

OFFERED IN SPRING 2013 (SAMPLE SYLLABUS ONLY) (NO BACKGROUND NECESSARY):

RELIGION 18

INDIAN BUDDHISM



Spring 2013
MWF 1:45-2:50
(X-hour: Th 1:00-1:50)
Location TBD

Prof. Reiko Ohnuma
Office: 314 Thornton Hall
Office Hours: TBD
Phone: 646-2114

Course Description

Buddhism is a major world religion that has existed for over 2,500 years. Buddhism has played an enormous and influential role in shaping the many cultures of Asia, as well as becoming an increasingly popular religion in the West. However, Buddhism is not a single, unified religious tradition. As Buddhism has spread throughout Asia and the rest of the world, it has undergone a constant process of change, development, and assimilation with the regional cultures it encounters. Thus, rather than speaking of "Buddhism" in the singular, we might more properly speak of Indian Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, Korean Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism, Southeast Asian Buddhism, American Buddhism, and so forth. Although these different traditions do share a common core of basic concepts and ideas, each of them also has its own unique characteristics.

This course is an introduction to Buddhism in India. It is restricted to Buddhism within the Indian subcontinent and does not cover Buddhist traditions in any other region. Nevertheless, India constitutes the original homeland of Buddhism, and a solid grasp of Indian Buddhism is essential in understanding *all further Buddhist developments* throughout Asia and the rest of the world. We will take a chronological approach to the development of Buddhism in India between the 6th c. B.C.E. and the 12th c. C.E. (when Buddhism largely disappeared from India proper), focusing on the major areas of history, doctrine, and practice.

Required Texts

All required texts (including the reader) will be available for purchase at Wheelock Books. (Please note: Both the *Dhammapada* and the *Bodhicaryavatara* are available in many different editions and translations, but I prefer you use the ones listed here.)

Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices* (Cambridge University Press, 1990). [Referred to in the syllabus as "Harvey."]
F. Max Muller, trans., *Wisdom of the Buddha: The Unabridged Dhammapada*, Dover Thrift Editions (Dover Publications, 2000). [Referred to in the syllabus as "*Dhammapada*."]
N. A. Jayawickrama, trans., *The Story of Gotama Buddha (Jataka-nidana)* (Pali Text Society, 2000). [Referred to in the syllabus as "*Story of Gotama Buddha*."]
Walpola Sri Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, revised edition (Grove Press, 1986). [Referred to in the syllabus as "Rahula."]
Shantideva, *The Bodhicaryavatara*, trans. by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton (Oxford University Press, 1998; orig. pub. 1995). [Referred to in the syllabus as "*Bodhicaryavatara*."]
Religion 18 Reader. [Referred to in the syllabus as "Reading No. 1," "Reading No. 2," etc.]

Grading Criteria

1. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION. You are expected to attend class every day, complete the readings on a timely basis, and come to class ready to discuss the readings. Attendance and participation are worth 12% of the final grade.

2. JOURNAL ENTRIES. Throughout the course of the term, there are nine journal entry assignments offered, out of which you must complete *two from Group A* and *two from Group B*; you can choose any two from each group you wish, but *there must be two from each group and you may not hand in more than four total*. The journal entries pose questions about the course material that are more personal and informal in nature than either the short papers or the exams. They do not have "right" or "wrong" answers; instead, their intention is simply to gauge whether or not you are really engaging with and thinking critically about the material in the course. They will be graded on a simplified scale (such as check-minus, check, or check-plus). *Journal entries are due within one week after they have been assigned*. Each journal entry should be double-spaced, 1-2 pages in length, and submitted electronically on Blackboard (see instructions). Journal entries are worth 4% of the grade each, for a total of 16%.

3. SHORT PAPERS. There will be two short paper assignments (5 pages each) asking you to critically engage selected topics we have covered. Both paper assignments will be based on the readings you have done and will require no additional reading. Late papers will not be accepted unless you have a documented excuse. Each short paper is worth 18% of the final grade, for a total of 36%.

4. EXAMS. There will be a midterm exam held during class, worth 18% of the final grade. It will be cumulative, covering material from the beginning of the course up to the class before the midterm. There will be a final exam during the final exam period, also worth 18% of the grade. It will focus on material covered after the midterm but include questions that require a basic comprehension of the material covered in the whole course. Both exams will consist of

short-answer and essay questions on the central themes of the lectures and readings. Critical thinking and clear writing will be essential to receiving a good grade.

5. MAKE-UP POLICY. Lateness on anything (journal entries, short papers, or the midterm exam) will require a *documented excuse* and should be approved by me *beforehand* (unless absolutely unavoidable).

6. SUMMARY OF GRADING SYSTEM: Attendance & Participation (12%); 4 Journal Entries (16%); Short Paper No. 1 (18%); Short Paper No. 2 (18%); Midterm Exam (18%); Final Exam (18%).

7. SPECIAL NEEDS. If you have a physical disability, learning disability, or any other condition that will require accommodation on my part, or if you will need to miss class in order to observe a religious holiday, *please come see me before the end of the second week of the term.*

Course Syllabus

(For abbreviations used throughout the syllabus, please see "Required Texts" above.)

I. BUDDHIST BEGINNINGS

Class 1: Introduction to the course.

Class 2: An introduction to Buddhism.

