

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY — FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Religious Studies

Mahāyāna Buddhism

RELS 323 L01- Winter 2011, Tues-Thurs 11:00-12:15 p.m., SH 288

(University of Calgary Policy about course outlines may be found from page 39 of the *University Calendar*)

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Required Texts

Williams, Paul. *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge, 2009.

Śāntideva. (1998) *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Translated by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thurman, Robert A.F., translator. (1987) *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti: A Mahāyāna Scripture*. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Course Website: **Blackboard**

Our course web site will list important announcements, electronic readings, and downloadable documents.

Course Description: Self-consciously styled as the “Greater Vehicle” among Buddhist traditions, Mahāyāna streams of Buddhism have had a profound impact on the shape of Buddhist formations in India, throughout Asia, and beyond. This course will examine, in a selected survey format, the classification, cultural formations, literature, and systematic thought of Mahāyāna doctrines and practices utilizing a range of interdisciplinary methods and approaches. The course focuses on the problems of classification and definition; the “new metaphysics” of emptiness; controversies in the conception of Buddhahood; the centrality of compassion; visualization and other meditation techniques; the role of faith and the practices of lay people; and the development of the bodhisattva ideal.

Course Requirements and Weighting:

1. Regular attendance, preparation of reading assignments, and regular, wakeful participation in discussion.
2. Midterm examination, 30 points (30%).
3. Research paper, 30 points (30%).
4. Final examination, 40 points (40%).

*** There will be a Registrar scheduled final examination in this course**

Schedule of Exams and Essays	Evaluation
1. Midterm in class on Thursday, March 3.	Midterm (30%)
2. Research paper due on Thursday, April 7.	Research paper (30%)
3. Comprehensive Final: To Be Scheduled by the Registrar	Final (40%)

Missed Exams: If you cannot write a test on the scheduled date due to a sudden illness or emergency, you must contact me or the Department office as soon as possible. To be allowed a rewrite of a test, you must provide proof of illness/emergency. Transfer of weight from a missed test or unwritten essay to another course requirement will not be allowed in this course. Without acceptable documentation (i.e. medical certificate, police report, bereavement notice, confirmation of religious observance, or court order) or without PRIOR arrangement with the instructor, missed assessments will receive an ‘F’. This policy is intended to encourage diligence and integrity among students as well as to uphold principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class. Excuses other than those listed above will receive little attention.

To ensure academic honesty: No student is allowed to leave the examination room until they have handed in their exam. No additional materials or technical aids are permitted at your desk during an exam.

Grading:

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme (standardized within the Department of Religious Studies):

A+	100-96	A	95-90	A-	89-85
B+	84-80	B	79-75	B-	74-70
C+	69-65	C	64-60	C-	59-55
D+	54-53	D	52-50	F	Under 50

Course Requirements explained:

1. Attendance and participation: Regular attendance, preparation of reading assignments, and class participation are expected in a university-level class. These are not graded requirements, but obviously they will impact your performance in the course. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to ask a fellow student to lend you their notes.

Classroom sessions will consist of lectures on the scheduled subject matter related to the overall theoretical objective of the course. Students must prepare the material before each meeting and be ready to comprehend the topics to be covered. As much as possible the lectures attempt to complement the required readings or address related issues not treated extensively in the assigned books. During such sessions, students must have knowledge of the required readings. Participation in class thus plays a significant role in conducting lectures.

Given the nature of the lectures, and the fact that the examination will test knowledge of material discussed in lectures as well as the readings, it cannot be overemphasized that attendance is necessary and to your advantage. Your attendance in class allows you to participate in and contribute to the class by raising questions and offering insights. More importantly, your attendance allows you to hear what specific points are being emphasized. Students are reminded that presence at lectures, participation in classroom discussion and projects, and the completion of assignments are important components of most courses, and students will serve their interests best by regular attendance. Those who choose not to attend must assume whatever risks are involved.

