

## Course Syllabus (1/30/2018)

**Course Code:** HUMA 2911  
**Course Title:** Buddhism: Origin and Growth  
**Course Offered in:** Spring Semester 2018 (Feb. 1 – May 8, 2018)  
Tuesday/Thursday 12:00 - 13:20 (Rm 1104)  
**Course Instructor:** Eric S. NELSON (Associate Professor, HUMA)  
**Office Room Number:** 2370  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 14:00-15:00, Wednesdays 12:30-14:00; and by appointment.  
**Instructional Language:** English, no other language requirements.  
**TA:** Tung Tin WONG

### Course Description:

An examination of the historical, religious, and philosophical foundations of Buddhist traditions in South Asia and exploration of the history of Buddhism with an emphasis on its basic doctrines, interpretive strategies, and philosophies.

This course offers an introduction to canonical and non-canonical sources of South Asian Buddhist thought and practice from the discourses of the Buddha to later developments in India and Tibet. We will explore key Buddhist concepts such as dependent origination, emptiness, no-self, loving-kindness, and compassion as well as philosophical questions concerning knowledge, language, ethics, and psychology (meditation and the mind) by closely reading and interpreting texts of various traditions of Buddhism, including Theravāda, Pudgalavāda, and the two central schools of South Asian Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy (Mādhyamika and Yogācāra), in relation to their historical contexts, philosophical contents, and their significance for contemporary philosophical and social issues. In the last section of the course, we will examine in depth two depictions (the “way of the Bodhisattva” as presented by Śāntideva and the so-called “Tibetan Book of the Dead”) of the practice of the Buddhist path with respect to life, death, and afflictive states and emotions.

**Note:** Students interested in Chinese Buddhism, can attend HUMA2840: Buddhism and the Chinese Intellectual Tradition (in Chinese) this semester (TTH 10am) taught by Professor Simon Wong.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

	Course ILOs
1	Develop an introductory understanding of classical Buddhist philosophy and its motivations and argumentative, interpretive, and rhetorical strategies.
2	Learn different approaches and perspectives to philosophical issues in the context of South Asian thought and further develop one’s own philosophical perspective.
3	Improve abilities in recognizing, evaluating, and discussing ideas and arguments.

4	Cultivate skills in the critical interpretation of textual sources and in scholarly communication.
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### COURSE OUTLINE

Dates	Topics
<b>1. TH. Feb. 1</b>	<b>Introduction to the Course and to Buddhist Philosophy</b> Introduction to the course and introduction to the historical and intellectual contexts of Early Buddhism
<b>I. Self and No-Self: The Discourses of the Buddha</b>	
<b>2. T. Feb. 6</b>	<b>Introduction to the Buddhist Path</b> <i>Discourse on the Noble Quest (Ariyapariyesana Sutta)</i> 《圣求经》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read EBD 1-18</li> </ul>
<b>3. TH. Feb 8</b>	<b>The Priority of Experience</b> <i>Discourse on the Kālāma (Kālāma Sutta)</i> 《卡拉瑪》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read EBD 19-25</li> </ul>
<b>4. T. Feb 13</b>	<b>Causality and the Interdependent World</b> <i>The Greater Discourse on Cause (Mahānidāna Sutta)</i> 《大緣方便經》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read EBD 26-41</li> </ul>
<b>5. TH. Feb. 15</b>	<b>Documentary on Theravada Buddhism (tba)</b>
<b>6. T. Feb 20</b>	<b>Philosophical Psychology I: Cultivating Mindfulness</b> <i>Greater Discourses on the Foundations of Mindfulness (Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta)</i> 《大念住經》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read EBD 42-58</li> </ul>
<b>7. T. Feb 22</b>	<b>Philosophical Psychology II: Overcoming Attachment</b> <i>The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving (Mahātanhāsankhaya Sutta)</i> 《爱尽大经》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read EBD 59-72</li> </ul>
<b>8. T. Feb. 27</b>	<b>Confronting the Paradoxes of Buddhist Philosophy</b> <i>Questions of Milinda (Milinda Pañha)</i> 《彌蘭王問經》 Read <i>Questions of Milinda</i> , chapters 1-2
<b>9. TH. Mar 1</b>	Read <i>Questions of Milinda</i> , chapters 3-4
<b>10. T. Mar 6</b>	Read <i>Questions of Milinda</i> , chapter 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QUIZ ONE</b></li> </ul>

