UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OFFERED BY CENTRE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES IN 2019-20

ELECTIVE COURSE
(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: 10:30pm-12:20pm (Tuesday) / Second semester
Venue: CPD 3.04 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 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
75% short essay with 2,500-3,000 words
15 % Presentation. Each group has 10 minutes
10 % 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.

General expectations of student performance at the various grades

About Plagiarism:

Please be aware of plagiarism. For details, please refer to
http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism

Course schedule with bibliography

Lecture One (21st Jan): Course introduction/ Introduction of resources for the study of Buddhism

Lecture Two (28th Jan): Lunar New Year Holiday

Lecture Three (4th Feb): Current studies of Chinese Buddhism

Readings:

Lecture Four (11th Feb): Buddhism in Contemporary China

Lecture Five (18th Feb): Humanistic Buddhism in the Modern World (1):

Lecture Six (25th Feb): Humanistic Buddhism in the Modern World (2):

Lecture Seven (3rd Mar): Contemporary Social Practices of Buddhism

Lecture Eight (10th Mar): Reading Week

Lecture Nine (17th Mar): 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 Ten (24th Mar): Theoretical Basis of Buddhist Rituals

**Lecture Eleven (31st Mar):** Buddhist Practice and Ritual I

**Lecture Twelve (7th Apr.):** Buddhist Practice and Ritual II

**Lecture Thirteen (14th Apr):** Buddhist Practice and its Benefits

**Lecture Fourteen (21st Apr) Buddhism in Contemporary Hong Kong and Revision**

*Recommended Readings

*(Last updated: July 23, 2019)*