Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies in 2018-19

ELECTIVES / INTER-FACULTY ELECTIVES
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

**BSTC2005 Buddhism in Today’s World** (6 Credits)

Instructor: Dr. SIK Fa Ren  
Office: Rm. 4.12, The Jockey Club Tower  
Email: faren@hku.hk  
Time: 10:30am-12:20pm (Tuesday)  
Venue: CPD LG.07 Centennial Campus  
Offering semester: 2nd semester

**Course Outline**  
Buddhism was founded by Buddha Sakyamuni more than 2500 years ago. Since then, it has spread to various places, and has become one of the major religions in the contemporary world. Buddhism has undergone a long historical development and its practices have experienced magnificent changes. This course is designed to explore, from various perspectives, the development of Buddhism in the contemporary period. It will first give an overview of the major Buddhist doctrines, and then review its history in a concise manner. Then it will look into a number of aspects of Buddhism, including institutional developments, lay Buddhism, ritual practices, and social relationships in various areas of today’s world. Recent developments of Chinese Buddhism, which is closely concerned with human life in this world, as well as how Buddhism has transformed itself to suit the needs of the modern world, will also be explored.

**Aim and Objective**  
The course aims at introducing the basic beliefs and practices of Buddhism to its students. Its objective is to, by critically evaluating reading materials during lectures, enable students to understand how Buddhism has constantly reinvigorated its institutional and doctrinal traditions in order to better respond to the social, political, and scientific progress of the human world.

**Assessment ratio**  
Students are required to read the relevant papers before coming to the lecture so that they can participate in our lively discussion. The final examination is based on one essay, one presentation and lecture participation.
Presentation is arranged. Each group has about 15 minutes to give a presentation. This requires students’ critical thinking on the related topics and informed participation. This is the key for the success of the course.

Also, students are going to write a term paper of about 2500 to 3000 words on one of topics discussed in lectures, or students may choose your own topic related to the course (in this case, make sure you discuss with me beforehand). Students are expected to attend all lectures on time without being late.

100% coursework, including:
(i) 70%: a short essay with 2,500-3,000 words
(ii) 30%: a presentation (each group with 15 minutes duration)

Criteria for marking essay
1. Good and correct understanding of the Buddhist teaching given in the lectures,
2. Clear, logical and rational presentation of your ideas and thoughts,
3. Show that you have read at least three papers in your essay either in your footnotes or endnotes and list them at the end.

Course schedule with bibliography
Lecture One (15th Jan): Course introduction/ Introduction of resources for the study of Buddhism

Lecture Two (22nd Jan): Buddhism in Contemporary China

Lecture Three (29th Jan): Humanistic Buddhism in the Modern World (1):
Lecture Four (12th Feb): Humanistic Buddhism in the Modern World (2):

Lecture Five (19th Feb): Engaged Buddhism in the Modern World:
*David Schak and Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao (2005), Taiwan’s Socially Engaged Buddhist Groups (http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/2803) Development of Lay Buddhism

Lecture Six (26th Feb): Contemporary Social Practices of Buddhism

Lecture Seven (5th Mar): Reading Week

Lecture Eight (12th Mar): Theoretical Basis of Buddhist Rituals
Lecture Nine (19th Mar): Buddhist Rituals I


Lecture Ten (26th Mar): Buddhist Rituals II


Lecture Eleven (2nd Apr): Buddhist Practice and its Benefits


Lecture Twelve (9th Apr.): Buddhism in Contemporary Hong Kong


Lecture Thirteen (16th Apr):

Lecture Fourteen (23rd Apr): Course Revision

*Recommended Readings