

BUDDHIST MEDITATION & THE MODERN WORLD

Culture | Science | Experience

Spring 2014, RELB2165

Taught by David Germano (dfg9w) and Kurtis Schaeffer
(ks6bb)

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Introduction

The class's goal is to explore Tibetan Buddhist meditation in their cultural contexts, investigate scientific research on meditation's dynamics, survey contemporary applications (health care, K-12 education, entrepreneurship, creativity), and experience meditation firsthand in the Contemplative Lab.

The course blends four distinct components revolving around Buddhist meditation in Tibet with the goal of exploring tradition and modernity, humanities and sciences, theory and practice:

1. **Traditional Practices:** learn the original meditative practices in Tibetan Buddhist, and their deep relationships to philosophy, community, and ways of life.
2. **Modern Research:** learn the scientific exploration of these practices and the neurological, biological, and psychological mechanisms of their effects.
3. **Contemporary Adaptations:** learn about how people in an astonishingly varied array of fields are creating new secular adaptations of such practices.
4. **Contemplation Practice:** learn contemplative practices first hand within silence and sound, in sincerity and in irony, in body and in mind.

We will have two **lecture meetings** a week with Professors Germano and Schaeffer, which involve lecture, presentations, and group interactions. Germano's Tuesdays deal with traditional practices, and Schaeffer's Thursdays deal with contemporary adaptations and modern research.

Each student will then attend a 50 minute **Contemplative Lab** in groups of 20 led by a graduate student Contemplative Assistant (CA) specializing in Buddhist Studies and with contemplative experience. The contemplative practices will be 100% secular and have no religious content. The relationship of such secular contemplation to Buddhist contemplation is one of the major intellectual topics of the course. The Contemplative Lab consists of weekly introductory exercises in a variety of meditation techniques that are secular in character and have no religious content. The goal of these exercises is to gain familiarity with the types of contemplation in order to better evaluate the practices currently present in contemporary adaptations of traditional meditation practices. Contemplative Lab instructors all have meditation and teaching experience.

The Basics

1. Places & Times

- **Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 11-12:15
- **Location:** Nau 101 (South Lawn)
- **Prerequisites:** None
- **Contemplation Lab** at time and location depending on your section:
 - **Thursday**
 - 2-250pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP1 Katarina
 - 2-250pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP2 Eva
 - 3-350pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP1 Katarina
 - 3-350pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP2 Eva
 - 4-450pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP1 Eva
 - 4-450pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP1 Nick
 - **Friday**
 - 10-1050am Slaughter Rec 115A-MP2 Eva
 - 11-1150am Slaughter Rec 115A-MP1 Katarina
 - 11-1150am Slaughter Rec 115A-MP2 Nick
 - 12-1250pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP1 Katarina
 - 1-150pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP2 Nick
 - 3-350pm Slaughter Rec 115A-MP1 Nick

2. Instructors

- **David Germano** (Professor, Department of Religious Studies): Tuesday 2:00-2:50 pm in Gibson S338 (South Lawn), Tuesday 8-9pm by Skype (dfg9ww), or by appointment (germano@virginia.edu). Afternoon hour starts on Jan 21 due to conflict on Jan 14, but evening hour starts on Jan 14. If you are failing to get my attention on Skype - either call Skype, or you can also call me at my phone +1 (434) 218-2099.
- **Eva Natanya** (Contemplative Assistant): Thursday, 12:15-1:15pm, Gibson 387, or by appointment (er5dr@virginia.edu).
- **Kurtis Schaeffer** (Professor, Department of Religious Studies): Thursdays 12:15-1:15, Gibson 362, or by appointment (ks6bb@virginia.edu).
- **Nick Trautz** (Contemplative Assistant): Wednesdays, 11:00 AM, Gibson fourth floor hallway couches, or by appointment nt2eu@virginia.edu.
- **Katarina Turpeinen** (Contemplative Assistant): Gibson somewhere Tuesday 1230-130 or by appointment kst9f@virginia.edu.

