

# Kathmandu University

## School of Arts

### Certificate Course in Buddhist Studies

#### Program Course Description



Kathmandu, Nepal

As approved by the School of Art's Faculty Board August 2016  
and to be implemented by Kathmandu University's Centre for Buddhist  
Studies at Rangjung Yeshe Insitute.  
Print version: October 2016

## About Kathmandu University

Kathmandu University was established by an Act of Parliament in November 1991. The University began functioning from December 11, 1991, and was formally inaugurated on August 2, 1995.

Kathmandu University is an autonomous, non-profit, non-governmental public institution of higher learning.

The mission of the university is to:

- ◆ Promote all-round development of students' abilities and personalities.
- ◆ Develop an awareness of the role of science and its application in understanding problems of society.
- ◆ Extend and disseminate knowledge and encourage its application.
- ◆ Develop a community of scholars, students and staff.

The University site is located at Dhulikhel, Kavre, in Kathmandu, Nepal and covers an area of 17 hectares of land. The University offers its academic and short-term programs through six schools:

- ◆ School of Management
- ◆ School of Science
- ◆ School of Engineering
- ◆ School of Arts
- ◆ School of Education
- ◆ School of Medical Sciences

## CERTIFICATE COURSE IN BUDDHIST STUDIES

The School of Arts provides a Certificate Course in Buddhist Studies at Kathmandu University – Centre for Buddhist Studies (KU-CBS), which is located at Rangjung Yeshe Institute (RYI), Boudhanath, Kathmandu. The program has a yearly enrollment capacity of 20 students.

**KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY**  
CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES AT RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

**Certificate Course in Buddhist Studies**

**DURATION OF STUDY**

One year: one Fall semester and one Spring semester

**ADMISSION**

Candidates with second division in any Intermediate or equivalent degree (Higher Secondary School) are eligible to apply to the program.

Eligible candidates may apply to Kathmandu University Centre for Buddhist Studies at Rangjung Yeshe Institute, by filling in the appropriate online application forms.

**VENUE**

The program is to be administered by Rangjung Yeshe Institute, Boudhanath, Kathmandu.

**PROGRAM OF STUDY**

Candidates for the Certificate Course in Buddhist Studies must earn a total of 30 units as follows:

1. Specialized Textual Studies (Required Courses):
  - TSTD 101 Buddhist Philosophy and Hermeneutics I, 6 credits (Fall)
  - TSTD 102 Buddhist Philosophy and Hermeneutics II, 6 credits (Spring)
2. Historical and Cultural Studies in Religion (Required Courses):
  - BSTD101 Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture I, 3 credits (Fall)
  - BSTD 102 Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture II, 3 credits (Spring)
  - BSTD 205 Anthropological Study of Nepalese Religions, 3 credits (Fall)

3. Critical Studies in Buddhist Doctrine (Required Courses):

- BSTD 207 Buddhist Meditation Practices, 3 credits (Spring)

4. Himalayan Language (Choose one language from the four choices below):

- NLAN 101 Nepali I, 3 credits (Fall)
- NLAN 102 Nepali II, 3 credits (Spring)
- TLAN 101 Classical Tibetan I, 3 credits (Fall)
- TLAN 102 Classical Tibetan II, 3 credits (Spring)
- TLAN 103 Colloquial Tibetan I, 3 credits (Fall)
- TLAN 104 Colloquial Tibetan II, 3 credits (Spring)
- SLAN 101 Sanskrit I, 3 credits (Fall)
- SLAN 102 Sanskrit II, 3 credits (Spring)

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### SPECIALIZED TEXTUAL STUDIES

**TSTD 101 Buddhist Philosophy and Hermeneutics I (Required Course) 6 Cr.**

**TSTD 102 Buddhist Philosophy and Hermeneutics II (Required Course) 6 Cr.**

These courses introduce students to the traditional study of Buddhist scripture and are taught by Khenpos and Lopons and translated into English.

They offer students the opportunity to engage with Buddhist philosophical literature as presented in the traditions of classical scholarship and introduce students to key aspects of Buddhist view, meditation and conduct. Students become familiar with the central concepts and terminology of classical Buddhist philosophy and the presentations that characterize the systems of the Śrāvakayāna and the Mahāyāna, with emphasis on the Mahāyāna. By reading and analyzing primary literary sources, students are introduced to the structure of classical Buddhist scripture in its philosophical, literary and hermeneutical aspects.

Prerequisites: For TSTD 101, None. For TSTD 102, TSTD 101.

### HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES IN RELIGION

**BSTD 101 Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture I (Required Course) 3 Cr.**

This course surveys the development of Buddhism in South and SE Asia. Through a primarily historical lens, students become familiar with the context within which Buddhism arose, and study critically the various developments and transformations of Buddhist institutions, doctrines and practices through the tradition's evolution in its native land. This course also looks at the results of the migration of Buddhism into other areas of South East Asia. Together with BSTD 102, students focus on developing essential academic skills: 1) how to read and critically assess different kinds of sources, 2) how to write for different kinds of assignments (summaries, reflections, analytic essays and longer papers), 3) how to frame a research project, build a bibliography, and properly cite sources, and 4) how to manage time and study effectively.

Prerequisites: None.

**BSTD 102 Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture II (Required Course) 3 Cr.**

This course examines the historical development of Buddhism in Central Asia, East Asia, and the Tibetan cultural region up to the present day, with an emphasis on investigating the ways in which Buddhism transformed and has been transformed by these distinct cultural, social and geographical contexts. This course also focuses on the further development of the essential academic skills acquired in BSTD 101, culminating with a research paper.

Prerequisites: BSTD 101: Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture I.

**BSTD 205 Anthropological Study of Nepalese Religion (Required Course) 3 Cr.**

An investigation of the rich religious traditions of Nepal, with emphasis on the Kathmandu Valley. The course begins with an overview of Hinduism, with its diversity of symbols, beliefs and practices. The course identifies unifying elements, especially those relevant to Buddhism. The second part of the course focuses on Buddhism in Nepal, especially the unique form practiced by Newars, the indigenous people of the Kathmandu Valley, and the sole remnant of Sanskrit-based South Asian Mahāyāna Buddhism. Onsite lectures at places of particular historical and cultural significance offer an experiential

dimension to this survey of Nepalese religion.

Prerequisites: None.

#### **CRITICAL STUDIES IN BUDDHIST DOCTRINE**

##### **BSTD 207 Buddhist Meditation Practices (Required Course) 3 Cr.**

This course introduces students to important historical, philosophical, and religious aspects of Buddhist ritual and meditation. Through a theoretical as well as an experiential approach, the rituals and meditations of Buddhist cultures as contained in both original literature and oral traditions are studied. For students to assimilate knowledge of the oral traditions central to Buddhism, active participation in the practical application of meditation and/or rituals is emphasized. Students study texts associated with meditation, and critically investigate their meaning through assignments, class work and discussions. In addition, they gain familiarity with the experience of meditation by taking part in regular guided meditation sessions in which they experience the different types of cultivation practices. Although the students do not experience all the types of meditation practices studied, they have the opportunity to experience basic practices belonging to each model.

Prerequisites: BSTD 101: Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture I.

#### **HIMALAYAN LANGUAGES**

##### **NLAN 101 Nepali I (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

This course introduces students to basic patterns of spoken and written Nepali centering on various situational examples. Students learn the Devanāgarī script and basic sentence structure and begin building a vocabulary of colloquial words and phrases. Basic grammatical concepts of spoken Nepali are introduced and illustrated. Emphasis is placed on active learning, with students using techniques such as role-playing in order to develop confidence in speaking. During classes students are given the opportunity to practice their skills privately or in small groups with a native Nepali speaker.

Prerequisites: None.

##### **NLAN 102 Nepali II (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

Building on Nepali I, this course aims to develop students' ability to communicate in spoken and written Nepali. More complicated grammatical structures and further vocabulary are introduced and students engage actively in the classroom to further develop their skills in basic communication. As in Nepali I, students have access to native Nepali speakers with whom to practice conversation skills.

Prerequisites: NLAN 101: Nepali I

##### **TLAN 101 Classical Tibetan I (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

This class develops students' ability to read the Tibetan script and precisely analyze and understand Tibetan grammar. The course covers the principal topics of classical Tibetan grammar using handbook material as well as text passages from classical Tibetan Buddhist literature. Study of grammatical explanations from both Tibetan and Western traditions constitute the foundation for discussions in class where active student participation is of primary importance. Although the topic of grammar is central for this course, students are also introduced to the basic vocabulary of classical Tibetan philosophy.

Prerequisites: No course prerequisites exist, but familiarity with the Tibetan alphabet is assumed. Students learn the Tibetan alphabet during Orientation prior to Fall semester start.

