Master of Arts (M.A.) Degree in Buddhist Studies

Full Time (One Year) / Part Time (Two Years)

Scope and Content of Course

The course is intended to introduce the student to the most up-to-date information, research and judgments in the multiple branches of Buddhist studies, so as to enable him/her to discover the new frontiers of the subject. Studies under this scheme, coordinated by three Departments of Study, extends from the primary sources of Buddhist Studies which exist in Pali, Sanskrit, Sinhala, Tibetan, Chinese etc., through Buddhist Thought to the culture of Buddhism, including social organization and development of fine arts and literature. A comprehensive range of courses covering these areas will be provided at the Institute. Knowledge of a relevant language is not required although certain taught courses may only be taken by students with a language competence. Students will be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to enhance their language proficiency. Any student whose first degree has not been in a field closely allied to Buddhist Studies may be required to take one course of a general or comparative kind, as an introduction to the subject. The Master of Arts Degree offered by the Institute is regarded as a preparation for in-depth studies and research in Buddhism or Comparative Religion, or for relevant careers or simply as an extension of a liberal education.

Eligibility for Admission

Candidates seeking admission to the M.A. course in Buddhist Studies should have at least one of the following qualifications:

i. A Degree from a recognized university

   or

ii. A postgraduate Diploma in Buddhist Studies from a recognized University/ Institute

   or
iii. A pass at the final examination of the Oriental Studies Society (Sri Lanka)

or

iv. Any other qualification deemed by the Faculty Board of the Institute as equivalent to the above

Requirements for the Course of Study

A student is required to take six taught course units selected from those announced for the academic year. The selection may tend towards specialization or widening out of the field. The student is also required to submit a 5,000-word essay on a theme related to one of the courses taken and selected with the guidance of the lecturers concerned. All candidates are required to inform their essay titles before the end of the second term of the academic year. The essay should be submitted within 30 days from the date of the last paper of the Final Examination.

Available Course Units (Prescribed for the Academic Year 2017)

ME 01 - Buddhist Doctrines of the Pali Nikāyas: Analysis and Interpretation
ME 02 - Theravada Abhidhamma: Origins and Development
ME 04 - Doctrinal Controversies of the Abhidharma Tradition
ME 06 - Origins of Mahayana and the Earliest Mahayana Sutras
ME 07 - Nāgārjuna’s Philosophy as Reflected in His Mūlamādhyamaka- kārikā
ME 09 - Buddhist Vinaya and the Monastic Organization
ME 16 - Chinese Buddhist Literature
ME 21 - Buddhist Aesthetic Concepts: Analysis and Evaluation
ME 22 - Buddhist Art and Architecture - I (Indian Subcontinent)
ME 23 - Buddhist Art and Architecture - II (Sri Lanka)
ME 26 - Buddhist Psychotherapy
ME 27 - Buddhist Social Dimension
ME 33 - Buddhist Economic Philosophy
ME 35 - Theravada Tradition: A Historical and Doctrinal Study
ME 39 - Basic Pali, Research Methodology and Logical Reasoning
ME 40 - Buddhist Philosophy of Education and Communication
ME 52 - History of Indian Buddhism: From its Origins to the Emergence of Mahayana
ME 54 - Mahayana Buddhism: A Doctrinal Survey
ME 56 - The Pali Commentarial Literature
ME 57 - The Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal in Theravada Buddhism
ME 60 - Sarvastivada Abhidharma: Doctrines and Controversies
ME 61 - Methods of Spiritual Praxis in the Sarvastivada Tradition
ME 62 - The Doctrine of Śūnyatā (Emptiness): Prajñāpāramitā Scriptures and Early Mādhyamika
ME 63 - Doctrines of Early Indian Yogācāra
ME 64 - History of Chinese Buddhism
ME 65 - Japanese Buddhism: History and Doctrines
ME 66 - Tibetan Buddhism: History and Doctrines
ME 67 - Readings in Pali Suttas
ME 68 - Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit Texts
ME 69 - Readings in Buddhist Tibetan Texts
ME 70 - Buddhist Doctrine: Modern Philosophical Perspectives

Courses may, however, vary from those given above depending on the interests and availability of the teachers involved, and additional courses may be offered from time to time. The Institute reserves the right to alter or withdraw any of the courses announced, or change the conditions governing them.
**Evaluation**

i. Two Assignments for each course unit: 10 marks per assignment

ii. Three-hour final year examination for each course unit: 80 marks per course unit

   i. Essay: 100 marks

However, the evaluation method may be decided by the lecturer concerned on the approval of the Faculty Board.

**Grades**

- 75 - 100: A - Distinction
- 65 - 74: B - Credit
- 50 - 64: C - Pass
- 00 – 49: W - Weak

**Merit Pass**

Requires an average of 75 marks for all units with not less than 50 marks for any unit.

**Pass**

50 marks for each course unit.

Between 45 - 49 for one course unit with average of 50 for all units.

However, the evaluation method may be decided by the lecturer concerned on the approval of the Faculty Board.
Syllabus for Master of Arts (M.A.) Degree in Buddhist Studies

Course Code: ME 01

Course Title: Buddhist Doctrines of the Pali Nikāyas: Analysis and Interpretation

Aim
To give the students a critical and comprehensive knowledge of Buddhist doctrines of Pali Nikāyas

Content
Fundamental Teachings of early Buddhism, questions raised and solutions offered by modern scholars on the interpretation of early Buddhist doctrines, the diverse trends discernible in the early Buddhist discourses as to the nature of the world of sensory experience and the reasons that could be adduced in grasping their significance within the context of the religion. Philosophical system of early Buddhism will form an Integral part of this course.

The course will be based on Suttapiṭaka and supplemented, where necessary, with the Abhidhammic and commentarial expositions. It is in the interests of the student to gain an ability to read the Pali suttas in the original texts.

Method of Teaching
Lectures, discussions and assignments

Expected Learning Outcomes
Ability to elaborate critically the fundamental teachings of Suttapiṭaka and to read and understand relevant discourses in the original sources.

Recommended for References


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**Course Code: ME 02**

**Course Title: Theravada Abhidhamma: Origins and Development**

**Aim**

Knowledge of antecedent doctrinal trends and historical factors that led to the emergence of the Abhidhamma, its expository methodology and its fundamental concepts as found in the canonical Abhidhamma and their further elaboration in the commentaries and compendiums.