2. Midterm examination (30 points = 30%): This will consist chiefly of short identification and essay questions, with the possibility of some objective questions, as well. Some time in the preceding class will be devoted to review. **THE DATE OF THE MIDTERM IS Thursday, March 3.**

3. Final examination (40 points = 40%): The format will be the same as for the midterm exam. The date of the final exam is **to be scheduled by the registrar.**

4. Research Paper (of approximately 1800 words) worth 30% of the final course grade, is due on **Thursday, April 7 at the beginning of class.** The requirement is an 1800 word essay reflecting detailed research and critical reflection on a specific topic pertaining to Mahāyāna Buddhist formations in Asia. Paper topics are open: you are free to choose any topic within Early Buddhist developments (specific texts, practices, historical figures work best). **PAPER PARAMETERS AND GUIDELINES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS AND POSTED ON THE BLACKBOARD COURSE SITE).** Late papers will be penalized 10% of the value of the assignment for each day the **paper is late.** If you have any questions, please contact me immediately.

Recording of the lectures is not permitted, except by special permission (see Tape Recording of Lectures, *University of Calgary Calendar*).

E-mail policy: E-mails will be responded to within 24 hours during weekdays. I do not reply to email messages that are poorly written, unclear or disrespectful.

Academic Honesty: *Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contributions of others be acknowledged. As a result, cheating or plagiarisms on any assignments or examinations are regarded as extremely serious academic offenses. Students are advised to consult pp 49-52 of the University Calendar which provides a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with plagiarism, cheating, and other academic misconduct. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.*

Academic Accommodation: If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Once registered, please discuss any upcoming tests/examinations with the instructor **two weeks** before the scheduled date. (DRC web address is: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/Others/DRC/>.)

Gnosis: Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: gnosis@ucalgary.ca or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule:

This outline is subject to change. It may be modified if it appears to the instructor that the material is not being adequately covered in the allotted time. The amount of time devoted to particular topics is contingent on the instructor's sense of what deserves greater emphasis as the course progresses. **Remember, to be aware of changes occurring in the schedule and to receive any crucial information regarding the course, regular attendance in class is necessary.** The instructor is not responsible for accommodating those with unexcused absences. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to ask a fellow student to lend you their notes. In addition, important materials are regularly handed out during class. The instructor is not responsible for providing handouts at a later date for those with an unexcused absence from class. Keep in mind that all lectures in class constitute material that may appear on the final examination. Remember, too, that it is not possible for the instructor to explain all the material contained in the readings—it is up to students to be familiar with the readings regardless of the extent to which the assigned texts are discussed in class.

Feb 22-Feb 24	Reading Week: No Lectures	T: Th:
	Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule continued	
March 1-March 3	Cittamātra *** <i>Mid-term Exam</i> ***	T: Williams, pp.84-102 [Blackboard]King, Early Yogācāra and Madhyamaka Th: *** <i>Mid-term Exam</i> ***
March 8-March 10	Madhyamaka after Asaṅga	T: Huntington, Candrakīrti's <i>Madhyamakāvatāra</i> , 157-184 Th: <i>Huntington, Candrakīrti's Madhyamakāvatāra, 157-184</i>
March 15-March 17	Buddha nature & the Flower Garland	T: Williams, pp. 103-128 [Blackboard] King, "The Concept of Buddha Nature" [Blackboard] Wayman, The Lions Roar of Queen Śrīmālā, pp. 42-56, 96-107 [Blackboard] Th: Williams, pp. 129-148 [Blackboard] Cheng Bhikṣu, "Manifestation of the Tathāgata", pp. 47-81.
March 22-March 24	Compassion	T: Williams, pp. 149-171; [Blackboard] Hurvitz, Lotus Sūtra, chapter 1 Th: [Blackboard] Hurvitz, Lotus Sūtra, chapters 2, 3, 16
March 29-March 31	Buddhas in Mahāyāna Buddhism	T: Williams, pp. 172-186. [Blackboard] Nagao, "On the three bodies of a Buddha" Th: Williams, pp. 172-186. [Blackboard]:

<p>April 5-April 7</p>	<p>Faith, devotion, Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas</p> <p>***<i>TERM PAPER DUE</i>***</p>	<p>T: Williams, pp. 209-243 [Blackboard]Snellgrove, “Celestial Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.”</p> <p>Th: [Blackboard] Harrison, “Mañjuśrī and Celestial Bodhisattvas”</p> <p>***<i>TERM PAPER DUE</i>***</p>
<p>April 12-April 14</p>	<p>Compassion and the Path Śāntideva’s Guide</p>	<p>T: Williams, pp. 187-208 Śāntideva’s <i>Bodhicāryavatāra</i>, TBA</p> <p>Th: Śāntideva’s <i>Bodhicāryavatāra</i>, TBA</p>
<p>TBA</p>	<p>Registrar Scheduled Final Exam</p>	