<b>II. Emptiness, the Person, and Consciousness: Mādhyamika, Pudgalavāda, and Yogācāra</b>	
<b>11. TH. March 8</b>	<p><b>Mādhyamika: The Emptiness of Emptiness and the Two Truths</b>            Nagarjuna, <i>Mūlamadhyamakakārikā</i> (<i>Fundamental Verses of the Middle Way</i>)            《中論》</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read BP 29-33</li> </ul>
<b>12. T. March 13</b>	<p><b>Yogācāra: Consciousness and the Three Natures</b>            Vasubandhu, <i>Trisvabhāvanirdeśa</i> (<i>Treatise on the Three Natures</i>) 《三自性釋論》</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read BP 35-45</li> </ul>
<b>13. TH. Mar 15</b>	<p><b>Pudgalavāda: The Buddhist Debate over Personhood I</b>            Pudgalavāda (補特伽羅論者) Doctrines of the Person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read BP 275-285</li> </ul>
<b>14. T. Mar 20</b>	<p><b>Yogācāra: The Buddhist Debate over Personhood II</b>            Vasubandhu's critique of the Pudgalavāda theory of persons and his critique of the concept of the soul from the <i>Abhidharmakośa</i> 《阿毘達磨俱舍論》</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read BP 286-308</li> </ul>
<b>15. TH. Mar 22</b>	<p><b>The Question of Consciousness: A Mādhyamika Response to Yogācāra</b>            Candrakīrti, <i>Madhyamakāvatāra</i> 6.86–97 《入中論》: A Madhyamaka Critique of Vijñānavāda Views of Consciousness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read BP 309-319</li> </ul>
<b>Sunday, March 25 3 – 5 pm</b>	<p><b>Additional lecture (not required): Professor Eric S Nelson, Zhang Junmai and the Question of Chinese Modernity.</b>  <b>Venue: Lecture Hall, G/F, Hong Kong Museum of History.</b></p>
<b>16. T. Mar 27</b>	<p><b>Reflection and Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QUIZ TWO</b></li> </ul>
<b>III. The Ethos and Practice of the Buddhist Dharma</b>	
<b>17. TH. March 29</b>	<p><b>Documentary on meditative practice (tba)</b></p>
<b>Spring Break: No Classes on April 3 and 5</b>	
<b>18. T. Apr 10</b>	<p><b>The Way of the Bodhisattva I</b>            Śāntideva, <i>Bodhicaryāvatāra</i> 《入菩薩行論》</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read chapters 1 - 3</li> </ul>

## Course Syllabus (1/30/2018)

19. TH. Apr 12	<b>The Way of the Bodhisattva II</b> Śāntideva, <i>Bodhicaryāvatāra</i> 《入菩薩行論》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read chapters 4 - 6</li></ul>
20. T. Apr 17	<b>The Way of the Bodhisattva III</b> Śāntideva, <i>Bodhicaryāvatāra</i> 《入菩薩行論》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read chapters 5 - 9</li></ul>
21. TH. Apr 19	<b>Student Discussion Groups on Śāntideva, <i>Bodhicaryāvatāra</i></b>
22. T. Apr 24	<b>Documentary on Tibetan Buddhism (tba)</b>
23. TH. Apr 26	<b>Encountering Death I</b> <i>Bardo Thodol</i> ("The Tibetan Book of the Dead") 《西藏度亡經》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read part one</li></ul>
<b>No classes on May 1</b>	
24. TH. May 3	<b>Encountering Death II</b> <i>Bardo Thodol</i> ("The Tibetan Book of the Dead") 《西藏度亡經》 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read part two</li></ul>
<b>Recommended (not required) online lecture</b>	<b>Buddhism and Contemporary Western Thought</b> Eric S. Nelson, "Husserl and Heidegger: Phenomenology, Eurocentrism, and Buddhism": <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSR2dtYfQfQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSR2dtYfQfQ</a> <b>(Full print version:</b> chapter six of Eric S. Nelson, <i>Chinese and Buddhist Philosophy in Early Twentieth-Century German Thought</i> (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).
25. T May 8	<b>Concluding Reflections and Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>FINAL QUIZ THREE</b></li></ul>

**Note:** This syllabus can be lightly modified during the course of the semester. Please note announcements in class and on canvas.

### Course Requirements

By taking this course, students agree that they required to:

1. Not to commit any type of plagiarism. The HKUST has a no plagiarism policy.
2. Complete all assigned readings.
3. Maintain regular class attendance.
4. Participate in class discussion and discussion groups.
5. Complete all written assignments on-time.

## Course Syllabus (1/30/2018)

### Planned Assessment Tasks:

Note that the planned assessment tasks can be slightly adjusted during the semester. Final grades will be based on three in-class quizzes and participation in class discussion and in class individual and group assignments.

1 <sup>st</sup> Quiz (March 6):	20%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quiz (March 27):	20%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quiz (May 8):	20%
Attendance and Class Participation:	20%
Short in-class individual and group writing assignments	20%

### REQUIRED READINGS

1. [EBD] *Early Buddhist Discourses* (ed. John J. Holder) (Hackett, 2006; ISBN: 0872207927)
2. *Questions of Milinda* (Buddhist Publication Society, 1993; ISBN: 9552400678)
3. [PB] *Buddhist Philosophy: Essential Readings* (ed. William Edelglass; Jay L Garfield) (Oxford University Press, 2009; ISBN: 0195328175)
4. Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Oxford University Press, 2008; ISBN: 0199540438)
5. *Bardo Thodol* ("*The Tibetan Book of the Dead*") (Shambhala, 2000; ISBN: 1570627479)