3. Researchers

- Kim Penberthy <jkp2n@Virginia.EDU>
- John Schorling <jbs7f@virginia.edu>
- Joshua Pritikin <jpritikin@pobox.com>

- Karen Inkelas <kki5x@eservices.virginia.edu>

Readings

Required readings are available in two forms:

1. Books to Purchase

Several books are required for purchase. These are available in the U.Va. Bookstore and the usual online vendors:

- Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, *Clarifying the Natural State: A Principal Guidance Manual for Mahamudra*. Eric Pema Kunsang, translator. Hong Kong: Rangjung Yeshe Publications, 2001. Paperback.
- Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. Revised Edition. New York: Delta, 2013. [1st edition 1990]. Paperback.
- Richard Davidson and Sharon Beagley, *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*. New York: Hudson Street Press, 2012. Paperback.
- John Powers, *A Concise Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. Snow Lion Publications, 2008. ISBN-13: 978-1-55939-296-9. Paperback.

2. Articles and Chapters Online

Much of the reading will consist of articles and book excerpts. All of these are available on the course Collab site under “Resources”.

3. Optional Readings

In addition required readings, we have included select optional readings on the syllabus. You will not be tested on these, though instructors may draw on them during lectures. They are included here so that you can follow a particular topic in greater detail if you are interested. Taken as a whole, the readings listed on the syllabus represent only a tiny percentage of the current scholarship, scientific research, and Buddhist literature in translation that is currently available. We provide further bibliographic resources on our public database of contemplative sciences publications: https://www.zotero.org/groups/contemplative_sciences.

You may also want to search for “mindfulness,” “meditation,” etc. on publicly available databases for science articles:

- Science Direct. Full-text database of scientific journals: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/>
- Public Library of Science: <http://www.plos.org/>.

Assignments

The requirement is **five assignments**. However, if you do the course research surveys, then that can count as one of the five assignments. Assignments #1 and #2 are required, and then you have to select two assignments from Assignments #3, 4 and 5 (if you don't do the surveys, you have to do all three). With the exception of the Annotation-Interpretation assignment, you can choose which order you do the assignments over the semester.

All essays assignments - this does not include the Annotation-Interpretation assignment - should be between 1250-1500 words long (they will not be accepted if shorter or longer than that range). All essays should be submitted on the Collab site's WIKI feature as a child of the parent Assignment page, with the privacy settings made as with the Diary to avoid other students inappropriately using your work.

- Each paper must have a minimum of three cited works (and do not choose informal, trivial postings on the Web)
- There should be a bibliography of cited works, and works used in the essay, but that bibliography should NOT be included in the word count
- References should be inline (no footnotes) in this format: (Author Last Name YYYY: page number). So "(Schaeffer 2012: 23)". Two authors: "(Schaeffer and Germano 2010: 14-19)"

Deadlines: only one assignment has a specific deadline - the Annotation-Interpretation assignment. For the other assignments, you can do in any order, but there are deadlines for when you must finish at least one assignment, two assignments, three assignments and all four (or five) assignments respectively:

- **Finish your first assignment (which you choose):** March 9 (midnight).
- **Finish your second assignment (the Annotation-Interpretation assignment):** March 28th (midnight)
- **Finish your third assignment (which you choose):** April 15th (midnight)
- **Finish the fourth and fifth assignments (which you choose; whether the fifth is surveys or another assignment):** May 3 (midnight).

Notification of completion of Assignment: when you have finished an assignment, you need to send an email from your UVa email account to your TA that has the subject line BMMW Assignment #? (put the number of the assignment for ?). That email will notify the TA that this assignment is ready to be graded. It is important you use your UVa email account and precisely give the subject as specified, because TAs will use this to track the email and sort it.

1. Annotation-interpretation of primary text

Due at Week 11 (Tuesday, April 1st, 11am).