**Content**
Doctrinal trends and historical factors that led to the emergence of *Abhidhamma*, its expository methodology and fundamental concepts as found in the canonical Abhidhamma, Abhidhammic elaborations in commentaries and compendiums; Abhidhamma's central conception of *dhamma*, its ancillary theory of the two levels of reality (*paññatti* and *paramattha*) and two kinds of truth (*Sammuti* and *paramattha*); the commentarial interpretation of *dhamma* as *sabhāva* and its significance in the context of Sarvāstivādins’ theory of tritemporal existence; the Abhidhammic analysis of mind and matter, *bhavaṅga* and theory of perception; *bhāva-sādhana* and other methods of definition, theory of time and instantaneous being, conditioned genesis (*paccayākāra-naya*), mind- culture and higher reaches of mind.

**Method of Teaching**
Lectures, discussions and assignments

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
Ability to describe doctrinal and historical factors that led to the emergence of Abhidhamma, to explain expository methodology and its fundamental concepts in the canonical Abhidhamma and to elaborate on Abhidhammic expositions in commentaries and compendiums.

**Recommended References**


Karunadasa, Y. (2010). *The Theravada Abhidhamma*, University of Hong: Centre of Buddhist Studies.


**Course Code: ME 04**

**Course Title: Doctrinal Controversies of the Abhidharma Tradition**

**Aim**

To study critically the pre-Mahayana Abhidharma doctrines and new concepts developed within the Abhidharma tradition.

**Content**

This course unit begins with a review, in historical perspective, of the division of Buddhism into various pre-Mahayana sects around the time of the second Buddhist Council. This will be followed
by a detailed discussion of the following major controversial doctrines: *sarvamastivāda, pudgalavāda, karma* theories of *avijñapti, avipraṇāsa* and *bīja*, theories of cognition, Buddhhalogical theories of the Mahāsāṅghika, the spiritual status of the arahant, and theory of *antarābhava*.

**Method of Teaching**
Lectures, discussions and assignments

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
The student is able to explain the doctrinal views developed among the sectarian Buddhist schools.

**Recommended References**

**Course Code: ME 06**
**Course Title: Origins of Mahayana and the Earliest Mahayana Sutras**
**Aim**
Studying the origins and development of Mahayana elements embedded in Nikāya Āgama Texts, through those of the pre-Mahayana schools to the distinctly Mahayana doctrines in the earliest Mahāyana Sūtras.
Content
Pre-Mahayana elements found in Nikāya and Āgama texts, pre-Mahayana schools (particularly the Mahāsaṅghika and the Vibhājyavāda), causes that led to the emergence of Mahāyana taking into account consideration contributing factors such as socio-economic conditions and doctrinal influences from outside Buddhism, earliest Mahāyāna Sūtras based on materials from both Sanskrit and Chinese Sources (especially translations in the 2nd and 3rd centuries), main doctrinal features of these texts (to facilitate the understanding of the background of pro-Mahāyana doctrines), relevant sections of texts such as the Kathāvatthu (with its commentary), the Samayabhedaopacaranacakra, and the Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā-sāstra.

Students are not required to be conversant in Sanskrit and Chinese languages, although some acquaintance with important doctrinal terms will be an advantage

Method of Teaching
Lectures, discussions and assignments

Expected Learning Outcomes
The Student is able to explain the causes that led to the emergence of Mahāyana in relation to Nikāya and Āgama texts and Pre-Mahāyana schools and Mahayana concepts in relation to Early Mahāyāna Sūtras.

Recommended References


**Course Code:** ME 07  
**Course Title:** Nāgārjuna’s Philosophy as reflected in His *Mūlamādhyamakakārikā*  
**Aim**  
Studying Nāgārjuna's Philosophy from Primary Sources.

**Content**  
Nāgārjuna is generally regarded as a Mahayanist. In India, he was claimed as the founder of the Mahayana, and in China, the patriarch of all the eight Mahayana schools. Many works (preserved mainly in Chinese translations) have been ascribed to him. Among them, some like the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-śāstra*, certainly do deal with specifically Mahayana themes, particularly the altruistic practice of the bodhisattva. Accordingly, many modern scholars continue to present him as a great Mahayana expositor. However, some recent researchers have expressed serious doubt as to the authorship of this and other such works ascribed to him. Some (e.g. A. K. Warder) have even questioned whether he can be legitimately considered a Mahayanist as such. This course aims at a careful examination of the *Mūlamādhyamakakārikā*, the work which is unanimously agreed to be genuinely authored by him, and which establishes his fundamental ‘philosophical position.’ Through a more or less chapter-by-chapter in-depth critical study of the text (along with the ancient commentaries on it), it is intended that the students will be able to clarify for themselves the true standpoint of Nāgārjuna.

**Method of Teaching**  
Lectures, discussions and assignments

**Expected Learning Outcomes**  
Student identifies works of Nāgārjuna and student can explain Nāgārjuna’s philosophical position and basic concepts and the philosophy of emptiness.

**Recommended References**  


**Course Code:** ME 09  
**Course Title:** Buddhist Vinaya and the Monastic Organization  
**Aim**
To examine how the earliest community of anchoretic monks, known as munis, gradually paved the way for the emergence of a highly organized monastic order with a code of Vinaya rules.

Content
The practice of brahmacariya and the ideal of muni life, the monk and the graduated spiritual course: Silasamvara and Patimokkhasamvara; Sikkhâ and Sikkhâ-pada, ecclesiastical rules of the Vinaya pitaka and the recital of patimokkha, the nature and objectives of the precepts included in the Khandhakas; ecclesiastical offences and disputes; donation of monasteries and monastic residences; the structure and the administration of the monastery; evolution of monastic life and the attendant duties and responsibilities; monastic property, its use and management; divergent views as to the aim and objectives of the monastic organization; khuddānukhuddaka precepts and the problem of their interpretation.

Method of Teaching
Lectures, discussions and assignments

Expected learning Outcomes
The Student is able to explain the evolution of the earliest community of monks and the parallel development of the monastic code.

