Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU

BSTC2006 Buddhist Psychology and Mental Cultivation

(6 Credits)

Minor in Buddhist Studies Programme

(The course is open to students from all faculties as a free elective)

Offering Semester:  2nd Semester of 2016/2017
Day of the week:  Thursday 4:30 pm – 6:20 pm
Venue:  CPD 3.28, Centennial Campus
Lecturer:  Dr. G.A. Somaratne
Email:  soma@hku.hk
Office:  Room 408, 4/F, Jockey Club Tower, Centre of Buddhist Studies
Tel:  3917-5076

Course Description
In this course we will examine Buddhist discourses on the nature and operation of the mind. We will study basic Buddhist principles and diverse practices of mental cultivation based on ancient Buddhist texts and manuals that present unique perspectives on individual, family, and society at large and world. The main topics covered in this course include psychology of dhamma and the theory of “dependent co-arising”, relation between mind and body, sensory perception and obsession, intentional actions and human wellbeing, positive thinking and self-initiative, controlling emotions and mindfulness practice, selfless being and awakened mind.

Objectives
At the end of this course, students are expected to develop the ability to:

1. Explain the Buddhist teachings regarding the nature and operation of the mind.
2. Identify basic Buddhist principles, meditation practices and personality types.
3. Analyze the principles in which these diverse Buddhist meditation practices cater to different personality types.
4. Relate Buddhist ideas and principles in understanding and finding perpetual solutions to complex psychological, social, political and environmental issues in the modern world.
5. Develop an appreciative and positive attitude towards one’s life, family, society and the world.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dhamma, Buddha, and psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Theory of dependent co-arising</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Problem of ‘my self’</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Problem of craving</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Consciousness, mental factors and the analysis of mind and body</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Sense perception and obsession</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Psychological analysis of social conflicts</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Intentional actions, positive thinking and self-initiative</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Controlling emotions and dealing with defilements</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mindfulness practice and working with memory</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Personality types and meditation techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Awakened mind and awakened ones</td>
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**Assessment**

100% coursework with the following breakdowns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Tasks</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reflective Writing based on a concept learned from Lectures 1 to 4 (1000 words)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>(Due February 28)</td>
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<td>2. Reflective Writing based on a concept learned from Lectures 5 to 8 (1200 words)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>(Due March 31)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Reflective Writing based on a concept learned from Lectures 9 to 12 (1,500 words)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>(Due April 28)</td>
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<td>4. Attendance and participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Note:**

- All written assignments are to be submitted by uploading onto Moodle prior to 23:50 of the due date, late submission will be subjected to mark deduction. Files must be renamed as “LASTNAME First name”, e.g., “LEUNG Chi Wai Tony”. A printed copy of each assignment must also be handed over to the class instructor.

**General expectation of student performance at the various grades:**

Recommended Reading List


**Recommended Internet Resources**

1. An Entrance to the World of Buddhism [www.buddhistdoor.com]

2. Buddhism and Science [www.mindandlife.org]


4. Mindfulness teachers talks [www.dhammaseed.org]

5. Access to insight [www.accesstoinsight.org]


7. Translations of the Buddha’s discourses [http://suttacentral.net/]