

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

ART HISTORY, CLASSICS AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELI 206 Buddhism: The Noble Path / RELI 310 Buddhism: The Noble Path

20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 2 2013

Important dates

Trimester dates: 15 July to 17 November 2013

Teaching dates: 15 July to 18 October 2013

Mid-trimester break: 26 August to 8 September 2013

Study period: 21–25 October 2013

Examination/Assessment Period: 25 October to 16 November 2013

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination (aegrotats), refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat

Class times and locations

Lectures: Thursday 10:00-11:50 HM 002

Tutorials: Times and Seminar Rooms TBA.

Names and contact details

Course co-ordinator: Michael Radich 463 9477, HU 216, michael.radich@vuw.ac.nz

Tutors: TBA

Administrator: Aliko Kalliabetsos 463 5299, HU 318, aliki.kalliabetsos@vuw.ac.nz

Communication of additional information

Religious Studies is in the Hunter Building. The programme administrator, Aliko Kalliabetsos, is in HU 318 (ext 5299), Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the notice board outside her office. Notices will also be communicated to students via emails sent from Blackboard. Students who do not use their assigned student.vuw.ac.nz email addresses should ensure that ITS has an up-to-date email address, and that they check this address regularly. Tutorials are administered through S-Cubed. Students should enrol on line. Tutorial lists shall be posted on the Programme notice board in the third week of the trimester.

Office Hours: The main office is open Monday - Friday, 9.30 – 12:00 noon and 2:30 - 3.30 p.m. You can arrange to meet with Michael Radich in his office by appointment, and he will also answer all emails promptly.

READ THIS OUTLINE! It will be assumed that its contents have been communicated to students, and ignorance of information contained in it will not be considered an excuse for failure to meet the course requirements.

Prescription

An examination of the history, doctrines and practices of the major traditions of Buddhism from the perspectives of modern scholarship. A thematic approach is taken, and the course addresses modern Buddhism in Asia and its adaptations in the West.

Course content

The course aims to teach students to think, argue and write about Buddhism in a critical, creative and theoretically informed manner. The course uses a mixture of lectures and small-group discussions to make connections between theory and lived religious experience. The course also aims to improve students' skills in critical thinking, creative thinking and communication.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. engage with important features of Buddhist history, doctrine and practice, and they should have a sense of the range of cultures and phenomena encompassed by this old, rich and vast religion. They should also have developed skills in approaching the subject critically, and in evaluating scholarly sources.
2. understand the study of religion as a critical discipline; that is, to examine the political, economic, social, historical, conceptual and cultural dimensions of religious activity.
3. develop their research and writing skills, their ability to make and defend arguments, and their critical awareness.

The assessment of this course relates directly to the course learning objectives.

Teaching format

This course is designed as an integral combination of lectures, readings, tutorials, and assigned work. These components are complementary with one another, not redundant; and ALL components of the course are necessary for students to do well. It is thus recommended in the strongest possible terms that students do the reading, attend all lectures and tutorials, and keep up with the required work for the course. Please see Appendix A for the Lecture Schedule, the tutorial timetable and details relating to the assessment for this course.

Tutorials deal with topics which complement the lecture programme. They provide an opportunity to discuss aspects of the course in a small group and develop the ability to contribute to discussions. This is an important part of the apparatus the course uses to develop students' skills in critical thinking and communication.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. submit all the required work for assessment (reading assignments, essays, test), and
2. attend 80% of tutorials.

Workload

For 20 point courses, a student should spend on average 12 hours per week for preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at lectures and tutorials. The total workload for the course, including class time should be approximately 200 hours.

Assessment

RELI 206 Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	1 essay of 2,000 words	30%	1, 2, 3, 4	August 23, 2013
2	1 essay of 2,000 words	30%	1, 2, 3, 4	October 4, 2013
3	3 reading assignments (2 pages, maximum)	15%	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	1 in-class test (1 hour and 50 minutes duration)	25%	1, 2, 3, 4	October 17 2013

RELI 310 Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	1 essay of 2,500 words	30%	1, 2, 3, 4	August 23, 2013
2	1 essay of 2,500 words	30%	1, 2, 3, 4	October 4, 2013
3	3 reading assignments (2 pages, maximum)	15%	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	1 in-class test (1 hour and 50 minutes duration)	25%	1, 2, 3, 4	October 17 2013

Assessment requirements. The course is internally assessed by means of two essays, three reading assignments, and one class test, **all mandatory**, as follows:

- **two essays, each worth 30%** of the final grade:

Reli 206: 2,000 words in length

Reli 310: 2,500 words in length

Essay 1 due Friday August 23, 2013, 5 p.m.

Essay 2 due Friday October 4, 2013, 5 p.m.