Recommended References:


**Course Code: ME 16**

**Course Title:** The Chinese Tripitaka: A Historical and Analytical Study

**Aim**

Inculcating Comprehensive Understanding of Chinese Buddhist Literature

**Content**

The introduction of Buddhism into China, nature of the texts translated at the early Chinese Buddhist literature, translation process related methods and issues, and new additions to the Buddhist literature, comparative reading of Pali Nikayas with Chinese Agama texts paying attention to both textual and conceptual comparison; and finally, the Vinaya and Abhidhamma texts extant in Chinese.

**Method of Teaching**

Lectures, discussions and assignments

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

The students will be able to engage in comparative readings between Pali and Chinese Buddhist Texts

**Recommended References**

Course Code: ME 21
Course Title: Buddhist Aesthetic Concepts: Analysis and Evaluation

Aim
To examine the Buddhist teachings and observation on beauty

Contents
As a religio-philosophical system embracing the multiplex dimensions of human life, Buddhism's teachings and observations on beauty and its appreciation will constitute the main body of this study. It will take into consideration the following aspects in order to identify the Buddhist aesthetic concepts: the Buddhist teaching on compassionate kindness and love for all forms of life; art and artistic creativity in Buddhist perspectives; poetry (kāvyo); analysis and appreciation; the
udāna form of poetry; the early Buddhist literature and the concept of aucitya and anaucitya; Buddhist observations on rasa, hāsa, pīti, pamoda and, kāma; the concept of sukha in Buddhist perspectives; how the Buddha and the earliest disciples saw the mundane beauty of life and nature; the supra-mundane experience and the highest level of harmony. This study will be concluded with an evaluation of the Buddhist contributions in the field of painting, sculpture, iconography, architecture and other forms of artistic creation, together with an examination of their theoretical background.

**Methods of Teaching**
Lectures and class discussion

**Method of Evaluation**
Essay assignments and in-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
The students will be able to admire, appreciate and express beauty in accordance with Buddhist teachings

**Recommended References**


**Course code: ME 22**

**Course Title: Buddhist Art and Architecture - I (Indian subcontinent)**

**Aim**
A descriptive knowledge of monastic art and architecture in Indian subcontinent

Content
Evidence of Buddhist architecture from the Pali Canon; the monastic residence and its gradual evolution from early timber structures to buildings of a permanent nature; the rock-cut sanctuaries and their functions as residences and places of worship; Stupa and its evolution as symbol of religious worship; stupa-decorations as a form of mass media; the an iconic representation of the Buddha and the subsequent introduction of the Buddha image as an object of worship; the different schools of Buddhist iconography and the areas of their origin; the development of the Bodhisattva image and other Buddhist deities; Buddhist sculpture and painting in the Gupta era; the Gandhara school of Buddhist art; the Greek and Iranian influences on its sculpture and iconography; the part it played in the diffusion of Buddhist art in Central and East Asia; Buddhist art and architecture in South India with special reference to Amaravati, Nagarjunikonda and Jaggyyapeta; the last phase of Buddhist art under the Pala and Sena dynasties; refinements of its sculpture; the heavy dependence of Tantrayana on sculpture; the development of the śakti cult and its influence on Buddhist iconography.

Method of Teaching
Lectures and class discussion

Method of Evaluation
Essay, assignments and in-class participation

Expected Learning Outcomes
The student is able to describe the origins of Buddhist monastic art and architecture in Indian Subcontinent, socio-economic influences on ancient monastic art and architecture, and characteristics of relevant art works and architectural constructions.

Recommended References:


Course Code: ME 23
Course Title: Buddhist Art and Architecture - II (Sri Lanka)

Aim
A descriptive knowledge of monastic art and architecture in ancient Sri Lanka

Content
The beginnings and growth of monastic architecture in ancient Sri Lanka, its basic structure and socio-religious significance; the techniques of construction and its evolution into a specific Sinhala architecture; a survey and assessment of ecclesiastical buildings such as parivenas, padhāna-ghara, uposathagharas and other appurtenant buildings; their architectural features; the origin and development of the stūpa with reference to the different techniques and styles, and its deviation from Indian proto types; Buddhist iconography with reference to the styles and techniques peculiar to Sri Lanka; the symbolic representations; the adaptation of non-Buddhist deities and their representation in iconography; the utilization of religious symbols and the representation of flora and fauna in sculpture on pillars, moonstones and guard stones; Buddhist paintings: the Local
techniques and the backgrounds; the fresco and tempera styles; the use of Buddhist legends and local traditions in paintings; the social and religious relevance of these paintings and their success as a form of mass media.

**Method of Teaching**
Lectures, discussions, assignments and field Studies

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
The student is able to describe the origins of Buddhist monastic art and architecture in Sri Lanka, socio-economic influences on ancient monastic art and architecture and characteristics of relevant art works and architectural constructions.

**Recommended References**


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**Course Code: ME 26**

**Course Title: Buddhist Psychotherapy**

**Aim**
A descriptive knowledge of Buddhist analysis of mind and Buddhist approach to physical and mental health

**Content**
Buddhist concept of the individual and the related world with reference to the analyses of aggregates, elements, faculties, senses, and four great elements, analysis of personality types based on internal and external facts, causes and conditions that influence the personal behavior with reference to the teaching of dependent co-origination; analysis of *citta*, *mano*, *viññāna* and the process of mental behavior, analysis of psycho-physical problems, behavioral, spiritual and herbal treatments recommended for psycho-physical problems.

**Method of Teaching**
Lectures, discussions, assignments and field studies

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
Student describes the usefulness of Buddhist teachings for physical and mental health.
Recommend References


Course Code: ME 27

Course Title: Buddhist Social Dimension

Aim
A comprehensive and critical analysis of the selected topics pertaining to the Buddhist social Philosophy

Content
The Social and Political background of Buddhism as reflected in the Buddhist discourses, Buddhist stratification of society, Buddhist theory of state, Social significance of Buddhist path, five precepts and their social application, Buddhist attitude towards the functional problems of language, Buddhist way of conflict resolution, the importance attached to the teaching and learning in Buddhism, ethnic identity, Buddhist attitude towards fine arts, position of woman in Buddhism, position of rites and rituals in Buddhism, the Buddhist concept of development, the Buddhist norms on environmental impact assessment, Buddhism and sociological interpretation of Buddhism. In this study, pride of place is given to the data available in the discourses of the
suttapiṭaka in the Pāli canon to show all pervasive present day social relevance of Buddha's teachings.

