Buddhist Traditions (Rel 6346)  

Prof. Mario Poceski (Religion Dept., Univ. of Florida)

Class Time & Location
Wed 10:40–1:40; LEI 104.

Office Hours & Contact Information
Mon & Wed, 4:00–5:00 pm, and by appointment, 132 Anderson Hall.
(352) 273-2937; mpoceski@ufl.edu; www.clas.ufl.edu/users/mpoceski.

Course Description
The graduate seminar serves as a comprehensive survey of Buddhism, covering the principal texts, doctrines, traditions, and historical developments, with a focus on South and East Asia. Students will become acquainted with recent scholarship on Buddhism, read representative works from the canonical collections, and reflect on the scope and nature of Buddhist studies as an academic discipline. This is one of the core courses in the Asian religions track of the graduate program in religion.

Prerequisites
There are no formal prerequisites, although prior knowledge of Buddhism will be very helpful. No knowledge of Asian languages is required, but students are encouraged to do extra readings in the classical languages they use in their research.

Format
The seminar is organized around class discussions based on the assigned weekly readings. Each week, the students will rotate the responsibility of making presentations and leading discussions of the assigned readings. Students are required to come to each class prepared to engage in critical analysis and discussion of the relevant materials.

Requirements
- Class attendance, participation, and reading of all assigned materials (20% of the final grade).
- Class presentations, reading summaries, and leading of discussions (10%).
- Bibliography of academic works on Buddhism, due 4/1 (10%).
- Research paper, due 4/27 (60%).

Required Texts
Lopez, Donald S., ed. Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism.
Course Reader (CR); will be distributed in class.
Encyclopedia of Buddhism (EB) articles; available as an e-Book from the UF library.
Discussion Topics and Course Schedule
(Tentative and subject to change)

Week 1, 1/7  Introduction to the Course
            [EB] “India,” “Buddha,” “Sangha”

Part 1: South Asia

W 2, 1/14  Early Buddhist History
            [CR] Lamotte

W 3, 1/21  Traditions of Early Buddhism

W 4, 1/28  Development of the Mahāyāna Tradition
            Williams: 1–115; [CR] Harrison

W 5, 2/4   Mahāyāna Teachings
            Williams: 141–256; [CR] Thurman

W 6, 2/11  Emergence of Tantra

Part 2: East Asia

W 7, 2/18  Transmission and Growth of Buddhism in China
            [CR] Zurcher, Poceski (both chapters)

W 8, 2/25  Buddhism and Chinese Culture

W 9, 3/4   Chinese Buddhist Doctrines

W 10       Spring break (3/7–3/15)

W 11, 3/18 Chan/Zen Records of Sayings
            [CR] Poceski (both articles), Cleary & Cleary, Cheng Chien

W 12, 3/25 Special lecture on women in Daoism by Livia Kohn (Boston U)

W 13, 4/1  Buddhism in Korea
            [CR] Lee; [EB] “Korea”

W 14, 4/8  Buddhism in Japan
            [CR] de Bary; [EB] “Japan”

Part 3: The West

W 15, 4/15 Western Engagements with Buddhism
            Lopez: 1–61, 107–160
W 15, 4/15  **Buddhist Studies as an Academic Discipline**  
Lopez: 251–95; [EB] “Buddhist Studies”; [CR] Schopen, Gómez

W 16, 4/22  Students’ presentations of their research projects

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**Course Reader**

Lamotte, Etienne. *History of Indian Buddhism*: 1–84.
Bhikkhu Bodhi, ed. *In the Buddha’s Words: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pāli Canon*: 1–40.
Mollier, Christine. *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face: Scripture, Ritual, and Iconographic Exchange in Medieval China*: 1–22.