Harvey, pp. 1-8

[PDF file on Blackboard]: Frank E. Reynolds and Charles Hallisey, "Buddhist Religion, Culture, and Civilization," from *Buddhism and Asian History*, ed. Joseph M. Kitagawa and Mark D. Cummings (MacMillan, 1989), pp. 3-28.

Class 3: Pre-Buddhist Indian religious history.

Reading Nos. 1 and 2

Class 4: Pre-Buddhist Indian religious history (continued). The rise of the *shramana* movements. The beginnings of Buddhism as a *shramana* movement. The *shramana* ethos of the *Dhammapada*.

Harvey, pp. 9-14

Reading No. 3

Dhammapada—This short Buddhist text consists of 26 very brief chapters. Please read *at least 15* of these chapters; it doesn't matter which 15 you choose. (Of course, feel free to read the whole text, if you wish.)

II. THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

Class 5: The life of the Buddha, from birth to the attainment of enlightenment.

Harvey, pp. 14-22

Reading No. 4

Class 6: FILM—Bernardo Bertolucci's "Little Buddha" (showing only those scenes depicting the life of the Buddha, from birth to enlightenment). Starring Keanu Reeves as the Buddha!

Story of Gotama Buddha, pp. 63-101

Class 7: The life of the Buddha, from enlightenment to parinirvana (death).

Harvey, pp. 22-31

Story of Gotama Buddha, pp. 103-127

Reading No. 5

III. EARLY BUDDHIST DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

Class 8: Early Buddhist presuppositions: rebirth, karma, and cosmology.

Harvey, pp. 32-46

Reading Nos. 6, 7, and 8

[OPTIONAL] Rahula, pp. 1-15 (This is a good but optional introduction to the readings for the next two classes.)

Class 9: Early Buddhist doctrines.

Rahula, pp. 16-66

Class 10: Early Buddhist doctrines (continued).

[OPTIONAL] Harvey, pp. 47-72 (This covers the same material as the Rahula reading from last time; you should read it only if you wish to further reinforce your understanding of these doctrines.)

Reading Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17

Class 11: Early Buddhist meditation: mindfulness, calm, and insight.

Rahula, pp. 67-75 and 109-119

Reading No. 18

Class 12 [OPTIONAL]: During this special class session, Allyn Field, who is the Buddhist Chaplain at Dartmouth, will visit our class and offer an introductory lesson in traditional Buddhist meditation techniques. This session is completely OPTIONAL and will have no bearing on your grade.

IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN BUDDHISM

Class 13: Institutional history: the First Council, the Second Council, the First Schism, and the schools of Nikaya Buddhism. Abhidharma and the development of Buddhist philosophy.

Harvey, pp. 73-89

Class 14: Schools of Nikaya Buddhism and sectarian philosophical debates. King Ashoka and the spread of Buddhism in India.

[PDF file on Blackboard] Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, 4th edition (Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997), pp. 51-81.

Class 15: Monastic and lay life. The role of women.

Reading Nos. 19, 20, and 21

Class 16: The development of Buddhist monasticism. Early Buddhist practice, worship, and devotion. Art and architecture.

[PDF file on Blackboard] Vidya Dehejia, *Indian Art* (Phaidon Press, 1997), pp. 39-124.

Class 17: Developing Buddhology: past and future Buddhas, the bodhisattva career, the *jatakas*.

Reading No. 22

[OPTIONAL] *Story of Gotama Buddha*, pp. 3-8 and 14-24 (These pages relate the story of Sumedha, or how the Buddha Shakyamuni first became a bodhisattva.)

Class 18: MIDTERM EXAM (65 minutes, in class, cumulative).

Class 19: FILM—"Footprint of the Buddha."

V. THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MAHAYANA

Class 20: Origins of the Mahayana. Institutional history of the Mahayana. Overview of basic Mahayana elements.

Harvey, pp. 89-94

[PDF file on Blackboard] Paul Williams, *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (Routledge, 1989), pp. 1-33.

Class 21: The bodhisattva ideal. The Mahayana's criticism of the Hinayana. The *Lotus Sutra*.

Reading Nos. 23 and 24

Class 22: The Perfection of Wisdom Sutras. The concept of emptiness. Nagarjuna and the Madhyamaka school.

Harvey, pp. 95-104
Reading Nos. 25, 26, and 27

Class 23: Emptiness & Mahayana thought (continued).

Bodhicaryavatara, pp. vii-xxvi and 3-74

Class 24: The bodhisattva path and the *Bodhicaryavatara*. Mahayana Buddhology. The Mahayana pantheon of bodhisattvas and Buddhas. Mahayana practices of faith, worship, and devotion.

Bodhicaryavatara, pp. 75-104 and 133-143
Harvey, pp. 121-133
Reading No. 28

Class 25: Further Mahayana philosophy: Yogachara & Tathagatagarbha.

Harvey, pp. 104-118
Reading No. 29

VI. LATER INDIAN BUDDHISM AND THE VAJRAYANA

Class 26: Development of later Indian Buddhism. Buddhist scholasticism and Buddhist dialectics. Buddhist monastic universities.

[Either no reading or reading will be handed out in the previous class.]

Class 27: Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhism.

[PDF file on Blackboard] Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, 4th edition (Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997), pp. 117-134.

Class 28: Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhism (continued).

Reading Nos. 30 and 31

Class 29: Decline and disappearance of Buddhism in India. Current revival of Buddhism in India. Information for the final exam.

Reading Nos. 32, 33, 34, and 35