**Method of Teaching**

Lectures, discussions and assignments

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

Student gains ability to critically and comprehensively explain topics of Buddhist social philosophy with reference to piṭaka sources and understands their relevance to present day society.

**Recommended References**


**Course Code: ME 33**

**Course Title: Buddhist Economic Philosophy**

**Aim**

To analyze the fundamental Buddhist teachings with a view to discovering possible solutions for the contemporary problems in the sphere of the world economy.
Content
This course highlights the fundamental Buddhist teachings related to what may be termed a Buddhist perspective of economics. The analysis is based on the Pali suttas and vinaya texts. A comparison will be made between the pertinent Buddhist teachings and the existing economic models and theories, with a view to discovering possible solutions, inspired by the Buddhist teachings, for the contemporary problems in the sphere of economics in the world. The topics discussed in this course include: the economic social structure in India during the Buddha’s time which had paved the way for the emergence of Buddhism; the influence of Buddhist thinking on economy in India, especially during the period of King Asoka as well as on the Sri Lankan economy in the subsequent era; etc. A central emphasis of the course is on the necessity for the adjustment and orientation of the economy of both the individual and the state in relation to the Buddhist path of liberation from the existential unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) of humanity.

Method of Teaching
Lectures, discussions and assignments

Method of Evaluation
In-class participation
Two Assignments
Final Year Examination

Expected Learning Outcomes
The student gains the ability to explain the concepts of Buddhist economic philosophy and its applicability to provide possible solutions for the contemporary problems in the world economy.

Recommended for Reference


Course Code: ME 35
Course Title: Theravada Tradition: A Historical and Doctrinal Study

Aim
Tracing the historical data adequately, studying profoundly the Theravada as a tradition of interpretation of the teachings of the Buddha

Content
Theravada basically refers to the tradition of the Sangha and traces its history to the very beginning of Sāsana during the time of the Buddha. While it developed as a distinct monastic tradition first in Sri Lanka and subsequently in countries such as Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, it also developed a line of interpretation of the dhamma and the Vinaya with its own flavour. The purpose of this course unit is while paying due attention to historical aspects, to make an in-depth study of Theravada as a tradition of interpretation of the dhamma and the Vinaya. The historical beginning of Theravada is studied with special emphasis on whether there is a distinction between early Buddhism and Theravada, the councils, traditionality, emphasis on the Vinaya, attitude toward bhikkhuni-sāsana etc.

Method of Teaching
Lectures, Discussions and Assignments

Expected Learning Outcomes
The student describes the identity of Theravada as a Buddhist tradition of interpretation of Dhamma and Vinaya.

Recommended for Reference


**Course Code:** ME 39  
**Course Title:** Basic Pali, Research Methodology and Logical Reasoning (Compulsory)  

**Aim**  
To improve the ability of students to read and understand mainly the text in Pali, which are relevant to Buddhist studies and to enhance the understanding of research methodology and Buddhist logical reasoning.

**Content**  
01. Basic Pāli  
   i. Pāli alphabet  
   ii. Declension and conjugation (nouns and verbs)  
   iii. Sandhi – Euphonic Combination, Indeclinables (Nipāta, Upasagga)  
   iv. Compounds (Samāsa), Secondary Derivatives (Taddhita), Participial (Kitaka)  
   v. Understanding Pali passages from unspecified texts  
   vi. Recommended readings – Khuddakapāṭha, Dhammapada (Selected Parts)  
   vii. A general knowledge of the above aspects is expected.

02. Research Methodology  
   i. Basic characteristics of a research  
   ii. Preparing a research proposal  
   iii. Knowledge, classification of knowledge, Buddhist attitude towards knowledge and scientific knowledge  
   iv. Types of research  
   v. Preparing data and information  
   vi. Research methods of social sciences  
   vii. Systems of referencing  
   viii. Writing theses and research papers  
   ix. Research ethics
03. Logical Reasoning
   i. Propositions
   ii. Limbs of logical statements
   iii. Causes and fallacies
   iv. Criteria of debates
   v. Study of doctrinal discussions available in the texts such as the *Milindapañha*, the *Kathāvatthu*, the *Nettipakaraṇa* and the *Peṭakopadasa*

Method of Teaching
Lectures, discussions and assignments

Expected Learning Outcomes
The student reads and understands passages of relevant primary sources especially in Pāli, shows general knowledge of Buddhist Literature in Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan and demonstrates knowledge of research methods and critical approach.

Recommended References


Course Code: ME 40

Course Title: Buddhist Philosophy of Education and Communication

Aim
To study the concept of Education as Reflected in Buddhist literature with a focus on Western Principles of Education.

Content
1. Buddhist concept of education, aims and objectives of Buddhist education, the definition of Buddhist concept of education; the Buddhist concept of human mind, the Buddhist theory of human Motivation; human mind, its scope, its nature and the ways of overcoming mental obsessions and realization of ultimate goal (arahantatā); the comparison of the Buddhist concept of being with those of Western attitudes and the concept of liberation (vimutti); mental culture (bhāvanā) and the total development of human being; the importance of cognitive (pariyatti), affective (paṭipatti), and comprehension (paṭivedha), in the light of early Buddhist Sources.

2. The Buddhist concept of knowledge (vijjā), conduct (caraṇa) and psychomotor skills (kosalla); the Buddhist theory of communication and methods of teaching; the Buddhist Theory of Motivation and its relevance to modern class-room situations, human character traits (carita) and
importance of attention (cittekaggatā) in teaching learning situations; different methods of teaching and Buddhist approach to concept formation.

3. The Buddhist approach to moral educational, definition of Buddhist morality; the Noble Eight-Fold Path and moral education, place of meditation in mental culture; nature of teacher-pupil relationship reflected in early Buddhist texts and its impacts on moral education.

**Method of Teaching**
Lectures, discussions and assignments

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
Students identify the Buddhist approach to education and are able to explain elements of education in Buddhist literature comparing them with western theories of education.

**Recommended References**


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**Course Code:** ME 52

**Course Title:** History of Indian Buddhism: From its Origins to the Emergence of Mahāyāna

**Aim**
To have an objective understanding of the development of any Buddhist tradition presupposes a proper historical perspective.

**Content**
The course is designed to provide students with a foundational and general, but not superficial, survey of Indian Buddhism from a historical perspective highlighting all the important developments up to the emergence of Mahāyāna. The main themes for the course include: the origins of Buddhism and the Indian Background; process of the compilation of the Canon; the classification of the Buddha's teachings; the Councils; the popularization of Buddhism; the emergence and development of the major Buddhist sects; King Asoka and his contribution to the Buddhist cause; spread of Buddhism outside India; rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and other related topics.

It is expected that students taking this course will have acquired sufficient knowledge of the major historical development as a solid foundation for the further understanding of the contents of other courses offered by the programme, which deal in depth with specific historical and doctrinal issues in the various Buddhist traditions.

**Methods of Teaching**
Lectures and class discussion

**Method of Evaluation**
Essay assignments
Final Written Examinations
In-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. gain a foundational knowledge of the history of Indian Buddhism up to the emergence of the Mahayana movement;

2. critically examine different views and theories related to the history of Buddhism in India;

3. apply the knowledge derived from this foundational course to examine and appreciate the subsequent developments of Buddhism in Indian and beyond.

**Recommended for References**

Course Code: ME 54

Course Title: Mahāyāna Buddhism: A Doctrinal Survey

Aim
To provide a foundational knowledge of Mahāyāna Buddhism for students with no or little background in Buddhist Studies

Content
This is a foundation course. At the end of the course, students are expected to have acquired sufficient fundamental knowledge on the Mahāyāna tradition, to be able to better understand and appreciate the other more specialized courses on the various specific historical and doctrinal aspects within the vast tradition of the Mahāyāna, and indeed within the whole spectrum of the courses offered by PGIPBS. In keeping with this aim, its contents are mainly focused on the historical and doctrinal development in early Indian Buddhism - the source for all later development. The course begins with a survey on the contemporary theories of the origins of the Mahayana, and proceeds to examine the conception and formulation of the Bodhisattva Ideal in the earliest extant Mahāyāna texts, such as the Aṣṭa-sāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā, Ugra-paripṛcchā, etc. (including those preserved in Chinese translation). It further examines the question of the Primitive Prajñāpāramitā, the emptiness doctrine (śūnyatā) expounded by Nāgārjuna, the doctrines of the early Yogācāra and tathāgatagarbha thoughts. Other fundamental Mahāyāna doctrines examined include the trikāya, the six pāramitās, and the ten-stage progression
(daśabhūmi). Some important scriptures are also selected for discussion, including the Diamond-cutter sutra, the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa, and the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka.

**Methods of Teaching**

Lectures and class discussions

**Method of Evaluation**

Essay Assignments

In-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, the students will be able to:

1. gain an informed and objective historical perspective of the doctrinal development of the early Mahāyāna tradition, which is necessary for a proper comprehension and appreciation of the subsequent development of later Mahāyāna doctrines;

2. demonstrate the ability to critically examine the fundamental doctrines of Indian Mahāyāna;

3. critically appraise traditional and modern scholars' accounts on doctrinal and historical issues related to Buddhism in general and Mahāyāna in particular;

4. apply their knowledge of the ethical and spiritual teachings of Mahāyāna - such as compassion, wisdom, the perfection practices (pāramitās), etc - in their living, and thereby adding a spiritual dimension to their individual existences.

**Recommended References**


**Course Code: ME 56**

**Course Title: The Pāli Commentarial Literature**

**Aim**

To provide critical knowledge of different aspects of Pali commentaries

**Content**

The course is designed to critically examine and analyze different aspects of the Pāli commentaries. The course consists broadly of the following two areas: i. A textual examination of the commentaries; ii. An examination of the commentaries contents.

Under the first category the following areas of study will be examined: the sources of the present Pāli Aṭṭhakathā known collectively as the *Sīhala-aṭṭhakathā*; the date of the composition of *Sīhala-aṭṭhakathā* and the sequence of their translation into Pāli after the fifth century A.C.; the commentators, Buddhaghosa, Dhammapāla, etc., their lives and works; etc.

The second category will include individual concepts as reflected in the commentaries, different interpretations between Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla, doctrinal and other differences between the Mahāvihāra and Abhayagiri fraternities, value of the Pāli commentaries as source-material for the Study of Buddhism etc.
Methods of Teaching
Lectures and class discussions

Method of Evaluation
Essay assignments
In-class participation

Expected Learning Outcomes
At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. acquire comprehensive information relating to the development of Pāli commentarial literature;
2. understand the historical development and the main aspects of the Śīhala sources;
3. comprehend the significance and implications of the Pāli commentaries as a source for the study of the development of Buddhist thoughts;
4. apply the knowledge gained from reading the commentarial texts to further textual and doctrinal studies at a higher level.

Recommended References
Maung Tin, Pe. (1976). The Expositor (Atthasālīni), London: PTS.
Masefield, Peter. (1994). The Udāna Commentary (Udānaṭṭhakathā), London: PTS.
Course Code: ME 57

Course Title: The Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal in Theravada Buddhism

Aim
To provide the students with knowledge of historical perspective of the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal from the earliest Canonical texts to the exegetical literature of Theravada Buddhism

Content
This course is designed to examine from a historical perspective the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal from the earliest Canonical texts to the exegetical literature of Theravada Buddhism. For this, the main topics for examination will include: the Buddha’s biography; beginnings of his apotheosis; ‘great man’ (mahāpurisa); ‘great compassion’ (mahākarunā); ‘four confidences’ (catu-vesārajja); ‘omniscient knowledg’ (sabbaññuta-ñāna); ‘spiritual power’ and ‘physical power’; ‘80 minor bodily marks’ (asītiyānuvyāñjana); and ‘18 qualities of the Buddha’ (atthārasabuddhadhamma). The course will also examine the Bodhisatta Ideal, an integral part of the Buddha-concept in Buddhism, and the topics for discussion will include the ‘perfections’ (pāramitā), ‘aspirations’ (abhinīhāra), ‘18 impossible states of birth for a bodhisatta’, and others.

Methods of Teaching
Lectures and class discussions

Method of Evaluation
Essay assignments
In-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate:

1. acquire a clear understanding of the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal as developed in Theravada Buddhism;
2. comprehend clearly the differences of the Buddha concept among various Buddhist traditions;
3. gain a basic knowledge of the development of the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta doctrine in the Pali commentarial literature.

**Recommended References**


Course Code: ME 60

Course Title: Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma: Doctrines and Controversies

Aim
To enable students to understand basic knowledge of Abhidharma in general and doctrinal and controversial teachings in Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma

Content
The period of the Abhidharma represents the historical stage when Buddhist "philosophy" so-called truly began. A foundational knowledge of the Abhidharma doctrines will enable the students to acquire an integrated perspective of the Buddhist development as a whole: On the one hand, equipped with this knowledge which serves as a commentarial guide, they will be in a better position to comprehend the Buddhist tradition's conceptions of the sūtra teachings in the preceding stage. On the other hand, they will be able to meaningfully relate the subsequent Mahāyāna development to the Abhidharma development, thereby gaining a deeper insight of the teachings of the former.

This course has as its scope the Abhidharma development in the northern tradition. It focuses primarily on the doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣikas and the Dārśāntika-Sautrāntikas. While detailing the Abhidharma controversies, the relevant doctrines of the Mahāsāṅghikas and Vātsīputrīya-Sāṃmitiyas, etc., will also be discussed. The early part of the course will outline the historical and doctrinal background necessary for understanding the controversial doctrines to be examined in detail subsequently. The bulk of the course that follows will focus on selected controversial doctrines of importance, such as the tri-temporal existence of all dharma-s (sarvāsītta), simultaneous causality, the ontological status of the cittaviprayuktasanskāra-s, the avijñapti and the unconditioned dharma-s, etc. The discussion on these controversies will mainly be based on the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, supplemented with commentarial material from the Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā, the Nyāyānusāra of Saṅghabhadra, the Abhidharmadīpa with Vibhāṣā-prabhāvrtti, and the Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośa-Vyākhyā of Yaśomitra. By studying these controversies, the students will gain a deeper insight into the doctrinal and spiritual concerns
of the ancient masters in this period, and how these concerns fervently stimulated progressive articulation and development of Buddhist thoughts.

**Method of Teaching**
Lectures and class discussions

**Method of Evaluation**
Essay assignments
In-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. demonstrate proper understanding of the intellectual roles and doctrinal contribution of the Abhidharmika masters of the different affiliations;

2. critically examine the specific Buddhist doctrines in the Abhidharma literature;

3. show deeper insights into the doctrinal and spiritual concerns of the ancient masters in this period, and how these concerns fervently stimulated progressive articulation and development of Buddhist thoughts.

**Recommended References**


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**Course Code: ME61**

**Course Title: Methods of Spiritual Praxis in the Sarvāstivāda Tradition**

**Aim**

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the Sarvāstivādin doctrines and practices pertaining to spiritual praxis

**Content**

The Sarvāstivāda was undoubtedly the most influential school for the whole development of the northern Buddhist tradition, including the Mahāyāna. The school leaves behind a legacy of extremely important textual material, mainly preserved in Classical Chinese, which is indispensable for a proper understanding and appreciation of, among other things, the Buddhist tradition of spiritual praxis. This course examines the Sarvāstivādin doctrines and practices pertaining to spiritual praxis, as expounded in the gigantic *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya*. Where appropriate, corresponding or parallel textual material from the Theravāda and Yogācāra tradition will also be discussed from a comparative perspective. No prior acquaintance of the doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda or Classical Chinese is assumed, as all the selected textual expositions for discussion will be translated into English for the students.

**Methods of Teaching**

Lectures and class discussions
Method of Evaluation
Essay assignments
In-class participation

Learning Outcomes
At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. demonstrate a clear and comprehensive understanding of the meditative system of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma tradition;

2. show a proper perspective of the development of the doctrines and practices of the whole of the Buddhist tradition which is traceable to the broad Sarvāstivāda lineage;

3. better appreciate the diverse forms of meditative praxis transmitted within the various Buddhists schools.

4. enrich, basing on the knowledge derived from this course, the spiritual dimension of his individual existence.

Recommended References


阿毗達磨大毘婆沙論 (Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā) Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 27, no. 1545.

阿毗達磨俱舍論 (Abhidharmakohṣa) Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 29, no. 1558.

Course Code: ME62

Course Title: The Doctrine of Śūnyatā (Emptiness): Prajñāpāramitā Scriptures and Early Madhyamika

Aim

To educate students of the doctrine of emptiness as expounded in the Prajñāpāramitā sutras and the Early Mādhyamika school

Content

This course introduces the doctrine of emptiness as expounded in the Prajñāpāramitā sutras and the Early Mādhyamika school. It highlights the historical fact that this doctrine was undoubtedly inspired by the early Buddhist teachings as preserved in the Pāli suttas and Chinese āgamas. Nāgārjuna, generally regarded as the effective "founder" of the Mādhyamika school, certainly declares that his śūnyatā doctrine is none other than the Buddha's teaching of Conditioned Co-arising (*pratītya-samutpāda*). The course will begin by examining the Śūnyatā doctrine in the *Āṣṭasāhasrika Prajñāpāramitā*, demonstrating that, just as the early Buddhist teachings, the early portion of this text—constituting the stratum of “primitive prajñāpāramitā teaching” as well as the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, in fact, consistently emphasizes the doctrine of non-Self (*nairatmya*) and non-attachment, rather than the term śūnyatā. This will be followed by a discussion on the development of this doctrine in the *Pañcavimsati-sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* where the term śūnyatā came to be increasingly emphasized and distinctively elaborated. In
conjunction with the discussion of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, important stanzas from Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārika* will also be critically examined.

**Methods of Teaching**

Lectures and class discussions

**Method of Evaluation**

- Essay assignments
- In-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate:

1. a comprehensive understanding of the doctrine of *sūnyatā* in the early *Prajñāpāramitā* texts and Nāgārjunas exposition;

2. gain a proper historical perspective of the development of the *sūnyatā* doctrine from the Buddha's teaching of *pratītya-samutpāda* in the discourses of Early Buddhism;

3. distinguish the subsequent development of the *sūnyatā* doctrine in the relatively later *prajñāpāramitā* textual materials from its earliest or primitive form in the earliest period (as discernible from the earliest portion of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*).

**Recommended References**


Course Code: ME 63

Course Title: Doctrines of Early Indian Yogācāra

Aim
To introduce students to the doctrinal development of Indian Yogācāra up to the period of Dharmapāla.

