TOPICS IN EAST ASIAN BUDDHISM

Early Chan Literature and History
REL 5338/6062

Prof. Mario Poceski

Class Time & Location
Friday 3–6 pm, CBD 216.

Office Hours & Contact Information
Thu 3:20–5:00 pm, and by appointment, 106 Anderson Hall. (352) 392-1625x227; mpoceski@ufl.edu; www.clas.ufl.edu/users/mpoceski/INDEX.HTM.

Course Description
The seminar serves as a comprehensive survey of the early historical growth of the Chan tradition in late medieval China. We will examine key events and issues that shaped the emergence of Chan as a distinct movement within Chinese Buddhism and assess its rise to preeminence among the monastic and social elites. We will also explore the formation of the Chan school’s distinctive doctrinal perspectives, literary genres, and institutional structures, as well as reflect on the processes of recording the tradition’s past and re-conceptualizing its multifaceted historical trajectories.

Prerequisites
There are no formal prerequisites, although prior knowledge of Buddhism will be very helpful. No knowledge of East Asian languages is required, but students are encouraged to do extra readings in Chinese of other languages they use for their research (e.g. Japanese or Korean).

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

Requirements
• Class attendance and participation (25% of the final grade).
• Class presentations and reading summaries (10%).
• Field research report, due 4/6 (10%)
• Bibliography of academic works on Chan/Zen, due 4/13 (5 %).
• Research paper, due 4/23 (50%).

Required Texts

Additional Articles

Course Schedule (Tentative)

Wk 1, 1/12  Introduction to the Course and the Subject Matter
Wk 2, 1/19  **Bodhidharma and the Proto-origins of Chan**
Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology,* 1–52; McRae, *Seeing Through Zen,* 1–44
Wk 3, 1/26  **Formation of a Distinct Chan Tradition**
Wk 4, 2/2  **The Northern School’s History**
Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy,* 13–105
Wk 5, 2/9  **The Northern School’s Doctrines**
Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy,* 106–82
Wk 6, 2/16  **Squabbles over Orthodoxy in Early Chan**
Wk 7, 2/23  **Establishment of Chan as a Major Tradition within Chinese Buddhism**
McRae, *Seeing Through Zen,* 74–154
Wk 8, 3/2  **Formation of Chan Literature and Codification of its Genres**
Heine, *The Zen Canon,* 53–80, 137–244
Wk 9, 3/9  **Rethinking Chan Historiography**
Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights,* 3–151
Wk 10, 3/16  No class: Spring Break
Wk 11, 3/23  No class: Prof. Poceski presenting at a conference in Boston
Wk 12, 3/30  **The Hongzhou School’s History**
Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way,* Part 1
Wk 13, 4/6  **The Hongzhou School’s Doctrines**
Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way,* Part 2
Further Readings
In the seminar we will not be going over basic Buddhist concepts and doctrines. Depending on their level of preparation in Buddhist studies, students might need to do some additional reading and research on their own. The following list contains sample works that provide basic information about Buddhist terms, doctrines, historical developments, and the like.

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

Written Assignments
• All written assignments must be typewritten and follow a standard academic format.
• The length of the field research report should be 4–5 typed pages, while the final research paper should be 14–16 pages (1.5 spacing). The bibliography should contain at least 25 titles of academic publications pertinent to the student’s research topic. More information about the papers will be given in class.
• 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. Valid excuses for missed classes must be submitted in writing, along with pertinent documentation (such as a note from a doctor). Written excuses for planned absences (such as participation in religious observance, for example) must be submitted in advance.
• In case of excessive absences or disruptive behavior, after a warning I will prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade. Coming late or leaving early, or being inattentive in class can also be counted as absences.

Extracurricular Study
• 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 Chinese and other East Asian languages.

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.