

SCAR 2MT3: ASIAN MEDITATION TRADITIONS

Winter 2022

Instructor: Gerjan Altenburg
Email: altenbgp@mcmaster.ca
Lecture: PGCLL M12
Wednesdays 11:30am to 12:20pm &
Fridays 1:30pm to 2:20pm
Tutorials: BSB 137
Tuesdays 12:30pm to 1:20pm

Office: TBD
Office Hours: TBD/By Appointment
TA: Marc Lagace
TA email: lagacem@mcmaster.ca

Course Description

This course will provide an overview of meditation traditions in religions originating in South Asia and East Asia.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- discuss some of the latest theoretical trends and thematic topics of inquiry in the academic study of meditation, and
- demonstrate a familiarity with Asian traditions of meditation and the religious contexts in which these traditions developed.
- Students will not be taught how to meditate.

Required Materials and Texts

- *Asian Traditions of Meditation*, edited by Halvor Eifring (2016). Ebook available via McMaster's Library catalogue:
https://discovery.mcmaster.ca/iii/encore/record/C_Rb5037547_Sasian%20traditions%20of%20meditation_P0%2C1_Orightresult_U_X7?lang=eng&suite=def
- Auxiliary readings will be provided to students in custom handouts via Avenue to Learn on a weekly basis, no less than one week before the scheduled lecture.

Class Format

With the exception of Week 01, we will go over theoretical chapters from the textbook, *Asian Traditions of Meditation*, on Wednesdays in lecture. On Fridays, we will take up selections of primary sources in English translation, provided by the instructor on

Avenue to Learn. On Tuesdays, we will review the previous week's lecture and reading material in tutorial. Students should come to class and tutorial prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Lecture Attendance 10%, tracked throughout the term
2. Tutorial Attendance 10%, tracked throughout the term
3. Academic Integrity Assignment 10%, due 01/21/2022
4. Secondary Literature Assignment 20%, due 02/04/2022
5. Midterm Take-home Test 20%, due 03/04/2022
6. Final Take-home Test 30%, due 04/15/2022

Course Evaluation – Details

Lecture Attendance 10%, tracked throughout the term

Attendance in lectures will be tracked throughout the term. In total, there are 24 lectures. Therefore, attendance at each lecture is worth just under 0.5% of the final grade for this course.

Tutorial Attendance 10%, tracked throughout the term

Attendance in tutorials will be tracked throughout the term. In total, there are 10 tutorials. Each tutorial is worth exactly 1% of the final grade for this course.

Academic Integrity Assignment 10%, due 01/21/2022

On the first day of class, students will receive instructions for the Academic Integrity Assignment. This assignment will consist of two short answer questions.

In answering these questions, students must demonstrate an understanding of McMaster University's policies regarding academic integrity as well as an ability to properly format citations according to the style guide provided by their course instructor.

Secondary Literature Assignment 20%, due 02/04/2022

Students will be given a choice of academic articles to read, not currently found on the syllabus. Students must choose one article and then answer questions about their choice that assess their understanding of: 1) the author; 2) the sources the author uses; and 3) the arguments the author makes.

This assignment gives students an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to read secondary literature on Asian meditation traditions at a second-year undergraduate level.

Further instructions and a rubric will be provided to students on the first day of class.

Midterm Take-home Test 20%, due 03/04/2022

On February 18th, 2022, students will receive instructions for the Midterm Take-home Test. Students will be presented with a choice of two essay questions. Students will answer one of these two questions in an essay of no more than 1000 words.

Students will be graded on: 1) how well they answer the question; 2) their synthesis of assigned course materials; 3) their comprehension and use of course concepts and themes discussed in the first half of the course; 4) how well they demonstrate a successful completion of some of the “Course Objectives” listed on the syllabus; and 5) the general clarity of their writing.

Final Take-home Test 30%, due 04/15/2022

On April 1st, 2022, students will receive instructions for the Final Take-home Test. Students will be presented with a choice of four essay questions. Students will answer two of these four questions. Each answer will be written in an essay of no more than 1000 words.

Students will be graded on: 1) how well they answer the questions; 2) their synthesis of assigned course materials; 3) their comprehension and use of course concepts and themes; 4) how well they demonstrate a successful completion of some of the “Course Objectives” listed on the syllabus; and 5) the general clarity of their writing.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 01

01/11/2022 – No Tutorial This Week

01/12/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Eifring, Halvor. 2016. “Introduction.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: ix–xv (Introductory Chapter).

01/14/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Eifring, Halvor. 2016. “What is Meditation?” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: 1–26 (Chapter 1).

Week 02

01/18/2022 – No Tutorial This Week

01/19/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Eifring, Halvor. 2016. "Types of Meditation." In *Asian Traditions of Meditation: 27–47* (Chapter 2).