Content
This course introduces the students to the doctrinal development of Indian Yogācāra up to the period of Dharmapāla. The survey begins with a brief survey of the doctrinal contribution from the Sarvāstivādins in the milieu of the Abhidharma-mahāvibhāsā, particularly the early yogācāras. It will then proceed to examine the doctrines in the Basic Section (本地分) (maulī bhūmi) of the Yogācāra-bhūmi, which on the whole constitutes the earliest stratum of the textual sources of the Yogācāra as a Mahāyāna school. Particular emphases are laid here on its doctrines of the two intrinsic natures, prajñaptivāda-svabhāva and nirabhilāpya-svabhāva, and its epistemological doctrines - both representing a realistic standpoint characteristic of this Section. This will be followed by a study of the relatively more developed doctrines in the texts of the Maitreya-Asaṅga complex and of Vasubandu, et al., including the system of eight consciousnesses (particularly the ālaya-vijñāna doctrine), the Threefold Intrinsic Nature, the Threefold Absence of Intrinsic Natures, vijñaptimātratā and āśrayaparāvrtti. The course will end with a discussion on the developed doctrines in Xuanzang's Vijñaptimātrā-siddhi (成唯識論).
Methods of Teaching
Lectures and class discussions

Method of Evaluation
Essay assignments
In-class participation

Expected Learning Outcomes
At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate:

1. adequate understanding of the historical background of the origins and development of the Indian Yogācāra tradition;

2. critically analyze the doctrinal signification of the major Indian Yogācāra teachings developed in the various texts pertaining to the different historical strata;

3. understand and apply the Yogācāra teachings related to spiritual praxis in their own lives.

Recommended References
De La Vallée Poussin. (1928-1948). *Viñaptimātrasiddhi. La Siddhi de Hiuan-tsang*.
Wei Tat. (1973). Ch'eng Wei-shih Lum The Doctrine of Mere-consciousness by Tripitaka Master Hsuan Tsang,

Course Code: ME 64
Course Title: History of Chinese Buddhism

Aim
To provide knowledge of history of Chinese Buddhism and its major characteristics

Content
This course examines the major events and thoughts in the history of Chinese Buddhism with a particular emphasis on the establishment of Chinese Buddhist Schools. A major aim is to show how Buddhism came to be gradually and successfully incorporated into and became one of the three pillars of Chinese thought and culture. The important Chinese Buddhist masters will also be examined against their historical background to show their contribution to the development of Chinese Buddhism.

It is expected that, at the end of the course, students will have acquired sufficient familiarity with the basic historical events, major Buddhist schools of thoughts and important personages together with their contribution to the development of Chinese Buddhism.

Methods of Teaching
Lectures and class discussion

Method of Evaluation
Essay assignments and in-class participation

Expected Learning Outcomes
At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate:
1. the ability to critically examine historical issues related to Chinese Buddhist tradition from an informed objective;

2. critically appraise the doctrinal issues in the various Chinese Buddhist schools;

3. develop an appreciation of the Chinese Buddhist tradition and their influence and impact to Chinese culture.

**Recommended for References**


*Journal of Chinese Philosophy*. Cheng, Chung-Ying (Editor.). Published by the University of Hawaii.

**Course Code: ME 65**

**Course Title: Japanese Buddhism: History and Doctrines**

**Aim**

To educate students on the history, teachings, practice, and institutional realities of Japanese Buddhism.

**Content**

This course introduces students to the history, teachings, practice, and institutional realities of Japanese Buddhism. The course focuses especially on the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, Prince Shotoku’s contribution to its spread, the Taika Reforms, the Nara Buddhism, its formation and further development in the Heian and Kamakura periods, its transformation in the Edo period, its encounter with modernity in the Meiji period, and recent developments within Japanese Buddhism since the end of World War II. The founders of different schools of Buddhist thought such as Saicho, Kukai, Honen, Shinran, Eisai, Dogen, Nichiren and others together with their main teachings are also examined. The course will further examine the Buddhist impact upon the ways of thinking of the Japanese people with a view to understanding Japan and her culture.

**Methods of Teaching**

Lectures and class discussions

**Method of Evaluation**

Essay assignments and in-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate:
1. a comprehensive understanding of the teachings and history of Japanese Buddhism;
2. appreciate the legacies of the ancient Japanese Buddhist masters and the traditions to which they belonged;
3. apply understanding of the uniqueness and richness of the Japanese Buddhist culture to a study of human civilization from a comparative perspective.

**Recommended References**


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**Course Code: ME 66**

**Course Title: Tibetan Buddhism: History and Doctrines**

**Aim**

To provide historical, doctrinal and sociological dimensions of Tibetan Buddhism

**Content**

This course aims at providing historical, doctrinal and sociological dimensions of Tibetan Buddhism. It mainly consists of the following topics: the historical context and events of the transmission of Buddhism to Tibet; the various Buddhist traditions of Tibet; their history and institution of the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lama; Tibetan sacred art and symbolism and the mysticism and religious experience. Where appropriate, some aspects of the meditative practices of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition will be discussed.

**Methods of Teaching**

Lectures and class discussion

**Method of Evaluation**

Essay assignments and in-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate:

1. a comprehensive understanding of the historical, doctrinal and sociological dimensions of Tibetan Buddhism;

2. acquire a basic knowledge of the system of spiritual praxis of the Tibetan tradition;
3. an appreciation of the rich religious and cultural heritage of the Tibetan people.

**Recommended for References**


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**Course Code: ME 67**

**Course Title: Readings in Pali Suttas**

This course consists of two parts, each equivalent to a single-semester course unit:

ME 67 Readings in Pali Suttas I: Grammatical Foundation (30 lecture hours);

ME 67 Readings in Pali Suttas II: Readings of Selected Sutta Passages (30 lecture hours).

Unless specially exempted, the intending student for ME 67 II must have acquired a pass in ME 67 I as the prerequisite.

**Aim**

To familiarize students with Pali idioms and systematically provide them with an elementary grammatical foundation for reading the Pali-suttas.

**Content**

This is an introductory course meant for the students who have no knowledge of the Pali language. The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with Pali idioms and systematically provide them with an elementary grammatical foundation for reading the Pali-suttas. It is expected that, at the end of the course, the students will be able to read the Pali discourses at least with the help...
of a good dictionary. The course is divided into two parts. In the first part, basic grammar is taught along with Pali exercises.

