Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies in 2021-2022
ELECTIVE COURSE
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

**BSTC2008**
Sanskrit Language I

**Course Description:** Sanskrit, being one of the most ancient languages known to humankind, is considered to be a key to understanding human civilization, in particular, the rich cultural, philosophical and religious heritage of India whose influence on our world continues to be felt. Students of history, history of science, comparative literature, general and historical linguistics, philosophy and religions will discover that a basic knowledge of the language greatly enriches their studies. For students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, a reading knowledge of Sanskrit is essential.

This course is designed for absolute beginners, no prior knowledge of Sanskrit is required for this course. This course will give a comprehensive overview of the history, structure, and grammar of the language, covering topics such as scripts, phonetics, declensions, conjugations, and meters. Students are expected to be able to read and comprehend a simple Sanskrit passages by the end of the course. This course is not for speaking Sanskrit.

**Course Content:** The course begins with basic Sanskrit grammar along with exercises selected from Buddhist texts. As the students learn and attempt the graded passages, all the grammars involved will be analyzed and doctrines will be 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, present tense, future tense and past tense verbs, participles and their functions, gerunds, sandhi, classification of sentences.

**Objectives**
(1) To enable students to read and comprehend simple Sanskrit passages.
(2) To enable understand the basic structure and grammar of the Sanskrit language.
(3) To help students to understand Sanskrit Buddhist Literature.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offering Semester</th>
<th>First Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Dr. Amrita Nanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>Rm 4.09, 4/F Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tel:</td>
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<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nanda@hku.hk">nanda@hku.hk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>Every Tuesday from 10:30 to 12:20 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Venue</td>
<td>CPD-3.29</td>
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</tbody>
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Assessment:

- 50% - Coursework
  - 10% - class-participation
  - 30% - Mid-term quiz
  - 10% - weekly home works
- 50% - Final examination at the end of the semester. It will be an open-book exam.

Lecture Schedule

Lesson 1 (07/09/2021)
- Introduction to Sanskrit Language and Literature
- Introduction to Sanskrit Alphabet
- Introducing the Devanāgarī Scripts

Lesson 2 (14/09/2021)
- Writing the Devanāgarī Scripts
- A General Introduction to Sanskrit Nominals:
  - Three Genders of Sanskrit Nouns
  - Introduction to Eight Cases in Sanskrit
  - Nominative, Genitive and Locative cases

Lesson 3 (21/09/2021)
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in -a:
- Introduction to Sanskrit Adjectives
- Writing Complex Devanāgarī Scripts
- Indeclinable particles ca, vā and āpi
- Simple Sanskrit Greetings expression
- Vocabularies
- Exercises

Lesson 4 (28/09/2021)
- Introduction to Sanskrit Verbs:
  - Verbal prefixes
  - Three grades of strengthening verbs
  - Class I, IV, VI and X verbs
  - Conjugation of class I verbs in present tense
- Vocabularies and Exercises.

Lesson 5 (05/10/2021)
- Introduction neutral nouns ending in -a:
- The indeclinable particle –iti, eva and sma
- Introduction to Feminine nouns ending in —ā.
- Anusvāra sandhi (full sandhi will be introduced in lesson 10).
- Vocabularies and Exercises
Lesson 6 (19/10/2021)
- Causative verbs
- Past Passive Participles form
- Suffixes-ṭā, tva, and tās.
- Vocabularies and Exercises.

Lesson 7 (26/10/2021)
- Introduction to Personal Pronouns
- Mid-term quiz (one hour)

Lesson 8 (02/11/2021)
- Introduction to nouns ending in—u
  - Declension of masculine nouns ending in —u
  - Declension of neutral nouns ending in—u
- Future tense verbs
- Gerunds verbs
- Vocabularies and Exercises

Lesson 9 (09/11/2021)
- Introduction to –i ending nouns:
  - Declension of m nouns ending in -i
  - Declension of n nouns ending in –i
  - Declension f nouns ending in –i
- Demonstrative Pronouns
- Imperfect  Tense (one form of past tense)
- Vocabulary and Exercises.

Lesson 10 (16/11/2021)
- Parasmaipada and ātmanepadā verbs
- Interrogative Pronouns
- Interrogative particles.
- Introduction to the Sandhi rules
- Visarga Sandhi
- Vocabulary and Exercises.

Lesson 11 (23/11/2021)
- Infinitive verbs
- Vowel Sandhi
- Sandhi for final t
- Sandhi for n
- Vocabulary and Exercises.

Lesson 12 (30/11/2021)
- Future Passive Participle
- Possessive suffixes ‘vant’ and ‘man’
- Review for the exam
Note: This schedule is both approximate and flexible. We may deviate from it depending on the pace of students' comprehension and feedback during the class.

Textbook:
(Those who want to have copy can directly by from the Buddha-Dharma centre of Hong Kong: https://buddhadharma.co/Reading-Buddhist-Sanskrit-Texts-An-Elementary-Grammatical-Guide
Contact Address:
The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Ltd.
Address: 28/F, Pacific Plaza, 410 Des Voeux Road West, Hong Kong.
Tel: (852) 2673-0081
Fax. (852) 2673-0100

Note: We will be selective in follow the textbook exactly. Therefore, handouts will be uploaded to Moodle before every class.

Reference books:


Online Resources:
For Devanagārī script writing and alphabets pronunciation practice: https://enjoylearningsanskrit.com/sanskrit-alphabet-tutor/

For additional Sanskrit Grammar practice: https://ubcsanskrit.ca/
Sanskrit Dictionary

Note:

Grade Expectations in Faculty of Arts:
http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. The University upholds the principle that plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and any student found plagiarizing is liable to disciplinary action in addition to failing the assessment concerned. Please read the following webpage on "plagiarism" for details:

http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism