

## Religious Studies 3UU3

### *Buddhism in East Asia*

McMaster University, Term II 2019

{last revised November 30, 2018}

*Lectures*—Tuesdays and Fridays 12:30–1:20; BSB 136.

*Tutorials*—Wednesdays 3:30–4:20; UH 101

*Religious Studies Undergraduate Administrator*—Emma Whitford, ext. 23109.

*Instructor*—**Dr. James A. Benn**

*Email*—bennjam@mcmaster.ca

*Phone*—905-525-9140 ext. 24210

*Office*—University Hall 120

*Office Hours*—Wednesdays 12:00–1:00 and by appointment

*Teaching Assistant*—Lan Li

*Email*—lil148@mcmaster.ca

*Office*—

*Office hours*—

### ***Course Objectives***

This course is an introduction to the historical and contemporary Buddhist world of East Asia (i.e., the cultural sphere of China, Korea, and Japan). The course emphasizes an understanding and appreciation of East Asian Buddhist world views through the close reading of texts and attention to the beliefs and practices of monks, nuns and laypeople.

The transmission of Buddhism from India to East Asia was one of the most significant cultural events in human history. The subsequent evolution of the religion in East Asia left no area of human life untouched. Buddhist ideas and practices profoundly affected culture (art, music, poetry, architecture), society (politics, social structures, family life, burial practices, etc.), economics (money-lending, land-holdings, taxation) and so on. Since medieval times Buddhism has been one of the most important avenues for cultural exchange between sometimes quite distinct societies in East Asia. Thanks to the *lingua franca* of literary Chinese, Japanese, Chinese and Korean Buddhists have been able to work on the same vast cultural project. Thus, a familiarity with East Asian Buddhism will give students a unique perspective on a considerable expanse of human civilisation.

### ***Course Requirements and Grading***

There are no formal prerequisites. No knowledge of Asian languages is required.

**Attendance & participation in Tutorials and online discussion (10%)**

Regular preparation, attendance and participation are essential to understanding new material and acquiring knowledge. Your TA will determine this portion of your mark. Specific activities in tutorials (e.g., presentations, brief reports, leading discussion) may be required. In addition, we will ask you to post materials in online discussions on Avenue. Online participation will also be part of your mark.

Make sure to read the assigned passages prior to attending Lectures and Tutorials and bring the relevant books to both!

**Tests (30%)**

Three online tests, 10% each. You will take three tests on Avenue. The tests are designed to ensure that you are attending lectures and completing assigned readings. The tests are not timed and you are encouraged to consult your notes and books.

**Essay (30%)**

Details of the essay (6-8 pages) will be circulated separately via Avenue. It is due on March 21. Work submitted late will not be accepted.

**Final Examination (30%)**

Date, time and place of the examination TBA. Expect to answer three written questions that require analysis and interpretation as well as a solid grasp of the facts.

NB. We will practice our writing in class regularly. Please bring something to write with (pen, paper, laptop, tablet, phone, etc.) to the Lecture and Tutorial meetings.

**Policies**

- **Don't Cheat**
- **We will be using Avenue to Learn and Turnitin. Your rights may be affected.**
- **Use your McMaster email account.**
- **Check the MSAF policy.**
- **If bad stuff happens, the University may need to change things.**

### **DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC**

Staff in the office of the Department of Religious Studies will not date-stamp or receive papers and other assignments.

### **UNIVERSITY MANDATED ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the *Academic Integrity Policy*, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

### **AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### **AVENUE TO LEARN**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in

this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

### **POLICY FOR MODIFYING A COURSE:**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check her/his McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### **E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY:**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account.

This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **MCMASTER STUDENT ABSENCE FORM (MSAF):**

The McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self-reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report MEDICAL absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work (that is less than 25% of the course grade). Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period. You may submit a maximum of ONE Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation. If you are absent for more than 3 days, exceed one request per term, are absent for a reason other than medical, or have missed work worth 30% or more of the final grade, you MUST visit your Faculty Office. You may be required to provide supporting documentation. This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO

accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### **EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

### **Books**

#### *Required:*

Mitchell, Donald W. and Sarah H. Jacoby 2014. *Introducing the Buddhist Experience*. (**Third edition only**) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lopez, Donald S. 2004. *Buddhist Scriptures*. London: Penguin.

#### *Recommended*

Lopez, Donald S. 2009. *The Story of Buddhism: a Concise Guide to its History and Teachings*. San Francisco: HarperOne.

