

Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU

**BSTC 2008 Sanskrit Language
(Joint course with BSTC6045 Sem 1)**

Course Description: This is an elementary course meant for those who are beginners to the Sanskrit language. Students will be introduced to the Sanskrit grammar required for reading Buddhist Sanskrit texts. As the course proceeds, students will be gradually and systematically introduced to both Buddhist textual materials on the one hand, and elementary Sanskrit grammar on the other.

The purpose of this course is to enable students to understand the Buddhist *sūtras* in Sanskrit. The special focus will be to familiarize students with the basic Buddhist Sanskrit terminologies and read simple sentences from the Buddhist Sanskrit *sūtras*. All vocabularies will be selected from the Buddhist Sanskrit literature, particularly the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā pā ramitā* , to ensure students get familiar with Buddhist doctrines and technical terms.

Course Content: The course begins with basic Sanskrit grammar along with exercises. As the students learn and attempt the graded passages, all the grammars involved will be analyzed and doctrines explained to them in a gradual build-up manner. This includes the following: Sanskrit alphabets, Devanāgarī Scripts three genders, three numbers, different nouns and their declensions, different verbs and their conjugations, three tenses, participles and their functions, gerunds, compound, *sandhi*, classification of sentences and reading some passages from the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*.

Expected Outcome: At the end of this course, students may able to read simple Sanskrit passages and will be familiar with Sanskrit Buddhist terms and basic Buddhist doctrines.

Teaching and Learning Method: Lectures, class discussions and tutorials.

Offering Semester	First Semester
Lecturer	Ven. Dr. Amrita Nanda
Office	Rm 401, 4/F Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Tel:	39175077
Email	nanda@hku.hk
Schedule	Every Thursday from 6:30 to 9:30 pm
Class Venue	CPD 2.37

Assessment:

- 20% - Class participation
- 20% - Quizzes
- 60% - Final examination at the end of the semester.

Lecture Schedule

Week 1

- Introduction to Sanskrit Language
- Sanskrit Alphabet
- Sanskrit Nouns
- Three Genders of Sanskrit Nouns
- Introduction to Eight Cases and their senses
- Nominative, Genitive and Locative cases

Week 2

- Declension of masculine noun a ending in *a*
- Adjectives
- Verb to be
- Indeclinable particles *ca*, *vā* and *api*
- Vocabulary and Exercises

Week 3

- Accusative case
- Ablative case
- Sanskrit verbs
- Verbal prefixes
- Three grades of strengthening verbs

Week 4

- Class I, IV, VI and X verbs
- Conjugation of class I verbs in present tense
- Vocabulary and Exercises
- Quiz 1

Week 5

- Dative case
- Further discussion on Genitive case
- Vocative case
- Declension of Feminine nouns ending in —*ā*
- Suffixes—*tā*, *tva* and *tas*
- Vocabulary and Exercise

Week 6

- Class VI, IV and X verbs
- Personal Pronouns
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in —*a*, neutral nouns ending in—*a* and feminine nouns ending in— *ā*.
- Vocabulary and Exercise

Week 7

- Instrumental case
- Causative verbs

- Declension of masculine nouns ending in —*u*
- Declension of neutral nouns ending in—*u*
- Personal pronouns further discussion

Week 8

- Denominatives
- Past Passive Participles
- Indeclinable and Adverbs
- Imperative mode
- Vocabulary and Exercise
- Quiz 2

Week 9

- *Parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* verbs
- Gerunds
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in —*i*
- Declension of neutral nouns ending in —*i*
- Declension of feminine nouns ending in— *i* and ending in— *ī*
- Vocabulary and Exercise

Week 10

- Hard and soft Consonants
- Vowel *Sandhi*
- Consonant *Sandhi*
- *Visarga Sandhi*
- Internal *Sandhi*
- The passive voice

Week 11

- Declension of interrogative pronouns
- The integrative particles
- Future Tense
- Present participles
- Reading *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*

Week 12

- Future passive participles
- Relative pronouns
- Possessive suffix —*in*
- Further discussion on genitive
- Reading *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*

Note: This schedule is both approximate and flexible. We may deviate from it depending on the pace of students' comprehension.

Textbook:

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015), *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide* (5th edition), The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Ltd.

Reference books:

Speijer, J.S. (1998), *Sanskrit Syntax*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994) *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

Thomas, Egenes (1994) *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

- (2000), *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

Whitney, Williams D. (1979), *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

Monier, Williams (1979), *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, Delhi.

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