##### **TLAN 102 Classical Tibetan II (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

This course focuses on applying the principles of Tibetan grammar learned in Classical Tibetan I and on building vocabulary and reading skills in the context of studying excerpts from original Tibetan texts. Students are introduced to text examples from a variety of Tibetan literary genres and time periods. Students are expected to contribute actively to the class by means of presentations and discussions of homework assignments.

Prerequisites: TLAN 101: Classical Tibetan I

##### **TLAN 103 Colloquial Tibetan I (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

This course introduces students to the basics of spoken Tibetan. Basic sentence structure is taught and students begin building a vocabulary of

colloquial words and phrases. Basic grammatical concepts unique to spoken Tibetan are introduced and illustrated. Emphasis is placed upon active learning, with students using techniques such as role-playing in order to develop confidence in speaking. In classes, students are given the opportunity to practice their skills privately or in small groups with a native Tibetan speaker.

Prerequisites: No course prerequisites exist, but familiarity with the Tibetan alphabet is assumed. Students learn the Tibetan alphabet during Orientation prior to Fall semester start

#### **TLAN 104 Colloquial Tibetan II (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

This course is a continuation of Colloquial Tibetan I. The aim of the course is for students to develop confidence in simple colloquial dialogue. More complicated sentence structures and further vocabulary are introduced and students engage in role-playing to further develop their skills in basic communication. As in Tibetan I, students have access to native Tibetan speakers with whom they can practice conversation.

Prerequisite: TLAN 103: Colloquial Tibetan I

#### **SLAN 101 Sanskrit I (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

This course covers the Devanāgarī script and the rules of euphonic combination (sandhi). Students are introduced to the general principles of Sanskrit word construction, syntax, and grammar. Although this course focuses upon understanding and memorization of the rules of declension and conjugation, students also begin building a Sanskrit vocabulary of Buddhist terminology.

Prerequisites: None.

#### **SLAN 102 Sanskrit II (Optional Course) 3 Cr.**

This course continues the methods of Sanskrit I, building a solid structural knowledge of Sanskrit word construction, syntax and grammar. Increasing their vocabulary of Sanskrit philosophical terminology in the Buddhist context, students relate their grammar studies to examples of original Sanskrit philosophical discourse.

Prerequisites: SLAN 101: Sanskrit I

### **EVALUATION SCHEME**

The academic performance of the student is judged through:

- Continuous in-semester assessment (50%)
- End-of-semester assessment (50%)

The continuous in-semester assessment of the student is made by the concerned faculty member using any or a combination of the following:

- Written tests
- Assignments
- Term papers
- Oral presentations
- Any other method deemed suitable by the concerned faculty member.

The end-of-semester examination will normally be conducted according to the examination schedule as notified by the concerned office.

The mode of evaluation in a given course is decided by the concerned faculty member who may assign varying weights to one or more of the evaluation modes. The faculty member will announce such weights at the beginning of the course.

### **GRADING MODE:**

In each course, the student will be evaluated on a 4-point scale as follows:

Letter	Grade								
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.0	Fail
								Grade	Value

The grades used to indicate the quality of a student's performance are as

follows:

A = Excellent                      D = Fair  
B = Very good                      F = Failure  
C = Good

When grades are expressed as verbal designations:

Letter Grade	Grade Value	Verbal Designation
A	4.0	Outstanding
A-	3.7	Excellent
B+	3.3	Very Good
B	3.0	Good
B-	2.7	Fair
C+	2.3	Fair
C	2.0	Fair
C-	1.7	Poor
D	1.0	Poor
F	0.0	Fail

In addition to the letter grades mentioned above, the following letter grades may be awarded:

W = Withdrawn  
INC = Incomplete  
NC = Non-credit course  
S = Satisfactory  
U = Unsatisfactory

## GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Each letter grade is converted into the specific grade value associated with that grade. The Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by multiplying the grade value of the earned grade by the number of credits for the course and dividing that total number of grade points by the total number of semester credits. The GPA must be 2.0 or above at the end of each semester.

## CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE (CGPA)

Overall student performance is reported as a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) which is a weighted average of all course credits earned. The CGPA defines the overall performance category:

### CGPA PERFORMANCE

3.5 to 4.0 Distinction  
3.0 and below 3.5 First Division  
2.0 and below 3.0 Second Division  
Less than 2.0 Fail

### COMPLETION

To successfully complete the course, students must complete the minimum number of required course credits in each category and a total of 30 credits, with not less than a D grade in each course. Additionally, a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of at least 2.0 is required for graduation.