Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies
ELECTIVES / INTER-FACULTY ELECTIVES
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

BSTC2005 Buddhism in Today’s World (6 Credits)

Offering semester: 2nd
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

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 30 minutes to give a presentation. This requires students’ critical reading of assigned materials 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) 60%: a short essay with 2,500-3,000 words
(ii) 30%: a book presentation with 5 minutes duration
(iii) 10%: lecture attendance and class participation

**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:** Course introduction/ Introduction of resources for the study of Buddhism

**Lecture Two:** Introduction of Tibetan Buddhism

**Lecture Three:** Buddhism in Contemporary China


**Lecture Four:** Introduction of Pail Buddhism

**Lecture Five:** Humanistic Buddhism in the Modern World:


**Lecture Six:** 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)
Reading Week

Lecture Seven: Development of Lay Buddhism

Lecture Eight: Theoretical Basis of Buddhist Rituals

Lecture Nine: Buddhist Rituals I

Lecture Ten: Buddhist Rituals II

Lecture Eleven: Buddhist Practice and its Benefits

**Lecture Twelve: Buddhism in Contemporary Hong Kong**

*Kwong, Chungwah, The Public Role of Religion in Post-Colonial Hong Kong: An Historical Overview of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity (Asian Thought and Culture, 53; New York: Peter Lang, 2002), pp.64-69.*