

BUDDHIST TRADITIONS | RLG 6346 (sec 02ED), Spring 2014

Prof. Mario Poceski (Religion Dept., Univ. of Florida)



Class Time & Location

Wed, periods 7-9 (1:55–4:55); CBD 216.

Office Hours & Contact Information

Mon 11:40–12:30 pm, Wed 1:00-1:50, and by appointment, 132 Anderson Hall; (352) 273-2937; mpoceski@ufl.edu; www.clas.ufl.edu/users/mpoceski.

Course Description

The graduate seminar serves as a comprehensive survey of Buddhism, covering principal texts, doctrines, traditions, and historical developments, with a focus on South and East Asia. Students will become acquainted with recent scholarship on Buddhism, read representative works from the canonical collections, and reflect on the scope and nature of Buddhist studies as an academic discipline. This is one of the core courses in the Asian religions track of the graduate program in religion.

Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites, although prior knowledge of Buddhism will be very helpful. No knowledge of Asian languages is required, but students are encouraged to do extra readings in the classical languages they use for their research.

Format

The seminar is organized around class discussions based on the assigned weekly readings. Each week, the students will rotate the responsibility of making presentations and leading discussions of the assigned readings. Students are required to come to each class prepared to engage in critical analysis and discussion of the relevant materials.

Requirements

- Reading of assigned materials, class attendance, and participation in discussions (20% of the final grade).
- Class presentations, reading responses, and leading of discussions (10%).
- Paper abstract and annotated bibliography (10%), due by 4/2 (10 am).
- Research paper (60%), due by 4/25 (10 am).

Required Texts

Berkwitz, Stephen C. *South Asian Buddhism: A Survey* (Routledge 2009).

Williams, Paul. *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (Routledge 2008; 2nd ed.).

Poceski, Mario (ed.). *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to East and Inner Asian Buddhism* (Blackwell 2014; distributed via eLearning).

Additional readings (AR, distributed via eLearning) and articles from Robert Buswell, *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* (EB, available as an e-Book and a hardcover at the UF library).

Discussion Topics and Course Schedule (Tentative and subject to change)

- JAN** W 1 **Introduction to the Course**
| Poceski, Introduction
- W 2 **Early Buddhist History and Teachings**
| Berkwitz 1–51; [AR] Bodhi
- W 3 **Traditions of Early Buddhism**
| Berkwitz 51–67, 113–17; [AR] Collins; [EB] “Mainstream Buddhist Schools,” “Canon”
- W 4 **Development of the Mahāyāna Tradition**
| Williams 1–115; Berkwitz 68–86; [AR] Harrison
- FEB** W 5 **Mahāyāna Texts and Teachings**
| Williams: 141–256; Berkwitz 86–103; [AR] Thurman
- W 6 **Development of Tantra**
| Berkwitz 125–38; Poceski, Ch. 9; [AR] Davidson
- W 7 **Later Developments in South Asian and Tibetan Buddhism**
| Berkwitz 139–205; Poceski, Ch. 14 & 19
- W 8 **Transmission and Growth of Buddhism in China**
| Poceski, Ch. 2, Ch. 10, Ch. 11, Ch. 15, Ch. 18
- MAR** W 9 Spring Break
- W 10 **Buddhism and Chinese Culture**
| Poceski, Ch. 17, Ch. 20, Ch. 21; [AR] Poceski, Mollier
- W 11 **Chinese Buddhist Texts, Doctrines, and Practices**
| [AR] Gimello, Swanson, Poceski (both articles); [EB] “Huayan School”
- W 12 **Buddhism in Korea**
| Poceski, Ch. 3, Ch. 23; [AR] Lee
- APR** W 13 **Buddhism in Japan**
| Poceski, Ch. 4, Ch. 22; [AR] de Bary (100–74)
- W 14 **Issues in East Asian Buddhism**
| Poceski, Ch. 12, Ch. 16; [AR] de Bary (292–335)
- W 15 **Buddhist Studies as an Academic Discipline**
| Poceski, Ch. 25; [EB] “Buddhist Studies”; [AR] Schopen, Gómez, Cabezón
- W 16 **Student presentations**



Additional Readings

- Bhikkhu Bodhi, ed. *In the Buddha's Words: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pāli Canon*: 1–40, 223–53.
- Collins, Steven. "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15 (1990): 89–126.
- Harrison, Paul. "Searching for the Origins of the Mahayana: What are we looking for?" *Eastern Buddhist* 28.1 (Spring, 1995): 48–69.
- Thurman, Robert. *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti: A Mahāyāna Scripture*: 10–19.