This assignment will be done using the Now Comment software connected to our course Collab site. A Buddhist description of a complex and interesting meditation will be posted that is the readings for that class (Tuesday, April 1), and your task will be to annotate the text online with your analysis and interpretation of its details. The more creative and imaginative, the better. It isn't about being "right" - it's about thinking deeply and widely about what the details of the practice might mean. You can read it experientially, or socially, or psychologically, or symbolically, or any other way - as long as it is interesting. It is required that you make at least 10 comments on the text, with comments being 50-70 words apiece.

The assignment will be conducted on the Collab site's NowComment feature. Sign in to Collab and go to our course site. On the left hand menu, choose Now Comment. That brings up a Now Comment page in the Collab body - click on "Browse Documents on NowComment.com." That will bring up Now Comment in a separate window and on that page you will see the title for our texts ("The Quintessence of Nectar - XXX") and can click on it to access. The text is split into smaller sections in order to make it easier for the software to manage.

The actual text in PDF is of course in RESOURCES just like all the other texts - read the text from the PDF, and then comment in Now Comment.

Instructions::

- Prepare comments in Word first so that you don't lose them accidentally online, and also have a record for yourself.
- Comments must be made on sentences or paragraphs - do NOT make comments on the whole document in general
- Double click on a sentence or paragraph you want to comment on, and then a dialog box will open up that asks if its sentence or paragraph - make your choice.
- Put a short summary in, but then add your 50-70 word comment in the FULL COMMENT field; longer is ok if you need the length.
- Then click on "Start Conversation" and it should save.
- Its that simple.

2. Interpret a Buddhist Contemplative Practice

Half of this course is, in great part, about how Buddhist practices have been interpreted by scientists, health care providers, educators, philosophers, and so forth. Now it is your turn to interpret a Buddhist contemplative practice (Here, a contemplative practice is any specific form of meditation that is described in a Buddhist text). In other words, you will now do the work that so many of the people on the innovation and adaptation side of the course have done. To do this take a particular practice that is represented in one of the primary Buddhist sources we are reading (ie. Buddhist texts that Germano has taught) and ask. Please note this must be an

explicit Buddhist text from a traditional settings - you should not choose things from secularized traditions like Jon Kabat-Zinn, or Westernized versions even if they say they are Buddhist. It must be drawn from a text authored by an Asian figure. You cannot work with a generic category of meditation, but rather have to interpret a specific instance of that meditation as outlined in a text that gives a detailed account.

- **What is the contemplative practice about?**
 - What are its foundational ideas about the world, human life, the mind, the body, emotions?
 - What are the goals of the practice? Analyze the practice by breaking it down into its component parts and describing them.
 - What are the specific practices it prescribes to achieve that goal?
 - We expect you to do some work on understanding the practice in its Buddhist context by reading additional primary sources in Buddhism, and/or contemporary scholarship, on this practice in its various forms.
- **What interpretive framework are you using?**
 - Every interpretation uses an interpretive framework. This is simply the ideas and arguments that you, the interpreter, use to help you understand, describe, and explain the contemplative practice. It is important to make interpretive frameworks as explicit as possible. You can use a particular interpretive perspective drawn from the course, or you can use a completely different interpretative framework with which you are familiar from other courses you have taken or are taking. In either case, the interpretative framework should not be Buddhist, but drawn from literary theory, psychological research, psychotherapy, sociology, or some other field. Obviously you should choose an interpretative framework that you have reason to think will be helpful for understanding the practice in question, but at the same time, the degree to which it is helpful or not is precisely one of the points of the assignment. It is a dialog, and like all dialogs, imperfect - concealing as much it reveals.
 - For example, you may use Davidson's discussion of the emotions to help you explain the foundations, the goals, and the practices of the particular contemplation. Or you might use the framework of contemplative practices developed by Lutz, Dunne, and Davidson to explain another meditation that they have not explicitly treated, such as the bodily practices in the Shamarpa's text on the Six Yogas of Naropa.
- **Why are you choosing this particular interpretive framework?**
 - What does it help us to see about the contemplative practice that may not have seen without it?

