

## **BUDDHIST ETHICS**

### **Term 2 (Winter, 2022/23)**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment (e-mail)

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**Class meetings:** Tu. 12:30–2:20 (T13 107)

**Tutorials:** Tu. 2:30–3:20 (T13 106)

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## **Course Description**

This course provides an overview of Buddhist ethics with several in-depth studies of Buddhist attitudes towards topics of interest in contemporary ethical debates. We will explore Buddhist views on abortion, economics, the environment, euthanasia, gender, sexuality, suicide, war, and much more!

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course students should be:

- familiar with a significant number of scholarly discussions of Buddhist ethics.

## **Required Materials and Texts**

None. Everything needed may be accessed either through the library's e-resources, the University's Fair Dealing Policy, or elsewhere on the internet using older sources in public domain. Prepare ahead of time since some e-books only allow for one simultaneous user.

## **Class Format**

In order to foster engagement (discussion) with the material and build a sense of community, this class will be taught as a hybrid lecture/seminar (more discussion than lecture). Accordingly, students should come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. There will be two essays (worth 35% each). To do well in these essays, students must show evidence of critical engagement with the readings and present an argument. It is not sufficient simply to summarise readings.
2. There will be 8 mini quizzes. Each quiz is worth 5% of the final grade. You should complete 4 mini quizzes to receive 20%. If you complete more than 4 mini quizzes, only your best 4 scores will be retained.
3. Participation and attendance: 10%.

## **Course Evaluation – Details**

### **Essay 1 (35%), due March 7**

Topic will be announced on Avenue at least three weeks before due date.

### **Essay 2 (35%), due April 11**

Topic will be announced on Avenue at least three weeks before due date.

### **Weekly mini quizzes (20%)**

Available weeks 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13

## **Weekly Participation & Attendance (10%)**

Each of the following 10 weeks (2–5, 7–10, 12–13), students will earn 0.5% for attendance and 0.5% for participation in discussions.

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Week 1 (Jan. 10, 2023)**

#### **Introductions & Orientation**

### **Week 2 (Jan. 17, 2023)**

#### **Introduction**

- Keown, Damien. 2005. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 3–38 (chapters 1–2).
- Heim, Maria. 2020. *Buddhist Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–14 (chapter 1).

### **Week 3 (Jan. 24, 2023): online mini quiz 1**

#### **Karma and Merit**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–59 (chapter 1).
- Rotman, Andy, trans. 2017. The Story of Sahasodgata.” In *Divine Stories. Divyāvadāna. Part 2*, 95–116. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

### **Week 4 (Jan. 31, 2023)**

#### **Buddhist Values**

Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 60–149 (chapters 2–3).

### **Week 5 (Feb. 7, 2023): online mini quiz 2**

#### **Buddhism and War**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 239–285 (chapter 6).
- Keown, Damien. 2005. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 69–83 (chapter 5).
- Jerryson, Michael. 2018. “Buddhism, War, and Violence.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*, edited by Daniel Cozort and James Mark

Shields. Oxford University Press. DOI:  
10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198746140.013.8

**Week 6 (Feb. 14, 2023): online mini quiz 3**

**Buddhism & Economics**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 187–238 (chapter 5).
- Shields, James Mark. 2018. “Buddhist Economics: Problems and Possibilities.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*, edited by Daniel Cozort and James Mark Shields. Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198746140.013.28
- Schopen, Gregory. 2019. “The Business Model of a Buddhist Monasticism: Acquiring Productive Assets.” *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2 (2): 217–249. <https://dx.doi.org/10.15239/hijbs.02.02.08>

**Week 7 (Feb. 21, 2023): mid-term recess**

**No class**

**Week 8 (Feb. 28, 2023): online mini quiz 4**

**Buddhism, Animals, and the Environment**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 150–186 (chapter 4).
- Keown, Damien. 2005. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 39–52 (chapter 3).

**Week 9 (March 7, 2023): online mini quiz 5; essay 1 due**

**Buddhism & Sexuality**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 411–434 (chapter 10).
- Keown, Damien. 2005. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 53–68 (chapter 4).
- Horner, Isaline Blew, trans. *The Book of the Discipline*. Vol. 1. London: The Pali Text Society, 1938, pp. 1–63.
- Kieffer-Pülz, Petra. “Pārājika 1 and Saṅghādisesa 1: Hitherto Untranslated Passages from the Vinayaṭṭaka of the Theravādins.” *Traditional South Asian*

*Medicine* 6 (2001): 62–84. Reprinted in 2014 reprint of *The Book of the Discipline*. Vol. 1, pp. 349–373.

**Week 10 (March 14, 2023): online mini quiz 6**

**Buddhism & Abortion**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 311–352 (chapter 8).
- Keown, Damien. 2005. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 84–99 (chapter 4).

**Week 11 (March 21, 2023): Reflection Week  
Reflect!**

**Week 12 (March 28, 2023): online mini quiz 7**

**Buddhism & Gender**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 353–410 (chapter 9).
- Collett, Alice. 2018. “Buddhism and Women.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*, edited by Daniel Cozort and James Mark Shields. Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198746140.013.6

**Week 13 (April 4, 2023): online mini quiz 8**

**Buddhism & Suicide & Euthanasia**

- Harvey, Peter. 2000. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 286–310 (chapter 7).
- Keown, Damien. 2005. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 100–115 (chapter 7).
- Horner, Isaline Blew, trans. *The Book of the Discipline*. Vol. 1. London: The Pali Text Society, 1938, pp. 116–150.

**Week 14 (April 11, 2023): essay 2 due  
Conclusions**

## **Course Policies**

### **Submission of Assignments**

Do not submit papers by e-mail (attachments, in-line, etc.); they will not be accepted. Submit only to Avenue to Learn, following specific instructions on the course's website (Announcements in Avenue). Staff in the office of the Department of Religious Studies will not date-stamp or receive papers and other assignments.

All written work will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, and organization, as well as content and analysis. Proofread and then proofread again. All work must be properly referenced, with footnotes and bibliography (where applicable). Students are encouraged to visit the Student Success Centre to improve their essay skills (Gilmour Hall 110). For information about the Writing Support services, visit the [Student Success Centre's website](#).

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### **Late Assignments**

All written work must be submitted on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized 5% a day (including weekends). Late penalties will generally not be waived unless your Faculty/Program Office advises the instructor that you have submitted to that office the appropriate documentation to support your inability to submit the work by the due date. If you are having trouble with a deadline, contact me, *before* the deadline.

### **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 these with the course instructor.

## **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. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

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 Dishonesty: Zero Tolerance (my policy)**

If in doubt, consult with your instructor before submitting any work. Under no circumstances should you submit work if you are unsure whether or not submission of said work constitutes academic dishonesty.

All students are encouraged to complete the following:

- [How to recognize plagiarism](#)
- [Plagiarism certification tests](#)

### **Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection**

**Some courses may** use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

**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 details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to the [Office of Academic Integrity website](#).

### **Courses with an On-line Element**

**Some courses may** use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, 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 a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Online Proctoring**

**Some courses may** use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

### **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.

### **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](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

## **Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work**

[McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#): 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”.

## **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 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.

## **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.

## **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.