- Davidson, Ronald M. *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*: 1–24, 113–68, 293–339.
- Poceski, Mario. “Lay Models of Engagement with Chan Teachings and Practices among the Literati in Mid-Tang China.” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 35 (2007): 63–97.
- Mollier, Christine. *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face: Scripture, Ritual, and Iconographic Exchange in Medieval China*: 1–22.
- Gimello, Robert. “Apophatic and Kataphatic Discourse in Mahāyāna: A Chinese view.” *Philosophy East and West* 26/2 (1976): 117–136.
- Swanson, Paul L. *Foundations of T’ian-t’ai Philosophy: The Flowering of the Two truths Theory in Chinese Buddhism*: 1–17, 115–56.
- Poceski, Mario. “Mazu yulu and the Creation of the Chan Records of Sayings.” Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds. *The Zen Canon: Understanding the Classic Texts*: 53–79.
- Poceski, Mario. “Guishan jingce and the Ethical Foundations of Chan Practice.” Steven Heine and Dale Wright, eds. *Zen Classics*: 15–42.
- Lee, Peter and Theodore de Bary, eds. *Sources of Korean Tradition: Volume One*: 34–53, 78–93, 117–31, 216–35.
- de Bary, Theodore, et al, eds. *Sources of Japanese Tradition: Volume One*: 100–74, 205–37, 292–335.
- Schopen, Gregory. *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*: 1–22.
- Gómez, Luis. “Unspoken Paradigms: Meanderings through the Metaphors of a Field.” *JLABS* 18/2: 183–229.
- Cabezón, José Ignacio. “Buddhist Studies as a Discipline and the Role of Theory.” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 18/2 (1995): 231–68.

Encyclopedia Articles

- Silk, “Buddhist Studies”: 94–101; Harrison, “Canon”: 111–15; Poceski, “Huayan jing”: 340–41; Poceski, “Huayan School”: 341–47; Cox, “Mainstream Buddhist Schools”: 501–07.



Online e-Learning System

- The syllabus and other course materials are posted online via UF’s e-Learning system [lss.at.ufl.edu].
- Students should not write to the instructor by using the email feature in e-Learning; instead, they should send written communications directly on the email address given above.

Grading

- The final grade will be based on each student’s individual performance and his/her fulfillment of the course requirements, as stipulated in the syllabus.
- The same course rules and expectations apply equally to all students—no student is entitled to special consideration or unique treatment. Other extraneous or irrelevant factors, including student’s personal desires or expectations about grades, will not be taken into account. Students should also not expect retroactive changes or other dubious forms of grade modification.

- Students should take all assignments and other course requirements very seriously. There will be no opportunities to do additional work for extra credit or better grade.
- No incomplete grades will be given, except in very exceptional circumstances, in which case the students should contact the instructor no later than a week before the last day of classes.
- Final grades will be computed on this scale: A = 100–94%; A- = 93.9–90%; B+ = 89.9–87%; B = 86.9–83%; B- = 82.9–80% ; C+ = 79.9–77%; C = 76.9–73%; C- = 72.9–70%; D+ = 69.9–67%; D = 66.9–63%; D- = 62.9–60%; E = 59.9% or less.