- How might it hinder our understanding, perhaps by focusing us too much on a particular aspect of the practice, or diverting our attention away from something else important in the practice?

3. Turn a Buddhist meditative practice into a secular practice

The assignment is to take a Buddhist meditation as detailed in a printed source and create an adaptation of the practice into a thoroughly secular contemplative practice that has a clear agenda in terms of its target audience and context.

The assignment is NOT about documenting what others have already done in terms of turning a Buddhist practice into a secular practice, but rather you yourself doing this creatively with your own thought. You need to take an entire Buddhist practice on - not just one part of a practice - and consider all its elements. Assess what makes that practice religious, as well as what gives it impact. Then consider how you can best transfer those components that give it impact into a secular context, while leaving behind or transforming those elements that make it inherently religious. For this to be a rich assignment, it is best to choose a Buddhist practice that is rich - if you choose something very simple, there may not be much to say about it or much interesting to adapt. Regardless, whatever you chose, it has to be a whole practice as it is done in traditional Buddhist contexts - its traditional start to its traditional end, not just a piece of a meditation taken out of context. Start by documenting all its aspects - breathing, prayers, doing by self or with others, considerations to keep in mind during the practice, etc.

Please use this template in structuring your assignment:

1. **Buddhist Meditation Summary:** Summary of the Buddhist meditation with bibliographical reference for full details. This should include analyzing it into its component activities and functions, including an assessment of which of those components has religious associations.
2. **Secular Adaptation:** Description of the proposed secular adaptation, including a new title for the practice.
3. **Target Audience/Context:** Description of target audience(s) and context(s) in which this would be deployed.
4. **Analysis:** Provide an analysis of interesting issues that come up in this process of recontextualization and secularization.

In assignments, #3-5, consider working through the five phases of the design process:

1. **Discovery:** I have a challenge. How do I approach it?
2. **Interpretation:** I learned something. How do I interpret it?
3. **Ideation:** I see an opportunity. What do I create?
4. **Experimentation:** I have an idea. How do I build it?
5. **Evolution:** I tried something. How do I evolve it?

4. Turn a secular practice into a “contemplative practice”

All of engage in distinct practices every day. A practice is simply an activity that includes a combination of techniques, has some formal features, and to a process Reading, writing, walking, skiing, playing music, practicing a sport, running an experiment, talking with friends--all of these are examples of practices. We engage in a great number of distinct practices daily, though with varying degrees of self-awareness about our performance. In this assignment you will turn a common practice into a “contemplative practice.”

The assignment includes four distinct components:

1. **Describe the common practice.** Break the practice down into the component parts.
2. **Define the term “contemplative”** as you will use it to restructure your practice into a contemplative practice. Be as specific and detailed as possible.
3. **Describe the newly created contemplative practice.** Detail how the practice is distinct from the common practice.
4. **Analysis:** Reflect analytically on how your new contemplative practice is contemplative as well as other interesting interpretative issues that come up. The central question you should answer here is: What makes a practice “contemplative”? What features of the regular practice, the “non-contemplative” practice, did you keep in the new version? What did you leave out? What did you change? What goals or expectations for the practice that emerge when a practice is reframed as a contemplative practice?

5. Turn a U.Va. course into a “contemplative course”

In this assignment you will fundamentally redesign a U.Va. course you have taken or are taking so that it is intrinsically contemplative. In doing so, you have to engage the intellectual content of the course creatively - not just add some contemplative practices in a generic way that have nothing particular to do with the content of the course. Remember to think broadly about “contemplation” - it isn’t just the Buddhist practices or their direct secular adaptations.

Your redesign should include:

- A syllabus with a 14 week calendar
- Reading assignments
- Project and exam assignments
- A contemplative practice schedule (if applicable)
- Discussion sections (if applicable)
- Lab sections (if applicable)
- Explanation of the learning goals for the course
- A critique of the typical learning practices within University courses,

- A response to the critique, including how you intend to alter it fundamentally by going contemplative.