- **three *mandatory* reading assignments**; short written assignments (two pages maximum for RELI 206 and RELI 310) to be submitted respectively on:
Thursday July 25 10 a.m.
Thursday August 8 10 a.m.
Thursday Sept 12 10 a.m.
collectively worth **15%** of the final grade
- **a class test lasting 1 hour 50 min in class time on Thursday October 17**, worth **25%** of the final grade. A preparation guide for the test will be distributed at lecture a week beforehand, on Thursday October 10 at the latest.

Rationale

1. Reading assignments. Over the course of the trimester, we require students to submit a total of three written responses to the readings. These responses should not exceed **two pages** in length for both RELI 206, and RELI 310, and need only address the required readings. They will be marked according to the criteria below and returned to students as soon as practicable, to allow students the opportunity to use and build on the feedback they receive in subsequent work. These written responses are designed to accomplish the following four objectives, each of which is vital to successful completion of the course:

- They give students a regular, small-scale (low-risk) opportunity to practice good academic writing, and receive feedback on their writing to help them improve.
- They ensure students are keeping up with the required readings and enable teaching staff to monitor student progress.
- They provide students the opportunity to develop critical reading skills (i.e. a focus on the material most pertinent to the question).
- They develop students' skills in critical analysis and communication.

Assessment for mandatory reading assignments

The marker will assign each reading assignment a mark out of ten. A mark below 5/10 indicates that the work is unsatisfactory, i.e. that the student shows no sign of actually having read the work set; or has failed to comprehend adequately; or has failed to answer the set question. Marks from 5/10 to 10/10 are assigned according to the relative merit of the answers. The ideal response, which will receive full marks, shows ample evidence of having read and clearly understood the assigned material; is clearly written; and gives an original, well-thought-out response to the readings and the question.

NOTE: These mandatory reading assignments are a great chance to boost your grades! In no other section of the course (essays and test) is it likely that even the best students will receive perfect marks. Thus, if you just do the readings; write a careful, thoughtful response; and hand it in on time, you will usually raise your final grade.

The marks for each assignment will be added up and averaged to calculate the 15% of the overall grade delegated for reading assignments. Missing assignments will receive a 0/10. Assignments one week late will be docked 1/10; assignments two weeks late will be docked 2/10. Assignments more than two weeks late will be accepted only with medical documentation, and will otherwise receive zero. Students are reminded that even when their work becomes unacceptably late and will not receive a mark, they must still complete four reading assignments to complete the course.

2. The essays allow students to apply their analytical skills to information retrieved through library research on a set topic. Essays develop skills in critical thinking, reading, analysis and organizing material, which are necessary for continued study. The development of an original thesis is an important opportunity for students to exercise creative thinking in a manner appropriate to the academic context. Essays also demonstrate the students' level of proficiency in finding, understanding, and using sources, and gives students the opportunity to develop a more in-depth knowledge of an area covered in the lectures and weekly readings.

3. The test allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the material presented in the course, and allows students the opportunity to reflect on their learning process throughout the term.

Students who do not understand the grades they have been assigned or are concerned about their progress are encouraged to meet with the marker for a discussion.

Submission and return of work

Essays are to be submitted to the **assignment box** outside the Religious Studies office (HU 318). Please make sure you sign the sheet to document that you submitted your assignment, and when. Essays are **also** to be **submitted electronically, via Blackboard**, in part so that student work can be checked for plagiarism via TurnItIn. **DO NOT EMAIL YOUR ESSAYS TO THE LECTURER OR TUTOR. No responsibility will be taken for assignments for which there is no record.** Students should keep a copy of all their work until it is returned. Essays are to be collected from the Religious Studies office, HU 318.

Penalties

- 2 percent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays.
- Essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's certificate.

Set texts

There is no set textbook. The *RELI 206/310 Course Reader* should be obtained from vicbooks. Students are also strongly encouraged, but not required, to buy a copy of Rupert Gethin *Foundations of Buddhism* for background reading and reference. vicbooks website: www.vicbooks.co.nz

Recommended reading

Please see appendix A for a full reading list for this course

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Student feedback

This course will be evaluated by **CAD**.
Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Student Learning Support Services

A range of workshops, drop-ins and other assistance is provided by SLSS, covering such things as study techniques, essay writing, exam preparation and note taking skills. They are at Level 0 Kirk, facing Hunter Courtyard tel: 463 5999.

Supplementary Materials

A website of materials related to RELI 206/310 is being maintained in Blackboard. You can find it by visiting <http://blackboard@vuw.ac.nz>. Your user name is the one issued to you by Student Computing Services. Your password is your Student ID Number. If in doubt, please contact the Student Computing Services Help Desk, 463-6666 (extension 6666 from VUW phones) or by email scs-help@vuw.ac.nz.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz