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 passage 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 grammar 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 understanding of 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel</td>
<td>39175077/92850204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nanda@hku.hk">nanda@hku.hk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>Every Tuesday from 10:30 am to 12:20 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Venue</td>
<td>CPD2.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment:

- **50%** - Coursework
  - 10% - class-participation
  - 30% - Mid-term quiz (open-book quiz)
  - 10% - weekly home works
- **50%** - Final examination at the end of the semester (open-book exam).

**Lecture Schedule**

Lesson 1 (Sep 6, 2022)
- Introduction to Sanskrit Language and Literature
- Introduction to Sanskrit Alphabet
- Introducing the Devanāgarī Scripts

Lesson 2 (Sep 13, 2022)
- 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 (Sep 20, 2022)
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in -a:
- Introduction to Sanskrit Adjectives
- Writing Complex Devanāgarī Scripts
- Indeclinable particles ca, vā and api
- Simple Sanskrit Greetings expression
- Vocabularies
- Practicing Sanskrit to English translation exercises

Lesson 4 (Sep 27, 2022)
- Introduction to Sanskrit Verbs:
  - Verbal prefixes
  - Three grades of strengthening verbs
  - Class I, IV, VI, and X verbs
  - Conjugation of class I verbs in the present tense
- Vocabularies
- Practicing Sanskrit to English translation exercises.

*(No class on Oct 4, 2022) (General Holiday)*
*(No class on Oct 11, 2022) (Reading week)*
Lesson 5 (Oct 18, 2022)
- Introduction neutral nouns ending in -a:
- The indeclinable particle –iti, eva and sma
- Introduction to Feminine nouns ending in —ā.
- Anusvarga sandhi (full sandhi will be introduced in lesson 10).
- Vocabularies and Practicing Sanskrit to English translation exercises.

Lesson 6 (Oct 25, 2022)
- Causative verbs
- Past Passive Participles form
- Suffixes- tā, tvā, and tas.
- Vocabularies and Practicing Sanskrit to English translation exercises.

Lesson 7 (Nov 1, 2022)
- **Mid-term quiz (one and half an hour)**

Lesson 8 (Nov 8, 2022)
- Introduction to Personal Pronouns
- Introduction to nouns ending in—u
  - Declension of masculine nouns ending in —u
  - Declension of neutral nouns ending in —u
- Vocabularies and Practicing Sanskrit to English translation exercises.

Lesson 9 (Nov 15, 2022)
- Future tense verbs
- Gerunds verbs
- 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
- Vocabularies and Practicing Sanskrit to English translation exercises.

Lesson 10 (Nov 22, 2022)
- Demonstrative Pronouns
- Infinitive verbs
- Imperfect Tense (one form of past tense)
- Vocabularies and Practicing Sanskrit to English translation exercises.

Lesson 11 (Nov 29, 2022)
- Introduction to Sandhi
- Interrogative Pronouns
- 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)

Note: We will be selective in following the textbook. 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:

**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

**Faculty Grade Expectations**: http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf