



**Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani**  
Hyderabad Campus

**FIRST SEMESTER 2021-2022**

Course Handout Part II

Date: 20.08.2021

In addition to part-I (General Handout for all courses appended to the time table) this portion gives further specific details regarding the course.

Course No. : HSS F246  
Course Title : Philosophy of Nāgārjuna  
Instructor-in-Charge : Dr. A. K. Jayesh

### Scope and Objective of the Course:

The course intends to serve as an introduction to the philosophy of Nāgārjuna, the founder of the middle way school of Mahāyāna Buddhism. By systematically engaging with Nāgārjuna's master work the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, the course introduces students to Nāgārjuna's analysis of the following Abhidharma concepts: aggregates, elements, conditioned entity; desire and the desirous; agent and action; fire and fuel; ontological independence; prior entity; initial and final limits; intrinsic nature; compounded phenomena; suffering, bondage, and freedom; action and consequence; self and entities; substance metaphysics; time and origin and dissolution of existents; Tathāgata; assemblage; conjunction; four noble truths; nirvāṇa; and the twelve links of dependent origination. Also, in line with the spirit of Nāgārjuna's inquiry, the course aims to inculcate in students the ability to determine the nature and merit of any philosophical position and in the process introduces them to the rigors and requirements of philosophical thinking.

### Textbook:

1. Siderits, Mark, and Shōryū Katsura. 2013. *Nāgārjuna's Middle Way: "Mūlamadhyamakakārikā."* Boston: Wisdom.

### Reference Books:

1. Loizzo, Joseph John, trans. 2007. *Nāgārjuna's "Reason Sixty" with Chandrakīrti's "Reason Sixty Commentary."* New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies.
2. Walser, Joseph. 2005. *Nāgārjuna in Context: Mahāyāna Buddhism and Early Indian Culture.* New York: Columbia University Press.
3. Westerhoff, Jan. 2009. *Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka: A Philosophical Introduction.* New York: Oxford University Press.
4. ———, trans. 2010. *The Dispeller of Disputes: Nāgārjuna's "Vigrahavyāvartanī."* New York: Oxford University Press.
5. ———, trans. 2018a. *Crushing the Categories ("Vaidalyaprakaraṇa").* New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies.
6. ———. 2018b. *The Golden Age of Indian Buddhist Philosophy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.



## Course Plan:

Lecture No.	Learning objectives	Topics to be covered	Chapter in the Text Book
1	Understand the nature and objective of the course		
2	Understand the context of Nāgārjuna's philosophy	Abhidharma and Madhyamaka	
3–5	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of condition and motion	Conditions and motion	Chapters 1 and 2 (TB)
6–8	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of senses and aggregates	Senses and aggregates	Chapters 3 and 4 (TB)
9–11	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of elements, desire, and the desirous	Elements, desire and the desirous	Chapters 5 and 6 (TB)
12–14	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of conditioned existence and agent and action	Conditioned entities, agent and action	Chapters 7 and 8 (TB)
15–17	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of prior entity, fire and fuel	Prior entity, fire and fuel	Chapters 9 and 10 (TB)
18–20	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of initial and final limits and suffering	Initial and final limits and suffering	Chapters 11 and 12 (TB)
21–23	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of compounded phenomena and conjunction	Compounded phenomena and conjunction	Chapters 13 and 14 (TB)
24–26	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of intrinsic nature and bondage and freedom	Intrinsic nature and ontological independence and bondage and freedom	Chapters 15 and 16 (TB)
27–29	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of action and consequence and self and entities	Action and consequence and self and entities and substance metaphysics	Chapters 17 and 18 (TB)
30–32	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notion of time	Time and the origin and dissolution of existents	Chapters 19 and 21 (TB)
33–35	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna's destruction of the notions of assemblage and Tathāgata	Assemblage and Tathāgata	Chapters 20 and 22 (TB)



36–39	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna’s destruction of the notions of false conception and four noble truths	False conception and the four noble truths	Chapters 23 and 24 (TB)
40	Analyze, understand, and evaluate Nāgārjuna’s destruction of the notions of Nirvāna, twelve links of dependent origination, and views	Nirvāna, twelve links of dependent origination, and views	Chapters 25 and 26 (TB)

#### Evaluation Scheme:

Component	Duration (Minutes)	Weightage (%)	Date & Time	Nature of Component
Assignments	NA	30	To be announced	Open-book
Mid-semester Examination	90	30	18/10/2021 3.30 - 5.00PM	Closed-book
Comprehensive Examination	120	40	13/12 FN	Closed-book

**Chamber Consultation Hour:** A Google Meet link along with consultation hours will be shared on the CMS.

**Notices:** Notices concerning the course will be displayed on the CMS.

**Make-up Policy:** Make-up cases will be permitted in line with the existing institute policy.

**Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy:** Academic honesty and integrity are to be maintained by all the students throughout the semester and no type of academic dishonesty is acceptable.

A.K. Jayesh

**INSTRUCTOR-IN-CHARGE**

