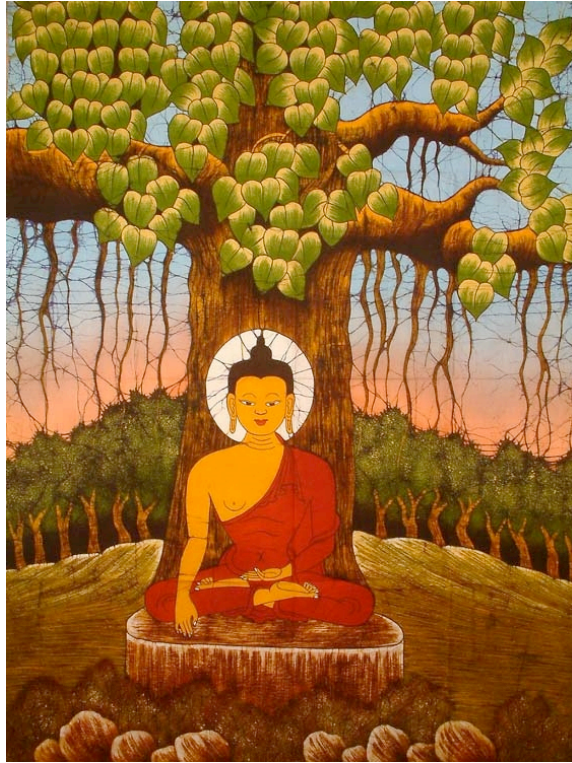


AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF BUDDHISM
RELG 220
Professor DANIEL M. STUART
Fall 2019



Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday, 11:40 am–12:55 pm, HUMCB 404
Office Hours: By appointment
Office: Rutledge College 331
Email: stuardt@mailbox.sc.edu

Course Overview:

Who was the Buddha? What did he achieve when he attained enlightenment? How do we know what we know about him and his followers? How do we account for the wide variety of Buddhist practices across the globe today? This course will explore these and other questions through a study of the early history of Buddhism in its Indian context. We will look closely at the philosophies, rituals and meditative practices of Indian Buddhists and the historical developments that such practices underwent before and during their exportation to regions such as China, Tibet, and mainland Southeast Asia. The course will also engage contemporary questions regarding the way Buddhism is imagined, understood, and recreated by modern practitioners from all regions of the globe.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to articulate fundamental ideals of Buddhist thought and practice from the standpoint of the three major strands of Buddhism that we study. Students will be able to connect the picture formed by those religious ideals to real cases of Buddhists' lives today. Students will be able to identify what is shared and what is unique among the various strands of Buddhist tradition that we examine. Students will be able to articulate specific ways in which the study of Buddhism sheds light on important, broader issues presently debated within the study of religion.

Requirements

- 20% — short written responses to weekly readings, due on most weeks as indicated on the course website. The responses will be based on writing prompts posted online. **Responses are due at 5 pm on the day before the final class of each week, and should be submitted via Blackboard.** A response should be between 200 and 250 words in length. These short reflections provide a valuable opportunity to think about the assigned readings prior to our last class discussion of each week. They will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. Only responses submitted on-time will be accepted.
- 20% — midterm exam; **midterm exam date: 10/8/2019**
- 25% — 4-6 page interpretive essay. The essay is based on prior lectures and readings. Additional reading is not necessary. Students choose a topic from among a set of prompts that will be posted online. Alternatively, students may propose an original topic and have it approved by the instructor at least one week before the due date. The essay will require a close engagement with one or more of our primary sources. It will be evaluated both for quality of thought and quality of expression. **Topics are distributed on 10/31/2019. Papers are due on 11/19/2019.** (For guidelines and expectations, see the handout on writing an interpretive essay.)
- 35% — comprehensive final take-home exam with an emphasis on course material since the midterm; **final exam due date: 12/12/2019 at 3:00 pm**

Attendance—Prompt and regular attendance is crucial for success in the course. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. Attendance is mandatory, and if you miss more than three class sessions, you will lose 3% of your grade for every additional class missed. If you are absent for an excusable reason, be sure to present the needed documentation to the instructor immediately upon your return (e.g., if you are absent for a legitimate medical reason, bring a doctor's note as soon as you come back to class).

Participation — participation forms an important part of the course. Meaningful contributions to class discussions and other in-class activities enhance everyone's learning experience. Students should feel free to discuss the quality of their class participation with the instructor at any point during the semester.

