

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY — FACULTY OF ARTS
Advanced Studies in Buddhism
Early Mahāyāna Buddhist Literature
RELS 453.05 L01 Winter 2017, W 2:00-4:45 p.m., SS 008

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

James Apple, Ph.D.

Office: SS 532

Office hours: Th, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Or by appointment.

E-mail: jbapple@ucalgary.ca

Office phone: 403-220-8267

Dept Office/Phone: 403-220-5886

*Classics and Religion Office:

Social Sciences 558

E-mail: clare@ucalgary.ca

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*

Daniel Boucher. 2008. *Bodhisattvas of the Forest and the Formation of the Mahayana*

Robert Thurman, , trans. 2001. *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti*

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.

Course Requirements explained:

1. Attendance and Seminar Discussion Moderator [10%]: All attendees will be required to lead a seminar discussion (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: 2/1, 2/15, 3/8 and 3/29. **[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 Tuesday, April 12 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

Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule (Note: D2L LINK= Desire2Learn)

Jan. 11	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Common or Mainstream Buddhisms</p> <p>Mahāyāna: definition, beginnings & formations</p>	<p>Background reading:</p> <p>[Session 1:</p> <p>[D2L] Silk, “What, if anything, is Mahāyāna Buddhism?”</p> <p>[D2L] Schopen, “Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions”</p> <p>Session 2: [D2L] Gombrich, “How the Mahāyana Began”</p> <p>[D2L] Ruegg, “Aspects of the Study of the (Earlier) Indian Mahāyana”</p> <p>[D2L] Harrison, “Mediums and Messages: Reflections on the Production of Mahāyāna Sūtras”</p>
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Jan. 18	CONFERENCE 1 The Inquiry of Ugra	<p>Session 1: Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 3-102 [D2L] Hirakawa, “The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stupas”</p> <p>Session 2: Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 103-200 [D2L] Harrison, “Who Gets to Ride in the Great Vehicle?”</p>
Jan. 25	CONFERENCE 2 The Inquiry of Ugra	<p>[Session 1: Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 207-279.</p> <p>Session 2: Nattier, <i>A Few Good Men</i>, pp. 280-324.</p>
Feb. 1	CONFERENCE 3 Bodhisattvas of the Forest	<p>Session 1:: [First Short Critical Essay due] Boucher, pp. 3-110</p> <p>Session 2: Boucher, pp. 3-110</p>
Feb. 8	CONFERENCE 4 Bodhisattvas of the Forest	<p><i>Session 1:</i> Boucher, pp. 3-110</p> <p>Session 2: Boucher, pp. 3-110</p>
Feb. 15	CONFERENCE 5 Concentration of Heroic Progress	<p>[Second Short Critical Essay due]</p> <p>Session 1: Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, pp.1-38.</p> <p>Session 2: [D2L] Anālayo, “Samādhi. [D2L] Skilton, “State or Statement ? Samādhi in Some Early Mahāyāna Sutras.”</p>
Feb. 22	Reading Week	Reading Week-No class.
March 1	CONFERENCE 6 Concentration of Heroic Progress	<p><i>Session 1:</i> Śūramgamasamādhi sūtra, background, pp. 39-53.</p> <p>Session 2: Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, pp. 53-106</p>
March 8	CONFERENCE 7 Concentration of Heroic Progress	<p>[Third Short Critical Essay due]</p> <p>Session 1: Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, 107-127.</p> <p>Session 2: Śūramgamasamādhisūtra, 127-150.</p>
March 15	CONFERENCE 8 Concentration of Heroic Progress	<p>Session 1: Śūramgamasamādhisūtra., 150-197.</p> <p>Session 2: Śūramgamasamādhisūtra., 197-241.</p>

March 22	CONFERENCE 9 Vimalakīrti	Session 1: <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti, pp. 1-10, 11-33</i> Session 2: <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti, pp 34-55</i>
March 29	CONFERENCE 10 Vimalakīrti	Session 1: [Fourth Short Critical Essay due] <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti</i> Session 2: <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti</i>
April 5	CONFERENCE 11 Vimalakīrti	Session 1: <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti</i> Session 2: <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti</i>
April 12	CONFERENCE 12 Vimalakīrti	Session 1: <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti</i> [Final Research Papers are due] Session 2: <i>Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti</i>

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, usually used within the Department of Classics and Religion:

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

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.

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.

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.*

Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf

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>.

Desire2Learn Help

Go to <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/category/d2l> for Student Help and FAQ's about Desire2Learn. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are also available on this website.

Electronic Device Policy: Please review the university policy regarding specific permission and forms required for recording of lectures:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>

Scientific evidence demonstrates that use of cellphones lowers student achievement as well as damage the brain (see links below). Use of cellphones are not permitted while attending class. Cell phones must be turned off and not taken out in class for texting or any other purposes. The in-class wearing of earphones or similar devices is not permitted. Computers should not be used for watching videos or playing computer games.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/mental-wealth/201402/gray-matters-too-much-screen-time-damages-the-brain>

<http://blog.chron.com/sciguy/2013/12/study-students-who-use-cellphones-more-get-lower-grades/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/memory-medic/201303/why-writing-hand-could-make-you-smarter>

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. 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 3rd 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 for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at 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. 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.