01/21/2022 – Lecture

Readings: "An Overview of Primary Sources for 2MT3." Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Notes: Academic Integrity Assignment due

Week 03

01/25/2022 – Tutorial "What is Meditation?"

01/26/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Bryant, Edwin. 2016. "*Samādhi* in the *Yoga Sūtras*." In *Asian Traditions of Meditation: 48–70* (Chapter 3).

01/28/2022 – Lecture

Readings: "Select Passages from Edwin Bryant's *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali: A New Edition, Translation, and Commentary (2009)*." Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Week 04

02/01/2022 – Tutorial "Yoga & Meditation"

02/02/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Khanna, Madhu. 2016. "*Yantra* and *Cakra* in Tantric Meditation." In *Asian Traditions of Meditation: 71–92* (Chapter 4).

02/04/2022 – Lecture

Readings: "Select Passages from Various English Translations of Tantric Texts." Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Notes: Secondary Literature Assignment due

Week 05

02/08/2022 – Tutorial “Tantra & Meditation”

02/09/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Bronkhorst, Johannes. 2016. “The History of Jaina Meditation.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: 93–102 (Chapter 5).

02/11/2022 – Lecture

Readings: “Select Passages from Various English Translations of Jain Scriptures.” Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Week 06

02/15/2022 – Tutorial “Meditation in Jainism”

02/16/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Myrvold, Kristina. 2016. “Nām Simran in the Sikh Religion.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: 103–121 (Chapter 6).

02/18/2022 – Lecture

Readings: “Select Passages from Pritam Singh Chahal’s *Śri Guru Granth Sahib: Text, Transliteration and English Translation* (4 volumes, 2015[1993]).” Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Week 07 (Mid Term Recess)

02/22/2022 – No Tutorial This Week

02/23/2022 – No Lecture This Week

02/25/2022 – No Lecture This Week

Week 08

03/01/2022 – Tutorial “Meditation in Sikhism”

03/02/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Shaw, Sarah. 2016. “Meditation Objects in Pāli Buddhist Texts.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: 122–144 (Chapter 7).

03/04/2022 – Lecture

Readings: “Select Passages from Various English Translations of Buddhist Canonical Texts Produced by the Pāli Text Society.” Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Notes: Midterm Take-home Test due

Week 09

03/08/2022 – Tutorial “Meditation in the Pāli Canon”

03/09/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Samuel, Geoffrey. 2016. “Tibetan Longevity Meditation.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: 145–164 (Chapter 8).

03/11/2022 – Lecture

Readings: “Select Passages from Various English Translations of Tibetan Buddhist Texts.” Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Week 10

03/15/2022 – Tutorial “Meditation in Tibetan Buddhism”

03/16/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Schlütter, Morten. 2016. “Kànhuà Meditation in Chinese Zen.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: 165–184 (Chapter 9).

03/18/2022 – Lecture

Readings: “Select Passages from English Translations of Chan Texts in Recent Books by Eric Greene: *The Secrets of Buddhist Meditation: Visionary Meditation Texts from Early Medieval China* (2021) & *Chan Before Chan: Meditation, Repentance, and Visionary Experience in Chinese Buddhism* (2021).” Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Week 11

03/22/2022 – Tutorial “Meditation in Chan”

03/23/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Roth, Harold. 2016. “Meditation in the Classical Daoist Tradition.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation*: 185–206 (Chapter 10).

03/25/2022 – Lecture

Readings: “Select Passages from Various Daoist Canonical Texts Translated by Livia Kohn.” Custom handout will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Week 12

03/29/2022 – Tutorial: “Meditation in Daoism”

03/30/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Mabuchi, Masaya. 2016. “Quiet Sitting ’in Neo-Confucianism.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation: 207–226* (Chapter 11).

04/01/2022 – Lecture

Readings: “Select Passages from Various English Translations of ‘The Four Books ’& ‘The Five Classics.’” Custom handout will be will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Week 13

04/05/2022 – Tutorial: “Meditation in Neo-Confucianism”

04/06/2022 – Lecture

Readings: Holen, Are. 2016. “The Science of Meditation.” In *Asian Traditions of Meditation: 227–243* (Chapter 12).

04/08/2022 – Lecture

Readings: No readings assigned (Final Thoughts Only)

Week 14

04/12/2022 – Tutorial: No Tutorial this week!

Notes: Final Take-Home Test due 04/15/2022

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Unless specifically instructed to do otherwise, all assignments must be submitted on Avenue as .doc(x) or .pdf. Do not submit assignments by email!

Late Assignments

If you need an extension on an assignment, contact me as soon as possible. Late assignments that have not been granted an extension in advance may receive a penalty of 5% a day for 5 days. If a deadline passes and I have not heard from a student within 5 days, I will not accept the assignment except in extraordinary circumstances.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.”

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.

Turnitin.com

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.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

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](#).

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.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

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.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail 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.

Course Modification

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 his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

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.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-

MARK	GRADE
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F