Grading Scale 100-90 A; 89-87 B+; 86-80 B; 79-77 C+; 76-70 C; 69-67 D+; 66-60 D; below 60 F

Required Texts

- Gethin, Rupert. 1998. *The Foundations of Buddhism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Samuel, Geoffrey. 2008. *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Links to additional course materials are available on Blackboard

Films:

Siddhartha (1972)

I ♥ Huckabees (2004)

The Future (2011)

Schedule of Weekly Readings and Assignments

8/22 (R): Introduction and General Discussion: The Buddha and Buddhism

Week 1: *The Buddha*

8/27 (T): The World of the Vedas:

Heehs 2002, pp. 39-55

Olivelle 1996, pp. 148-57

8/29 (R): The Buddha

Gethin, pp. 1-34

Ñānamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 253-268.

R. Gimello Handout: "The Date of the Historical Buddha"

Week 2: *The Dharma*

9/3 (T): The Ascetic Imperative (Film in class: *Siddhartha* [1972])

Bronkhorst 2007, pp. 13-54

Ñānamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 677-691

9/5 (R): The Ascetic Imperative (cont.)

Gethin, pp. 35-84

Week 3: *The Dharma (cont.)*

9/10 (T): The Cosmos and the Self: Karma, Rebirth and the Chain of Dependent Origination

Gethin, pp. 112-162

Ñānamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 1053-1065

9/12 (R): Meditation

Gethin, pp. 163-201

Walshe 1995, pp. 159-170.

R. Gimello Handout: "Mindfulness Outline"

Week 4: *The Dharma (cont.)*

9/17 (T): Abhidharma—Mind, Matter, Mental contents, and Nirvāṇa: What else is there?

Gethin, pp. 201-223.

Buswell 2005, pp. 1-7

Bodhi 2000, pp. 1-11

9/19 (R): Middle Paths

Film: I ♥ Huckabees (2004)

Week 5: *The Saṅgha*

9/24 (T): The Monastic Community

Gethin, pp. 85-111

Khaggavisana and *Sangarava Suttas*

9/26 (R): Discipline

Thanissaro Bhikkhu 1994, pp. 4-28 (web file)

Horner 1949, pp. 21-51

Week 6: *The Saṅgha (cont.)*

10/1 (T): The Lay Community

Bodhi 1999, pp. 205-208

Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 669-676

Saddhatissa 1970/1997, pp. 81-111

Buswell 2004, pp. 445-449

10/3 (R): Women and Men

Falk 1980, pp. 207-224

Norman 1989, pp. 167; 176; 178-179; 195-196; 201-202; 212-215

Week 7: *Exam Time*

10/8 (T): *Midterm Exam

FALL BREAK: 10/10–11/2019

Week 8: *Time, Space, and New Conceptions of Buddhist Practice*

10/15 (T): The Past and the Future

Nattier 1991, pp. 7-26

Collins 1998, pp. 344- 375

10/17 (R): The Beginnings of the Great Vehicle

Gethin, pp. 224-252

“Mahāyāna” in Buswell 2004, pp. 492-499

Week 9: *The Mahāyāna*

10/22 (T): Philosophy and the Middle Way

Garfield and Edelglass 2009, pp. 26-34

10/24 (R): Pure Living, Pure Lands

Gomez 1996, pp. 3-59

Week 10: *The Mahāyāna (cont.)*

10/29 (T): The Way of Vimalakīrti

Thurman 2001 [1976], pp. 1-55

10/31 (R): The Way of Vimalakīrti cont.

Thurman 2001 [1976], pp. 55-102

*** Paper topics distributed**

Week 11: *Tantra*

11/5 (T): What is Tantra?

“Tantra” in Buswell 2004, pp. 825-831

Samuel 2008, pp. 191–228

11/7 (R): Wrathful Realities

Samuel 2008, pp. 229–270

Week 12: *Tantra (cont.)*

11/13 (T): Embodied Consciousness

Samuel 2008, pp. 271-290

11/15 (R): Power and Politics

Samuel 2008, pp. 291-323

Week 13: *American Buddhism*

11/19 (T): Westward Dharma

Prebish and Baumann 2002, pp. 1-49

***Papers due in class**

11/21 (R): Buddhism, Culture, and Practice

Obeyesekere in Kleinman and Good 1985, pp. 134-152

Week 14: *American Buddhism (cont.)*

11/26 (T): Social Realities

Loundon 2001, pp. 5-16; 59-64; 99-106

Film: *The Future* (2011)

THANKSGIVING RECESS: 11/27-12/1/2019

Week 15: *American Buddhism (cont.)*

12/3 (T): Engaged Buddhism

Edelglass and Garfield 2009, pp. 419-427; 428-436

12/5 (R): American Engagements

Williams, Owens, and Syedullah 2016, pp. 9-18; 22-26; 32-36; 46-53; 60-67; 101-105

FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE on Thursday, December 12 at 3 :00 pm

Bibliography

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