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**Encyclopedia Articles**


- Bechert, “Buddha, Life of the”: 82–88
- Silk, “Buddhist Studies”: 94–101
- Harrison, “Canon”: 111–15
- Lachman, “Chan Art”: 125–30
- Rhie, “China, Buddhist Art in”: 145–54
Whitfield, “Dunhuang”: 240–41
Anderson, “Four Noble Truths”: 295–98
Poceski, “Huayan jing”: 340–41
Poceski, “Huayan School”: 341–47
Cohen, “India”: 352–60
Bielefeldt, “Japan”: 384–91
Keel, “Korea”: 430–35
Cox, “Mainstream Buddhist Schools”: 501–07
Sparham, “Sangha”: 740–44
Davidson & Orzech, “Tantra”: 820–26
Crosby, “Theravāda”: 836–41
Davidson, “Tibet”: 851–59

Further Readings
In the seminar we will not be going over basic Buddhist concepts and doctrines. Depending on their level of preparation in the field of Buddhist studies, students might need to do additional reading on their own. The following list contains sample works that provide basic information about Buddhist terms, doctrines, historical developments, and the like, in addition to the aforementioned Encyclopedia of Buddhism.

Harvey, Peter. An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History, and Practices.
Jones, Lindsay, ed. Encyclopedia of Religion.
Mizuno, Kogen. Basic Buddhist Concepts.

Grading
• The final grade will be based on the course requirements.
• Grades will be computed on this scale: A = 100–91%; B+ = 90.5–87%; B = 86.5–81%; C+ = 80.5–77%; C = 76.5–71%; D+ = 70.5–67%; D = 66.5–60.5%; E = 60% or less.

Written Assignments
• All written assignments must be typewritten and follow standard academic format.
• The length of the final research paper should be 14–16 pages (double spacing). More information about the paper will be given in class.
• The bibliography should contain at least 25 titles of academic publications pertinent to the student’s research topic.
• When a student is responsible for leading a weekly discussion, he/she will also have to prepare a 2–3 page summary of the assigned reading(s) and distribute copies of it to everybody in class.
• A hard copy of each written assignment must be submitted in class on the due date, at the latest. Students can also leave their papers in the instructor’s mailbox at the Dept. of Religion office any time prior to the deadline.
• No late submissions will be accepted under any circumstances, and no other form of submission, such as emailing a paper, is acceptable.
• Students are welcome to bring early drafts of their papers and ask for feedback/advice during the office hours.

Attendance
• Attendance is mandatory for all students, starting with the first day of classes. Students who have problems with class attendance or punctuality should think twice before enrolling in this course.
• Valid excuses for missed classes must be submitted in writing and in a timely manner, along with pertinent documentation (such as note from a doctor). Written excuses for planned absences (such as participation in athletic meetings or religious observances, for example) must be submitted in advance.
• Excessive absences from class will have adverse effect on the final grade. Student can miss up to three (3) hours (regardless of whether they are excusable or not) without any penalty. Each subsequent unexcused hour will lead to a 2% reduction of the final grade.
• Coming late, leaving early, being inattentive, and other forms of disruptive behavior can be counted as unexcused absences.
**Extracurricular**

- The assigned readings and other seminar requirements, as described in this syllabus, are a basic minimum. Students are encouraged to take personal initiative to further broaden their knowledge and improve their academic skills by doing additional readings, including materials written in Asian languages pertinent to their area of research, and by initiating further discussions with other graduate students and Asian religions faculty.

**Other Notices**

- A student who has a disability that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements should consult the instructor so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Note that the student is responsible for communicating his/her needs to the instructor.
- Plagiarism and cheating will result in a failing grade and other serious penalties. For more information, see the “Academic Honesty—Student Guide” brochure, posted online by the Dean of Students Office at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/Academic_Honesty.html.
- Registration in this course implies that each student enters a contractual agreement with the instructor, whereas he/she is accountable for fulfilling all course requirements and adhering to the course policies. Students are responsible for knowing and following all schedules and instructions contained in this syllabus, as well as any other instructions given in class (remember, attendance is required, not optional). Any questions about the course requirements or any aspect of the coursework should be resolved by consulting the instructor.

“The perfect and sudden practice of calmness and insight from the very beginning takes the true nature of reality as its object; being identical with the mean, within it there is nothing that is not true reality. When one’s mind connects with the realm of reality and the realm of reality is present within a single thought, then there is no sight or smell that is not the middle way. The realm of self, the realm of Buddhas, and the realm of living creatures are all also like that…. There is only one unadulterated reality, and there is nothing outside of that reality. That the nature of all things is quiescent is called calmness; that things are quiescent and yet illuminated is called insight.”

—Guanding’s (561–632) preface to Zhiyi’s *Great Calmness and Insight*