

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM

Term 1 (Fall, 2021/22)

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Lecture: Tuesdays 7–9 pm

Tutorials: Tuesdays, 9–10 pm (Zoom)

Office: UH 118

Office Hours: By appointment (e-mail)

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Course Description

This course is designed to provide an introduction to the academic study of Buddhism. No background is required or expected.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be:

- familiar with a significant number of basic concepts, doctrines, history, legends, and Sanskrit terms associated with Buddhism in India and beyond.

Required Materials and Texts

- Gethin, Rupert, *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford U.P. (Mills Library: Paper and e-book)
- Gethin, Rupert, *Sayings of the Buddha: New Translations from the Pali Nikayas*. Oxford U.P. (Mills Library: Paper and e-book)

Class Format

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

Tutorials: Hopefully we will have a TA.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. There will be **two online, open-book tests**, each worth **20%** of the final grade. Students will be required to identify and/or explain key terms and concepts, and discuss the significance of selected passages/images.
2. There will be **two assigned response papers** based on weekly readings (worth **20%** each). To do well in these papers, students must show evidence of critical engagement with the readings. It is not sufficient simply to summarise the readings. The topic will be announced two weeks prior to the deadline.
3. There will be **6 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, thus allowing you to improve your grade.
4. Participation and attendance will not be graded.
5. There is **no final paper or exam**.

Course Evaluation – Details

- 1) Paper 1 (20%), due October 5 (week 5)
- 2) Online, open-book Test 1 (20%), October 19 (week 7)
- 3) Online, open-book Test 2 (20%), November 9 (week 10)
- 4) Paper 2 (20%), due November 30 (week 12)
- 5) Weekly Mini Quizzes (20%), available weeks 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (September 7): No Tutorials this week Introduction and overview

Week 2 (September 14): No Tutorials this week

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Introduction and Chapter 1: The Buddha: The Story of the Awakened One.

Gethin, *Sayings*, pp. xiii–xlix.

Week 3 (September 21): Tutorials start this week; mini quiz 1

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 2: The Word of the Buddha: Buddhist Scriptures and Schools.

Gethin, *Sayings*, pp. 5–36. OR: <https://suttacentral.net/dn2/en/sujato>
(*Sāmaññaphala-sutta*)

Week 4 (September 28): Mini quiz 2

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 3: Four Truths: The Disease, The Cause, The Cure, The Medicine.

Gethin, *Sayings*, pp. 37–97. OR: <https://suttacentral.net/dn16/en/anandajoti>
(*Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*)

<https://suttacentral.net/vb6/en/anandajoti> (Vibhaṅga:
Paṭiccasamuppādavibhaṅga)

Week 5 (October 5): Paper 1 due

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 4: The Buddhist Community: Monks, Nuns, and Lay Followers.

<https://suttacentral.net/mn82/en/horner> (*Raṭṭhapāla-sutta*)

<https://suttacentral.net/ud1.8/en/anandajoti> (*Saṅgāmajī-sutta*)

<https://suttacentral.net/pli-tv-bu-vb-pj1/en/brahmali> (*First Pārājika rule*)

Week 6 (October 12): Reading Week/Mid-Term Recess (no classes)

Oddly, no assigned readings this week.

Week 7 (October 19): Open-book Test 1

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 5: The Buddhist Cosmos: The Thrice-Thousandfold World.

Gethin, *Sayings*, pp. 116–128; 129–138. OR:

<https://suttacentral.net/dn27/en/sujato> (*Aggañña-sutta*)

<https://suttacentral.net/dn31/en/sujato> (*Sigālovāda-sutta*)

Week 8 (October 26): Mini quiz 3

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 6: No Self: Personal Continuity and Dependent Arising.

Gethin, *Sayings*, pp. 205–246.

https://suttacentral.net/mil3.1.1/en/tw_rhysdavids

Week 9 (November 2): Mini quiz 4

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 7: The Buddhist Path: The Way of Calm and Insight.

Gethin, *Sayings*, pp. 141–167. OR:

<https://suttacentral.net/mn10/en/sujato> (*Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*)

<https://suttacentral.net/mn20/en/sujato> (*Vitakkasaṅṭhāna-sutta*)

<https://suttacentral.net/mn22/en/sujato> (*Alagaddūpama-sutta*)

Week 10 (November 9): Open-book Test 2

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 8: The Abhidharma: The Higher Teaching.

Gethin, *Sayings*, pp. 195–204. OR: <https://suttacentral.net/en/mn136> (*Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta*)

<https://suttacentral.net/vb1/en/thittila> (*Vibhaṅga: Khandhavibhaṅga*)

Week 11 (November 16): Mini quiz 5

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 9: The Mahāyāna: The Great Vehicle.

“The Sūtra on the Buddha of Infinite Life,” in Hisao Inagaki, trans., in collaboration with Harold Stewart, *The Three Pure Land Sutras*. Revised second ed. Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2003, pp. 1–62.

http://www.bdk.or.jp/document/dgtl-dl/dBET_ThreePureLandSutras_2003.pdf

Week 12 (November 23): Mini quiz 6

Readings:

Gethin, *Foundations*, Chapter 10: Evolving Traditions of Buddhism: South, East, North, and West.

Week 13 (November 30): Reflection Week: Paper 2 due

Readings:

Clarke, Shayne. "Locating Humour in Indian Buddhist Monastic Law Codes: A Comparative Approach," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 37, no. 4 (2009): 311–330.

Clarke, Shayne. "Monks Who Have Sex: Pārājika Penance in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 37, no. 1 (2009): 1–43.

Schopen, Gregory. "The Learned Monk as a Comic Figure: On Reading a Buddhist Vinaya as Indian Literature," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 35.3 (2007): 201–226.

Week 14 (December 7): No Tutorials this week Conclusions & Review

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 Centre's website: <https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/academic-skills/writing-support/>

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

Late Assignments

All written work must be submitted on or before 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, ideally 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 this 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.

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 www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

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—but not mine—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 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.

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