Interactive Classroom - Required Use of Learning Catalytics

We will use Learning Catalytics (www.learningcatalytics.com) during classroom meetings. Learning Catalytics allows you to use your phone, tablet, or computer to respond in the classroom to instructor questions during the class.

This allows us to make the classroom space more participatory rather than a one way lecture,, so that students are actively thinking, and contributing. The Learning Catalytics system allows us to do that despite the size of the class.

You must bring a device enabled to use Learning Catalytics to every single classroom meeting without exception. Your participation, and the quality of your participation, through use of the such a device in the classroom will be factored into your final grade for the class. If you come to class but forget your device, or you somehow screwed up and don't think your device registered that class, see your TA after class and ask them to make a point of it.

Please note that unless instructed otherwise, responses on Learning Catalytics must be done by the individual in question without consultation, and the person must be present in the classroom using their own clicker. Consulting with another individual, or using someone else's device who is not physically present is an honor violation for both parties, which could result in being expelled from UVA.

1. Class Quizzes & Doing Weekly Reading

The vast majority of lecture classes will have very brief quizzes that relate to the reading and classroom discussions. We will use Learning Catalytics for polling, exercises, and quizzes on readings. If you come to class, and read the required readings in advance of class *religiously* (so to speak) then you should do fine. If you don't, however, you will damage your grade!

We want and require you do the reading for the class. We have let go of all exams - which you should appreciate - but we need to ensure you are doing the readings. This use of Learning Catalytics incentivizes and rewards students in terms of the class reading, but also allows us to skip exams, midterms and finals. In addition, this gives us a clearer sense of how you are encountering the readings, what you are struggling with, and so forth.

2. Using Learning Catalytics

Please view the video entitled "For Students" here:

<https://learningcatalytics.com/pages/intro>.

This includes instructions for signing up and logging into Learning Catalytics. Skip the parts about the class seating chart: we are not using that feature.

You have until next Tuesday to get set up.

Our Spring class student code is:

USLCSX-AUXIL-POIND-SPINA-LEWIS-POSES

This code will allow you to register as a student on www.learningcatalytics.com at no cost.

On Learning Catalytics our course is called “Buddhist Meditation 2014.”

3. Important - Limits on Uses of Computers in Classroom

We are fine with you using your computers in the classroom to do Learning Analytics and to take notes. However NO OTHER USE IS PERMITTED. You should not be doing email, looking at webpages, IMing people, playing games, or anything else whatsoever. Being there in body but not in mind is the same as being absent. If you are observed using your computer for any purpose other than Learning Analytics or taking notes, you will be marked as absent for that class.

Attendance

Please note that attendance is not optional and you will FAIL the class, regardless of performance, if you miss more than 4 lecture classes over the semester, or more than 2 section meetings.

Learning Catalytics will be used to check attendance in lecture meetings. Be sure to bring a device capable of signing on to Learning Catalytics with you to every lecture meeting. Attendance is not optional - we want you to be in lecture and section both week after week. Otherwise perhaps you can trick the system to get your desired grade, but you won't have learned what we want you to learn - so we are making it impossible to skip lectures and sections both.

If you somehow can't use Learning catalytics in a given class meeting but are there, don't write Kurtis or I, but see your CA before or after class. Same for absences – write your CA, not Kurtis or I. CAs are in charge of all grading issues

Participation in Research Assessments

This class of students will be participating in a brand new endeavor at the University of Virginia - teaching undergraduates in the emerging field of contemplative sciences and contemplative studies. In order to best serve the students and to guide our teaching for optimal outcomes, we will be implementing an assessment process to understand the actual impact that this type of

learning has upon students in different areas.

