Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies  
(OPENS TO ALL FACULTIES)

**BSTC2021 Buddhist Ethics (6 Credits)**

**ELECTIVE COURSE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Dr. Chengzhong PU</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>Rm 4.03, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>I am in office most of the time, or by appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pcz100@hku.hk">pcz100@hku.hk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture hours</td>
<td>15:30-17:20 pm, Friday (2nd Semester)</td>
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<td>Class Venue</td>
<td>CPD- LG.18</td>
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**Course Description**

Since morality plays a fundamental role in its soteriology, Buddhism has always been regarded as the most ethical world religion. This course provides the students with an opportunity to become acquainted with a variety of Buddhist moral teachings concerning topics such as ‘what are good and bad’, ‘why and how to be good’, etc., and their interpretations in relation to some social ethical issues including war, abortion environmentalism, etc.

**Course Objectives**

1. To highlight the fundamental moral values and virtues in Buddhism;
2. To discuss social and ethical issues by applying the highlighted Buddhist moral doctrines;
3. To nurture an awareness of the relevancy of Buddhism to contemporary society
4. To practice critical skills and reflective inquiry about matters of personally and publically ethical importance.

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Generate an awareness of ethical issues and act according to one’s better judgement.
2. Being equipped with a Buddhist understanding in viewing ethical issues.
3. Gain enhanced ability to rationally analyze ethical issues.
4. Being able to understand Buddhism’s relevance to modern world.
5. Build a foundation for further inquiries into Buddhism and Contemporary society.

# Lecture Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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| Week 1 | 21. 01. 2022 | Introduction of the course: scope and limit; defining 'Ethics'.  
Read: pp. 21-38. | Page numbers refer to the Required Reading.                                               |
| Week 2 | 28. 01. 2022 | Buddhist Moral teachings  
Read: pp. 1-11.                           |                                                                                             |
| Week 3 | 11. 02. 2022 | Buddhist Values  
Read: pp. 12-16.                              |                                                                                             |
| Week 4 | 18. 02. 2022 | The Buddhist Social and Mahayana Ethics  
Read: pp. 17-20.                   |                                                                                             |
| Week 5 | 25. 02. 2022 | Buddhist idea of equality (social)  
Read the uploaded article on the Moodle |                                                                                             |
| Week 6 | 4. 03. 2022  | Buddhist idea of equality (gender)  
Read: pp. 78-88.                    |                                                                                             |
|        | 11. 03. 2022 | **Reading Week**                                                      |                                                                                             |
| Week 7 | 18. 03. 2022 | Buddhist ethics of Sexuality  
Read: pp. 53-68.                        | Quiz 1 Deadline for Book report                                                            |
| Week 8 | 25. 03. 2022 | War and Terrorism  
Read: pp. 69-83.                        |                                                                                             |
| Week 9 | 01. 04. 2022 | Abortion, Gene editing and Cloning  
Read: pp. 84-99; 116-131.                |                                                                                             |
| Week 10| 08. 04. 2022 | Suicide and Euthanasia  
Read: pp. 100-115.                        |                                                                                             |
| Week 11| 22. 04. 2022 | Animals and the Environment  
Read: pp. 39-52.                         | Deadline for Experiment                                                                    |
| Week 12| 29. 04. 2022 | Buddhist economic ethics  
Read materials on the Moodle page                   | Quiz 2                                                                                        |
**Assessment:** 100% coursework made up with the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>Submission deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Discussions</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Experiment (1200-1500 words)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Apr. 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Report of 1800-2200 words</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Mar. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Mar. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Apr. 29</td>
</tr>
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**Grade Expectations in Faculty of Arts:**
http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf

**Further Notes on the Experiment and Book Report**

1. For an **Experiment Report**, you can choose either of these two: 1) write a report of 1200-1500 words in which you identify one issue (global, social, or/and ethical) and create a Buddhist solution for it; 2) write a report of your discussion with anyone on the contemporary interpretation /implication/value of any Buddhist doctrine. Your report should be clearly structured and formal in both style and wording.

2. For the Book Report (1800-2200 words), you can choose any item from the Recommended Reading List, EXCLUDING the Required Reading. You can also choose to write on a book that is not in the list, but please let me or your TA know first. Necessary components of a college level Book Report should include a concise and accurate systematic summary of the author’s views/points, your critical analysis of / view on the author’s views/points and argumentation, and a conclusion. You can chose to comment on a part of a book, but a good general summary of the whole book is required. This option DOES NOT apply if your reading is an article.

3. Your writings should include proper referencing and citation, and be **double-spaced**. Any one of the major citation formats/styles such as Chicago Manual of Style, Humanities is acceptable, and in-text citation should be ok but with page numbers.

4. All your written works should be submitted through the ‘turn-it-in’ on the Moodle course page. The acceptable similarity rate is 20% for the book report.

5. The simple marking guidelines are: 70% is for the quality of your writing (general clarity, argumentation, structure); 15% for language; 15% for technical matters (proper title page, citation [if necessary], bibliography [if necessary], etc.)

6. Late submission with no justifiable excuses is liable for penalty of lowering assignment grade: 1) within first 7 days after the deadline, one sub-grade will be deducted (e.g. A ⇒ A-); 2) a grade from two weeks after the deadline (A ⇒ B).

7. No plagiarism. For details, please refer to

http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism
Recommended readings for Book Report


Further Readings on the course


King, Sallie B. Socially Engaged Buddhism, State University Press of New York, 1996.

Further Readings on Individual Lectures
1. Lecture 1:

2. Lecture 2:
   Kotyk, Jeffrey. 2018. ‘Astrological Determinism in Indian Buddhism’. Journal of
International Association of Buddhist Studies, 41, pp. 145-167.

3. **Lecture 3:**

4. **Lecture 4:**


5. **Lecture 5:**


6. **Lecture 6:**


7. **Lecture 7:**

Cheng, Fung Kei. 2018. ‘Being Different with Dignity: Buddhist Inclusiveness
of Homosexuality’. *Social Sciences*, 7, 51, pp. 1-16.

8. **Lecture 8:**

9. **Lecture 9:**

10. **Lecture 10:**

11. **Lecture 11:**


12. **Lecture 12:**


**Online Sources:**

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry on Consequentialism
http://www.iep.utm.edu/consequ/

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry on Deontological Ethics
http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-deontological/

Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy entry on Psychological Egoism
http://www.iep.utm.edu/psychego/

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry on Metaethics
http://www.iep.utm.edu/metaethi/

The electronic *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*. http://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/