Attendance

- **Attendance** is **mandatory** for all students, starting with the first day of classes. Students who have problems with class attendance or punctuality should think twice before enrolling in this course.
- Active and informed **participation** in classroom discussions is expected from all students. In order to facilitate that, students are expected to read carefully all assigned readings before coming to class.
- **Absences** from class will have adverse effect on the final grade. After missing one (1) hour of instruction (unexcused), each subsequent unexcused hour will lead to an automatic 1% **reduction** of the final grade; there is no limit to this kind of grade deduction (i.e. student can fail the course due to a poor attendance record).
- Valid excuses for missed classes must be submitted *in writing* and in a timely manner, along with pertinent documentation (such as note from a doctor).
- Written excuses for planned absences— participation in athletic meetings or religious observances, for example— must be submitted in advance.
- Coming late, leaving early, being inattentive, and other forms of disruptive behavior can be counted as unexcused absences.

Written Assignments

- When students are responsible for leading weekly discussion, they have to prepare a 400-500 word **summary and response** to the assigned reading(s). The reading response must be posted on e-Learning by 10am on Wednesday (the day of the pertinent class discussion). It should contain a brief summary of the relevant reading(s), student’s critical response, and several topics for class discussion.
- The **abstract** and **bibliography** must clearly state the topic—i.e. provide provisional title—of the final paper. It should contain a short –250 words—abstract of the paper and at least 15 titles of academic publications pertinent to the student’s research topic, each of them annotated with a short summary of contents and a note on how it is relevant to the stated topic.
- The **final paper** should be 7,000-8,000 words, inclusive of notes and citations. There should be a bibliography at the end of the paper.
- Students are welcome to bring early drafts of their papers and ask for feedback/advice, but they have to do that in person during office hours.
- All written assignments must be submitted in **MS Word** and must follow standard academic format. Use standard font, such as Calibri 12, for all assignments, with 1.5 spacing and 1”

margins. Do not forget to include paper title, course name, instructor name, date, and page numbers.

- Each written assignment must be **submitted digitally**, via e-Learning, before the final deadline.
- Students can receive **bonus** points for early submissions: 2 points for the final paper, if submitted by April 18 (10 am), and 1 bonus point for the abstract and bibliography, if submitted by March 26 (10am).
- **No late submissions** will be accepted under any circumstances.
- Students are encouraged to avoid procrastination and make early submissions, ideally at least a week before the final deadline.

Classroom Conduct

- All students are required to come to class on time, as late arrivals (and early departures) are very disruptive.
- Students are expected to be courteous and respectful, and abstain from disruptive behavior in the classroom that adversely affects others and is contrary to the pursuit of knowledge. Examples of such behavior include talking with someone, displaying active disinterest in the class (e.g. sleeping or inappropriate computer use), or putting down others. Phones should also be turned off during class. Offending students will be asked to leave.
- It is hoped that there will be lively debates and informed discussions. While there is room for individual opinions and disagreements, they have to be expressed in ways that are appropriate for an academic setting.

Office Hours and Communication

- Students are encouraged to come to office hours, especially if they have questions or need help with the course materials. The instructor will also be glad to discuss all relevant topics that, due to time constraints, are not covered in class in much detail.
- Any questions about the course requirements or any aspect of the coursework should be resolved by consulting the instructor directly and in person, preferably during office hours. Pleading ignorance or lack of common sense are not valid excuses for failures to fulfill requirements or abide by course policies.

Extracurricular

- The assigned readings and other seminar requirements, as described in this syllabus, are a basic minimum. Students are encouraged to take personal initiative to further broaden their knowledge and improve their academic skills by doing additional readings, including materials written in classical or foreign languages.

Plagiarism and Cheating

- Plagiarism and cheating will result in a failing grade and other serious penalties.
- For more information, see the “Academic Honesty – Student Guide” brochure (posted online by the Dean of Students Office).

Disability

- A student who has a documented disability that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements should consult the instructor in person at the beginning of the course so that appropriate arrangements may be made.
- The student is responsible for communicating his/her needs to the instructor, as early as possible. All arrangements for changes pertaining to the exams must be made at least one week in advance.

Other Notices

- Registration in the course implies that each student enters a contractual agreement with the instructor, whereas he/she is accountable for fulfilling all course requirements and adhering to the course policies.
- Students are responsible for knowing and following all schedules and instructions contained in this syllabus, as well as any other instructions given in class (remember, attendance is not optional).