**NB. If you have no background in Buddhism, I strongly urge you to acquire and read this book as soon as possible.**

## **Schedule**

### **Week One:**

**\*\*No Tutorial this week\*\***

Please complete the “Introduce Yourself” quiz on Avenue. It should take about 20 minutes or less

1. January 8<sup>th</sup>. Introduction and overview.
2. January 11<sup>th</sup>. Buddhist Basics 1 Causality, karma and no self.

### **Read**

*Buddhist Experience*, XX-XX

### **Week Two: Buddhist Basics 2**

Tutorial: “A Call to Practice,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 19–23.

1. January 15<sup>th</sup>. The Four Noble Truths.
2. January 18<sup>th</sup>. The Buddha.

### **Read**

“Karma Tales,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 24–33; “Avoiding Hell, Gaining Heaven,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 69–77;

*Buddhist Experience*, XX-XX

**Week Three: Buddhist Basics 3**

Tutorial: “The Great Departure and Enlightenment” ???.

1. January 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Buddha, continued.
2. January 25<sup>th</sup>. The Saṃgha.

**Read**

*Buddhist Experience* XX-XX.

**Week Four: Buddhism in India and East Asia**

**\*Online Test 1 this week\***

Tutorial: “A Chinese Pilgrim in India,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 78–83.

1. January 29<sup>th</sup>. The Saṃgha, continued.
2. February 1<sup>st</sup>. Buddhism for religious merit: Mahāyāna practices of East Asian Buddhism.

**Read**

*Buddhist Experience* XX-XX

**Week Five: Can an Indian Religion work outside India?**

Tutorial: “Scripture in 42 sections” (pdf)

1. February 5<sup>th</sup> Buddhism in Chinese? Coming to terms with a foreign religion.
2. February 8<sup>th</sup> \*\*No class meeting\*\* Instructor at conference

**Read** de Jong, “Buddha’s word in China” (pdf file available from website).

**Week Six: Why and how is Buddhism the common religion of East Asia?**

**Essay assigned.**

Tutorial: “Taking the *Vinaya* Across the Sea,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 306–317.

1. February 12<sup>th</sup>. Buddhism and power: how and why Buddhism entered China, Korea and Japan; relations with secular powers.
2. February 15<sup>th</sup>. The Buddhist East Asian Sphere, shared ideas, beliefs and practices.

**Read**

*Buddhist Experience*,.

**Week Seven: No classes—Spring Break!**

**Week Eight: How can we become buddhas?**

**\*Online Test 2 this week\***

How can we become buddhas?

Tutorial: “The Practice of No Thought,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 504–512.

1. February 26<sup>th</sup>. Origins of Chan/ Sōn/Zen
2. March 1<sup>st</sup>. Regional flavours: Sōn in Korea, Zen in Japan.

## Read

*Buddhist Experience.*

**Week Nine:** Can women become awakened? Can they teach?

Tutorial: .

1. March 5<sup>th</sup>. Sex change
2. March 8<sup>th</sup>. Female communities

## Reading

*Buddhist Experience XX-XX*

**Week Ten:** Should Buddhism serve the state?

**\*Online Test 3 this week.\***

Tutorial: “Both Sudden and Gradual Enlightenment,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 375–78.

1. March 12<sup>th</sup>. Buddhism and the Japanese Occupation of Korea (1895-1945).
2. March 15<sup>th</sup>. Buddhism in contemporary China

## Reading

*Buddhist Experience, XX-XX*

**Week Eleven:**

**Essay Due March 21<sup>st</sup>**

Should Buddhists write poetry? Should they make art?

Tutorial: “How a Monk Freed his Mother from Hell,” *Buddhist Scriptures*, 329–34.

1. March 19<sup>th</sup>. Buddhism and verse.
2. March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Instructor away at Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting. No class meeting—catch up on reading.

## Reading

*Buddhist Experience, XX-XX.*

**Week Twelve:** Can Buddhism remove the fear of death?

Tutorial:.

1. March 26<sup>th</sup>. The Pure Land.
2. March 29<sup>th</sup>. Japanese funerary Buddhism.

## Read

*Buddhist Experience,*

**Week Thirteen:**. Can we change our reality?

Tutorial:

1. April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Esoteric Buddhism in East Asia
2. April 5<sup>th</sup>. Mantras, mandalas, mudras

**Read** Buddhist Experience, XX-XX

**Week Fourteen**

Review

No tutorial

1. April 9<sup>th</sup>. Last class meeting. Exam review.

**Reading**

None