Buddhist Meditation & Modernity is integrated with research assessments that will chart your own experience with the class's conceptual content and experiential practices to better understand what impact they might have on you over the semester. This will involve using a series of "instruments", such as questionnaires, that will assess such things as your capacity for attention, empathy, and so forth, at the beginning, middle, and end of the course. These will also help us understand better first hand the scientific methodology for assessing the impact of such practices.

Participation in these assessments will be optional, but if you choose to opt-out, then you will need to one extra assignment so that all students have equal work load.

We have three different research teams involved in assessment.

1. CSC Official Team headed by Professor Kim Penberthy (jkp2n@Virginia.edu): this will be gauging impact across several different dimensions – including mindfulness, compassion towards self and others, coping skills, emotional processing and reactivity, stress and anxiety levels – all of which have a significant impact on learning and quality of life. As this course will be accompanied by a weekly 'lab' component for practical application of contemplative practice -such as meditation, yoga, mindful movement, mindful writing – we are interested in seeing how learning these skills might improve students' wellbeing and academic performance.

To this end, we will be sending out a one-time demographic survey, a bundle of 11 surveys by email, and a 13th survey by a difference research. These should takes approximately 20 minutes to answer (in all). We will send out the 13 surveys again at the middle of the class and towards the end of the class.

Your authentic participation in these surveys is a vital contribution to helping us bring these important contemplative practices into the academic environment for the purpose of augmenting students' learning and living experience during their time at the university and beyond.

In order to assess changes in learning efficacy, emotional factors that impact learning and wellbeing, and elements of meditative practice/mindfulness, compassion (global citizenship) we will assess through self-report:

1. Impact of the course on students' wellbeing
2. Measures of the process of "mindfulness"
3. Measures of emotional processing, reactivity and regulation
4. Compassion, including both self-compassion and compassion for others, including the potential development of a broader global consciousness
5. Assessing how attention relates to study and self-management as a student

6. Self-efficacy and coping mechanisms
7. Psychological impact (stress and anxiety)

2. A College of Arts & Sciences-Curry Team headed by Professor Karen Inkelas

(kki5x@virginia.edu): this will involve a single more extended demographic survey for everyone, and then a selective engagement with a subset of people whom she will contact.

3. A Department of Psychology team headed by Joshua Pritikin (jpritikin@pobox.com): this effort is studying the effect of meditation on your mental health and your experience of complete mental silence. Each student will be sent a single email on 3 occasions: on the first week, halfway through the semester, and at the end of the semester. The email will invite them to complete a 20 minute survey on the Survey Monkey web site.

Grades

Grades are based on:

1. **Assignments:** each assignment is 15%, with a total of 60% for 4 assignments
2. **Contemplative Journal:** 15%. This is based purely on completion of each week, not any qualitative grading.
3. **Attendance:** 10%. This reflects attendance at lecture as measured by Learning Catalytics use in classroom meetings and by roll-call in Contemplative Lab sessions.
4. **In-class Quizzes:** 10%. Periodic quizzes given through Learning Catalytics in classroom meetings.

The grading scale is as follows:

- 100-97.5=A+ (98)
- 97-93.5=A (95)
- 93-89.5=A- (91)
- 89-87.5=B+ (88)
- 87-83.5=B (85)
- 83-79.5=B- (81)
- 79-77.5=C+ (78)
- 77-73.5=C (75)
- 73-69.5=C- (71)
- 69-67.5=D+ (68)
- 67-63.5=D (65)
- 63-59.5=D- (61)
- 59 and below: automatic failure and no credit.

Contemplative Lab

1. Overview

Contemplation labs are weekly 50-minute sessions in which you will be introduced to and practice contemplative techniques. All techniques offered in the contemplation lab are secular, rigorously tested, and common practices used throughout professional healthcare, athletics, and higher education. All sessions are led by qualified instructors of contemplation. Details are provided in **Course Syllabus** and **Contemplative Lab Manual** pages posted on the left hand side menu of the Collab site. This is being revised still and you will be emailed as new versions become available.

