



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELI 206 Buddhism: The Noble Path

20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 2 2016

Key dates

Trimester dates: 11 July to 13 November 2016

Teaching dates: 11 July to 16 October 2016

Mid-trimester break: 22 August to 4 September 2016

Last assessment item due: October 11 2016

Study period: 17–20 October 2016

Examination/Assessment Period: 21 October to 12 November 2016

Note: students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

Class times and locations

Lectures Tuesdays 13:10-15:00 in Hunter LT 119.

Tutorial times and locations TBA. Students should enrol in tutorials through myAllocator.

Names and contact details

Course Coordinator: Dr Michael Radich michael.radich@vuw.ac.nz

Tutor: Sophie Silvester silvester.sophie@gmail.com

Communication of additional information

Religious Studies is located at 14 Kelburn Parade. The programme administrator, Aliko Kalliabetsos, is in room 203 (463 5299), aliko.kalliabetsos@vuw.ac.nz. 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.

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 in a critical, creative and theoretically informed manner about Buddhism, as a case study in the broader problem of the study of religion in general. 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 the course will be able to:

1. engage with important features of Buddhist history, doctrine and practice, and they should demonstrate knowledge of the range of cultures and phenomena encompassed by this old, rich and vast religion. They should also have developed intermediate-level undergraduate skills in approaching the subject critically, and in evaluating scholarly sources.
2. show an intermediate understanding of 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. demonstrate intermediate-level research and writing skills, ability to make and defend arguments, and critical awareness.

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 attend at least 7 out of 9 tutorials.

Tutorial attendance is required because tutorial groups only function properly when all members attend consistently and develop a community of learning. In addition, skills exercises and content discussion in tutorials are an important means for developing core competencies.

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

Workload

For 20 point courses during the six-week summer trimester, a student should spend on average 26 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

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due dates
1	1 essay of 2,000 words (recommended average time spent on this task: 40 hours)	30%	1, 2, 3	Aug 19 2016
2	1 essay of 2,000 words (recommended average time spent on this task: 40 hours)	30%	1, 2, 3	Sept 30 2016
3	3 reading assignments (2 pages, maximum) (recommended average time spent on this task: 20 hours)	15%	1, 2, 3	July 19 2016 Aug 2 2016 Sept 6 2016
4	1 in-class test (recommended average time spent on this task: 30 hours)	25%	1, 2, 3	Oct 11 2016

NB

The three reading assignments are short written assignments (two pages maximum 206, three pages maximum 327) to be submitted respectively on:

Thursday July 19 1:10 p.m.
Thursday August 2 1:10 p.m.
Thursday Sept 6 1:10 p.m.

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, 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 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.

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' 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.

The **class test is of 1 hour 50 min duration in class time on Thursday February 11**. A preparation guide for the test has been made available for you on BlackBoard, and can be consulted right from the beginning of the course, to help guide you in note-taking while reading and during lectures.

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 (KP 14 / 203). 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. Marked assignments may be collected from the Religious Studies office 2 weeks from the date of submission.

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

If a student requires an extension for any serious or medical reason they must apply for one as soon as practicably possible, and if possible, before the due date of the assessment in question.

Penalties

- 2 per cent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays (including Saturdays and Sundays).
- Essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's certificate.
- Reading 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 receive zero unless accompanied by medical documentation. Students are reminded that even when their work becomes unacceptably late and will not receive a mark.

Set texts

There is no set textbook. Readings will be made available via TALIS Aspire, and links will be provided on BlackBoard.

Recommended reading

Please see the Lecture Programme in the Appendix to this Outline (to be distributed during the first lecture, and available on BlackBoard) 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.

Student feedback

All student feedback from course evaluations is considered and the course is regularly improved on that basis. Students responded positively to course content and delivery.

The course will be evaluated by CAD.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

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/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz