Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies in 2020-2021

ELECTIVE COURSE
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

BSTC 2003 Zen In East Asia (6 Credits)

Offering Semester 1st Semester
Lecturer Dr. Tony Chui
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Email tonychui@hku.hk
Day of the week TBA Every Thursday 4:30pm-6:25pm
Assessment 100% coursework
Class Venue TBA, Centennial Campus

1. Course Description:

Zen (禪) is a significant element in the cultural backbone of East Asia. In this course, attention will be focused upon three broad areas of study: Zen thought, its practice, and its impact on the cultures of East Asia. The course will begin with the introduction of proto-Zen from India to China, followed by a description of its basic teachings and historical developments in China, Korea and Japan. Zen practices will be examined through a survey of Zen monastic life. The cultural impact of Zen forms an integral component of this course and, for this purpose, the following themes will be discussed: paintings, poetry (禪詩), and other forms of Zen art in China and Korea; Cha-no-yu (Tea Ceremony), “Haiku” (俳句) poetry, Zen gardens, and swordsmanship in Japan. In this course, students will gain a basic understanding of Zen Buddhism and the impact it has had upon the thought and culture of East Asia.

2. Objectives:

The course is intended for students to gain a basic understanding of Zen Buddhism and its contribution to culture and spirituality of East Asia. Students at the end of this course are expected to gain the ability to: 1) describe the main teachings of Zen Buddhism; 2) recognize the unique teaching method of directly seeing into and training the mind; 3) describe different traditions and interpretations of Zen in China, Korea and Japan; 4) appreciate different cultural activities derived from Zen; and 5) realize the extent of Zen Buddhism’s influence upon the spiritual diversity in East Asia.

3. Assessment Ratio:

100 % coursework with the following breakdowns:
(1) Presentation – 25 %
(2) Final Essay (2000 words) – 60 %
(3) Attendance – 15 %
4. Schedule of Classes (Tentative):

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<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Origins of Zen Buddhism</td>
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<td>The introduction and development of Zen in China</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The acceptance and development of Zen in Korea and Japan</td>
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<td>Zen thought and practice</td>
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<td>The aesthetics of Zen</td>
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5. Reading list:

Compulsory reading:


Suggested reading:

The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, tr. McRae, John, Numata Tripitaka Translation. 


*(Last updated: July 10, 2020)*