
April 19	D 1-4
April 26	D 5-8
May 5	Final book report due at sakai.rutgers.edu