As part of this, we also require that you do at least four 15 minutes sessions on separate days outside of the Lab working with the contemplative practices you are learning in the Lab. Ideally you would maintain a daily practice, but we only require the Contemplative Lab practice and then four 15 minutes sessions. These should be detailed in your Contemplative Journal, including dates/times.

The present document is a detailed manual for students for the contemplative lab section.

2. The Contemplative Lab: Format and Requirements

The Contemplative Labs consist of weekly introductory exercises in a variety of meditation techniques that are totally secular in character and have no religious content. The goal of these exercises is to gain familiarity with the types of contemplation in order to better understand and assess the traditional Buddhist meditative systems, as well as secular adaptations, and the difference between the two. Contemplative Lab instructors all have meditation and teaching experience.

i. Attendance

Participation in all labs and lectures is mandatory. If you must miss a lab or lecture for athletics or for medical reasons you must present your instructor with an official note documenting the reason for the absence. Please note that attendance is not optional and you will FAIL the class, regardless of performance, if you miss more than 4 lecture classes over the semester, or more than 2 section meetings without proper documentation.

ii. Meditation outside of the Lab

As part of the course we require that you do at least four 15-minute sessions on separate days outside of the Lab working with the contemplative practices you are learning in the Lab. Ideally you would maintain a daily practice, but we only require the Contemplative Lab practice and then four 15 minutes sessions. These should be detailed in your Contemplative Journal, including dates/times.

iii. Contemplative Journal

You will be asked to keep an online Contemplative Journal with weekly entries detailing your experiences and thoughts on each week's Contemplative lab practices. The journal is maintained online using the Class Wiki as accessed through the Course Collab site. The entries will not be public and available only to instructors. Each week is due the following Monday by midnight. Each entry should be 250-350 words in length. This will not be graded in terms of quality of content, but only in terms of completion on a regular and timely basis of the specified assignment with content of appropriate type and length. The default assignment will be to write about the week's contemplative practices, and your experience in the Lab as well as during the weeks. On some weeks, there will be more specific assignments for the Contemplative Journal. See the actual calendar for each week for such assignments, though since this is the first time the course is offered, some will be given the week before.

You will be asked to keep an online Contemplative Journal with weekly entries detailing your experiences and thoughts on each week's Contemplative lab practices. The journal is maintained online using a WIKI as accessed through the Course Collab site, accessible through the "Wiki" menu item. The entries will not be public and available only to instructors.

Each week is due the following Monday by midnight. Each entry should be 250-350 words in length. This will not be graded in terms of quality of content, but only in terms of completion on a regular and timely basis of the specified assignment with content of appropriate type and length. The default assignment will be to write about the week's contemplative practices, and your experience in the Lab as well as during the weeks. On some weeks, there will be more specific assignments for the Contemplative Journal. See the actual calendar for each week for such assignments, though since this is the first time the course is offered, some will be given the week before.

iv. Contemplative Journal Technical Instructions

Find your Contemplative Journal Page: Each Student will have their own wiki page dedicated to creating their contemplative journal over the course of the semester. The link can be also be located on the home page of the class wiki accessed from the Collab site - choose WIKI from the left hand side Collab Menu, and then in the resultant page, click on the link for "Shanti Wiki: Buddhist Meditation 2014". You should also be able to use this link: <https://wiki.shanti.virginia.edu/display/BM14/Home>

Getting Started: To get started for the first time, go to the wiki home page and choose EDIT from the top menu, and then "Add New Page". This opens up an new page. At the top you and enter at title - use the format Jane Doe's Journal. After entering the title, click on SAVE in the upper right hand corner.

