

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY — FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**Advanced Studies in Buddhism**  
**Early Mahāyāna Buddhist Literature**  
**RELS 453.05 L01 Fall 2012, M 2:00-4:45 p.m., SS 1332**

(University of Calgary Policy about course outlines may be found from page 38 of the *University Calendar*)

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**Required Texts**

Jan Nattier. 2005. *A Few Good Men. The Bodhisattva Path according to The Inquiry of Ugra.*

Étienne Lamotte (Translator), Sara Boin-Webb (Translator). 2008. *Śūramgamasamādhisūtra: The Concentration of Heroic Progress*

Edward Conze, trans. 2001. *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lands & Its Verse Summary*

Leon Hurvitz, trans. 1976. *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (The Lotus Sūtra)*

Recommended: Luis Gomez. 1996. *Land of Bliss, the Paradise of the Buddha of Measureless Light.*

**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 seminar will examine, in a selected survey format, the classification and development of early Mahāyāna literature utilizing a range of interdisciplinary methods and approaches. The course focuses on the problems of classification and definition; social formation and mythmaking; controversies in the conception of Buddhahood; gender and identity; visualization and other meditation techniques; the role of faith and the practices of lay people; and the development of the bodhisattva ideal.

**Course Ethos**

This course requires a high degree of self-motivation. Not only is the study of Buddhist formations a truly demanding intellectual task, for which a robust reading requirement is a necessary component, but we will examine a number of primary and secondary sources that will not be familiar to all. Furthermore, this is a seminar course. Rather than following the lecture format, we will have discussions, and for discussions to be substantive, disciplined, and thought-creating, it means that seminar members must do the readings and attend the seminar with the intention to contribute to the course Conferences.

**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 Seminar Discussion Moderator [10%]:** All attendees will be required to lead a seminar discussion (or maybe more than one, depending on our numbers). This entails a short presentation in which the discussion leader identifies the central themes brought out by the course readings and then proposes a series of questions for the class to consider. A schedule for presentations and conference session talking points will be determined in the first two weeks of the term.

**2. Four Short critical response essays due on the following dates:** 10/1, 10/22, 11/5 and 11/26. **[60% total; 15% each].** These reports will serve as documentation of your presence and as evidence of your engagement with the reading material. The short essay guidelines and topics will be distributed in class.

**3. Research Paper worth 30%** of the final course grade, is due on Monday, December 3 at the beginning of class. The requirement is an essay reflecting detailed research and critical reflection on a specific topic pertaining to Mahāyāna Buddhist literature. Paper topics are open: you are free to choose any topic related to Mahāyāna Buddhist literature. **PAPER PARAMETERS AND GUIDELINES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS.**

Research Paper Requirements: Students enrolled in 453 – 3000-3500 words

**There will be NO registrar scheduled final exam in this course.**

**Recording of the course discussions** 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 54-56 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/.](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](mailto:gnosis@ucalgary.ca) or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

### **Blackboard Help**

Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/computersupport/onlineservices/blackboard> for Student Help and FAQ's about Blackboard. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are available at <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/blackboard/students>. Instructions for using the Digital Drop Box are available here: [http://library.blackboard.com/docs/r6/6\\_1/student/bbbs\\_r6\\_1\\_student/digital\\_drop\\_box.htm](http://library.blackboard.com/docs/r6/6_1/student/bbbs_r6_1_student/digital_drop_box.htm).

### **Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources**

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

### **Student Ombudsperson and Students' Union Representative**

The Student Ombuds Office provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. See [www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds](http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds) for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at [arts1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@ucalgary.ca).

### **Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at [www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints](http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints). Please check this website and not the nearest assembly point for this course.

### **Safewalk**

The Safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout campus to

request a walk.

**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 inexcusable 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 inexcusable absence from class.

**Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule (Note: BB= Blackboard)**

Sept. 10	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p><b>Common or Mainstream Buddhisms</b></p> <p><b>Mahāyāna: definition, beginnings &amp; formations</b></p>	<p><b>Background reading:</b></p> <p><b>[Session 1:</b>  <b>[BB]</b> Silk, “What, if anything, is Mahāyāna Buddhism?”  <b>[BB]</b> Schopen, “Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions”</p> <p><b>Session 2: [BB]</b> Gombrich, “How the Mahāyana Began”  <b>[BB]</b> Ruegg, “Aspects of the Study of the (Earlier) Indian Mahāyana”  <b>[BB]</b> Harrison, “Mediums and Messages: Reflections on the Production of Mahāyāna Sūtras”</p>
Sept. 17	<p>CONFERENCE 1</p> <p><b>The Inquiry of Ugra</b></p>	<p><b>Session 1:</b>Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 3-102  <b>[BB]</b> Hirakawa, “The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stupas”</p> <p><b>Session 2:</b>Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 103-200  <b>[BB]</b> Harrison, “Who Gets to Ride in the Great Vehicle?”</p>
Sept. 24	<p>CONFERENCE 2</p> <p><b>The Inquiry of Ugra</b></p>	<p><b>[Session 1:</b>Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 207-279.</p> <p><b>Session 2:</b>Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 280-324.</p>
Oct. 1	<p>CONFERENCE 3</p> <p><b>Perfection of Wisdom</b></p>	<p><b>Session 1:: [First Short Critical Essay due]</b></p> <p>Conze, <i>The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines</i>, Chap 1-7.</p> <p><b>[BB]</b> Conze, “The Development of Prajñāpāramitā Thought.”</p> <p><b>Session 2:</b></p> <p>Conze, <i>The Perfection of Wisdom</i>, Chap 8-15.</p>

		[BB] Deleanu, "A Preliminary Study on Meditation and the Beginnings of Mahāyāna Buddhism."
Oct. 8	Thanksgiving Holiday	
Oct. 15	<b>CONFERENCE 4</b> <b>Perfection of Wisdom</b>	<b>Session 1:</b> Conze, <i>The Perfection of Wisdom</i> , Chap 16-23.  <b>Session 2:</b> Conze, <i>The Perfection of Wisdom</i> , Chap 24-32.
Oct. 22	<b>CONFERENCE 5</b> <b>Concentration of Heroic Progress</b>	[Second Short Critical Essay due] <b>Session 1:</b> Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, pp.1-38. <b>Session 2:</b> [BB]Anālayo, "Samādhi." [BB]Skilton, "State or Statement ? Samādhi in Some Early Mahāyāna Sutras."
Oct. 29	<b>CONFERENCE 6</b> <b>Concentration of Heroic Progress</b>	<b>Session 1:</b> Śūramgamasamādhi sūtra, background, pp. 39-106. <b>Session 2:</b> Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, pp. 107-150.
Nov. 5	<b>CONFERENCE 7</b> <b>Concentration of Heroic Progress</b>	[Third Short Critical Essay due] <b>Session 1:</b> Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, 150-197. <b>Session 2:</b> Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, 197-241.
Nov. 12	Reading Days. No Class.	
Nov. 19	<b>CONFERENCE 10</b> <b>Lotus Sūtra</b>	<b>Session 1:</b> Hurvitz, <i>The Lotus Sūtra</i> , Preface and Chapters 1 & 2. [BB] Kajiyama, "Saddharmapuṇḍarīka and Śūnyatā Thought." <b>Session 2:</b> Hurvitz, <i>The Lotus Sūtra</i> , Chapters 3-7.
Nov. 26	<b>CONFERENCE 11</b> <b>Lotus Sūtra</b>	<b>Session 1:</b> [Fourth Short Critical Essay due] Hurvitz, <i>The Lotus Sūtra</i> , Chapters 8-11. <b>Session 2:</b> Hurvitz, <i>The Lotus Sūtra</i> , Chapters. 12-15.
Dec. 3	<b>CONFERENCE 12</b> <b>Lotus Sūtra</b>	<b>Session 1:</b> Hurvitz, <i>The Lotus Sūtra</i> , Chapters 16-17. [Final Research Papers are due] <b>Session 2:</b> Hurvitz, <i>The Lotus Sūtra</i> , Chapters. 20-28.