Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies in 2023-2024

ELECTIVE COURSE
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

BSTC2049 Buddhism and Gender (6 Credits)

Offering Semester 2nd Semester
Lecturer Dr. Catherine Hardie
Office 4/F, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Tel
Email
Day of the week Tuesday
Assessment 100% coursework
Class Venue 10:30 – 12:20

1. Course Description:

Gender dynamics shape religious worlds in diverse and complex ways. This holds true in Buddhism as it does in other religious traditions. In this course we will take an interdisciplinary approach to critically examine the relationship between Buddhism and gender in a broad variety of historical and Buddhist thematic contexts. To accomplish this, we will immerse ourselves in Buddhist texts and teachings, analyse material and visual culture, and delve into the lived experiences of Buddhist practitioners spanning from Early Buddhism to the present day, across a range of Buddhist traditions, cultures, and geographical settings. In so doing, we will explore topics including the role and status of women, the construction of Buddhist masculinities and femininities, the gendering of religious roles, institutions and practices, and activism towards gender equality in Buddhist communities. No background knowledge of Buddhism is required for this course and all students are welcome.

2. Objectives:

By completing this course, students will cultivate an understanding of the importance of gender in the study of Buddhism. They will develop a comprehensive grasp of the relationship between Buddhism and gender in a variety of concrete historical and thematic contexts. Furthermore, students will gain valuable insights into specific gender issues that arise within the context of Buddhist texts, visual culture, and lived religious experience, including issues pertaining to gender identity and representation, as well as soteriology, culture, ethics, and aesthetics.
3. **Assessment Ratio:**

100% coursework with the following breakdowns:
1. Group project – 30%
2. In-class tests – 20%
3. Long essay – 30%
4. Class participation – 20%

**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](http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism)

**Grading Criteria**

Correct understanding of the material in the lectures is essential. Students are expected to show critical and research elements in their essays. Further information will be provided in the lectures. Here is the Faculty Grade Expectations. [http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf](http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf)

4. **Course Content & Topics:**

1. Introduction to Buddhism and gender studies
2. Women in Early Buddhism
3. Women in Mahāyāna Buddhism
4. Buddhist masculinities across time and space
5. Gender and monasticism
6. Gender and the Bodhisattva ideal
7. Constructions of Gender in Buddhist Art and Iconography
8. Gender and the body in Buddhist practices
9. Women and gender in Tibetan Buddhism
10. Buddhist women’s empowerment in the modern era I
11. Buddhist women’s empowerment in the modern era II
12. The third gender and transgenderism
5. **Recommended Readings**

**Introductory Reading on Buddhism**


**Recommended Readings:**