Making Private: BEFORE writing content, it is important that you make your journal private so that only your teachers can see it, but not other students. To do so, go to your Journal page, and click on the "EDIT" button on the top, and then choose EDIT THIS PAGE. Then scroll down to the bottom of the page where there is a "Restrictions" section. Click the EDIT link there. In the resulting form, select the button for "restrict viewing of this page", and then in the box to the right that says "Enter user or group name", cut and paste in buddhistmeditationteachers. Then click the RESTRICT button. Then in the lower right hand corner, click the UPDATE button. That will return you to the editing window for the page, and then click on the SAVE button at the top or bottom. From that point, no one but you and the teachers/teaching assistants should be able to see your journal entries.

Making Entries: now you are ready to begin. From this point on, clicking on your link on this wiki's home page will show your journal wiki page, and you will then need to click on EDIT in the upper menu and then select Edit this Page to edit; when editing always in the upper right hand corner to save your changes. For your next entry, start at the top of the page and follow the above instructions. In this way, the most recent entry will always be at the top of the page. If you prefer to compose in Word, etc., offline, then we recommend before cutting and pasting into here, change the tab to WIKI MARKUP, and then cut and paste. Then you can change back to RICH TEXT to format. This will strip any formatting you made in Word, unfortunately, but it will also strip out all the junk Word puts into your texts which corrupts your entry in any other software, such as this online WIKI.

COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID:

- do not use "comments" on your page - all your journal entries are simply in the body of the single page
- do not add a new page to your first page for each week - all your journal entries are simply in the body of the single page

v. Required Texts

Contemplative Lab instructional materials include exercises in the following books:

- Mindfulness: Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. New York: Delta, 2013 [2nd edition.
- Emotional awareness: Davidson, Richard and Sharon Beagley, *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*. New York: Hudson Street Press, 2012.

3. Counseling Information

Regarding your experience in Contemplative Lab, we know that many of you will have questions and some of you have challenges. Keep in mind that in general, we are always engaged in a broad range of practices in our everyday lives. Your years at Uva involve

a variety of practices - many quite intense and demanding (intellectually, socially, etc.). Similarly, in the Contemplative Lab we will be investigating and trying out a few more practices, and doing so in a very mild, non-intensive fashion (compare to the practice of all night study sessions, massive reading, memorization, exams, athletics, etc.).

We have thought out the sequence of practices, and their character, and ask you to try them as described. If on your own time, and for your own reasons, you want to experiment, and mashup different things, of course by all means; but that is outside the course, and we ask you try the practices out as they are described in the labs and readings for the course. Of course you always have to follow the principle of not doing anything that feels harmful to you, a principle that we encourage you to pursue in all the various practices in which you find yourself engaged in at University and beyond.

These practices are simple exercises used by many in secular contexts, but just as a back might go out due to a simple movement because of years of bad posture, etc., just so a simple turn to watch your mind can trigger awareness of emotional problems that are the result of years of problems and which have been laying just below the surface. In addition, the practice of meditation is deeply personal and can involve an emotional response. Sometimes, unexpectedly intense feelings come up. In addition, turning your awareness and scrutiny to yourself – your body your mind, your emotions, your relations – not surprisingly often results in you noticing things for the first time. This doesn't mean the meditation produced those things, but rather you are just spending some quiet time reflecting on yourself, and hence noticing things already there below the surface of your awareness. However if any of this leads to persistent emotional distress, (such as increased agitation or anxiety, impaired sleep or appetite, poor concentration, low mood or an inability to function as usual), please seek expert support immediately.

Numerous resources for psychological support are available to U.Va. students:

- If any of you find yourself experiencing problems of an emotional type, we strongly encourage you to contact Student Health Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS: <http://www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/caps.html>). CAPS staff know that this course is running and that it includes a contemplative component. They are ready to serve you – they even have a staff member trained in Buddhist psychotherapy who teaches meditation! Usually you can get an appointment within a day or two; Students in crisis between 5pm and 8am can call the Student Health After Hours line (434) 972-7004.
- Resources at UVA in addition to CAPS include The UVA Women's Center (434) 982-2225.
- Please speak with your lab assistant or your instructor if you would like assistance connecting with counseling services.