The contents of this grammatical part include the following: Pali phonetics, parts of speech, different nouns and their declension, different verbs and their conjugation, participles and their function, absolutes, sandhi, Syntax and classification of sentences. The second part is mainly devoted to the understanding and translating of selected Pali-suttas and to progressively build up sufficient vocabularies for the purpose of reading the Pali-suttas.

**Methods of Teaching**
Lectures and class discussion

**Method of Evaluation**
Mid-term Test, final written examinations and in-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**
At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. critically analyze the sentence patterns and read the Pali sentences correctly;

2. demonstrate mastery of the Pali language and comprehend the content of the prescribed texts;

3. demonstrate the ability to understand the Buddhist teachings as shown in selected Pali passages;

4. begin to access the Pali original sources for research involving textual studies.

**Recommended References**


Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka (online resources).
Course Code: ME68

Course Title: Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit Texts

This course consists of two parts, each equivalent to a single-semester course unit:

ME 68 Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit Texts I: Grammatical Foundation (30 lecture hours);
ME 68 Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit Texts II: Readings of Selected Buddhist Sanskrit Texts (30 lecture hours).

Unless specially exempted, the intending student for ME 68 II must have acquired a pass in ME 68 I as the prerequisite.

Aim
To familiarize students with Sanskrit texts and systematically provide them with an elementary grammatical foundation for reading the primary Sanskrit texts

Content
The design of this course is guided by the reasonable assumption that the most interesting and rewarding way to learn Classical Sanskrit as a beginner is to actually read some simple Sanskrit texts that interest him, under the guidance of a teacher. Classical Buddhist Sanskrit texts have their own styles, idiomatic expressions and technical terminologies with which the student must first be familiarized. As the course proceeds, the student is being gradually and systematically introduced to both Buddhist textual materials, and elementary grammar on the other.

For pedagogical reasons, all vocabularies, examples, and passages for the exercises in each lesson (except, understandably, the first one or two) are selected from the Prajñāpāramitā texts, particularly the Aṣṭasāhasrikā, to ensure linguistic and contextual homogeneity as much as possible. The selection is made on the basis of (i) simplicity in terms of grammatical structure and doctrinal meaning, and (ii) the existence of corresponding Chinese versions (particularly those translated by Xuan Zang and Kumārajiva). Occasionally, however, the need arises to select a few sentences from other Buddhist sources (such as the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya). Hybrid Sanskrit passages will be excluded. It can be an advantage if the student already has some familiarity with
elementary Sanskrit grammar. However, neither familiarity with Buddhist scriptures and Classical Chinese nor knowledge of Sanskrit is an absolute prerequisite of this course.

**Method of Teaching**

Lectures and class discussion

**Method of Evaluation**

Mid-term Test, final written examinations, and in-class participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. demonstrate adequate proficiency in the Sanskrit grammar for the purpose of textual analysis;
2. read and understand Classical Buddhist Sanskrit texts with the help, where necessary, of a Sanskrit dictionary;
3. properly comprehend the meaning of fundamental Sanskrit Buddhist terminologies and idiomatical expressions - especially those in the *Prañāpāramitā* texts;
4. begin postgraduate research studies involving textual analysis of Buddhist Sanskrit sources.

**Recommended References**


Course Code: ME 69
Course Title: Readings in Buddhist Tibetan Texts

Aim
To enable students to read and understand basics of Tibetan texts

Content
This is an introductory course on learning how to read Tibetan Buddhist texts. It does not presuppose any prior knowledge of literary Tibetan. The course is divided in two major parts. In the first part, students learn to read and write Tibetan, while acquiring a practical understanding of the grammar and the ability to translate sentences and short passages mainly from Tibetan to English, and also from English to Tibetan. In the second part, students are trained to translate texts and selected passages from various genres of Tibetan Buddhist literature, while learning additional grammar and specialized Buddhist terms in their doctrinal contexts. At the end of this course, the students are expected to be able to read the less complicated Tibetan Buddhist scriptural passages at least with the help of a good dictionary.

Method of Teaching
Lectures and class discussion

Method of Evaluation
Mid-term Test, final written examinations and in-class participation

Expected Learning Outcomes
At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. read and write literary Tibetan and learn how to use Tibetan-English dictionaries;
2. learn Tibetan grammar and syntax and become familiar with Tibetan pronunciation;
3. recognize and appreciate different genres of Tibetan Buddhist literature;
4. translate Tibetan Buddhist texts into English and acquire a working level of Tibetan Buddhist vocabulary.
**Recommended References**


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**Course Code: ME70**

**Course Title: Buddhist Doctrine: Modern Philosophical Perspectives**

**Aim**

To provide critical knowledge on gradual developments of the Buddhist thought in modern era to examine how Buddhist teachings developed as a Philosophical thought through ages and how those doctrines have been interpreted in terms of modern western philosophy.

**Content**

This is a course on Buddhist Philosophy. It aims at training students to acquire philosophical perspectives on Buddhist doctrines. The course begins by considering the nature of philosophy, whether and how Buddhism is a philosophy. It further discusses what the pre-Buddhistic philosophies were, and how Buddha debated and advanced his own viewpoint. The course includes study of philosophical questions that arise in Buddhist moral philosophy and ethics, theory of knowledge (epistemology), doctrine of mind, ontology, and metaphysics. The Buddhist doctrines critically examined include the four Noble Truths, the Eight-Fold Noble Path, Dependent Origination, three marks of existence, *kamma* and effect, *saṃsāra*, *nirvāṇa*, and Abhidhamma. Some important later philosophical developments in Buddhist thought will also be critically examined, including the teachings of the pramāṇa school of thought. Competency to approach philosophical problems from Buddhist perspectives will be developed so that students can
meaningfully compare Buddhist philosophical views with those in the West. The latter includes existentialism, pragmatism, experientialism, psychology, psychotherapy, and analytic philosophy.

**Method of Teaching and Learning**

Lectures, discussions in class, providing written lecture notes, mentoring outside class as needed.

**Method of Evaluation**

30% for Paper One (1500 words)
60% for Paper Two (3000 words)
10% for Class Participation

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

1. Recognize the philosophical implications of Buddhist doctrine.
2. Identify distinctive Buddhist ideas in comparison and contrast with pre-Buddhist philosophies.
3. Be able to expound and critically discuss Buddhist philosophy in modern comparative perspective.

**Recommended Readings:**


