

CENTRE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES

Buddhism has played an important role in the history and culture of Asia and is still a dominant religion in many Asian countries. The Minor in Buddhist Studies aims to give students a broad-based education that is both coherent and flexible and address the relation of Buddhism to culture, society, language, art, film and psychology. It provides a study pathway on the fundamental doctrines, institutions, and representations of Buddhism through historical, philosophical, artistic, psychological and sociological approaches. Students will have opportunities to gain a greater appreciation of commonly shared elements in Asian cultures (Indian, Chinese, Tibetan, and Japanese) and examine Buddhist practices in traditional and contemporary contexts.

To obtain a minor in Buddhist Studies, students are required to take a total of 36 credits. They are expected to take two introductory core courses (BSTC1003 and BSTC1004) and four advanced courses. The courses that can be selected to meet the requirements of the minor are listed below:

Core courses (12 credits):

- BSTC1003. Introduction to religious studies (6 credits)
- BSTC1004. Introduction to Buddhism (6 credits)

Advanced/cross-listed courses (24 credits):

- BSTC2002. Life and Buddhism (6 credits)
- BSTC2003. The Influence of Zen Buddhism on Japanese aesthetics (6 credits)
- BSTC2004. Chinese Buddhism and ritual (6 credits)
- BSTC2005. Buddhism in today's world (6 credits)
- BSTC2006. Buddhist psychology and mental cultivation (6 credits)
- BSTC2009. Japanese culture and thought: the Buddhist impact (6 credits)
- BSTC2010. Buddhist art of Asia (6 credits)
- BSTC2013. Buddhism through film (6 credits)
- BSTC2014. Chinese Buddhist art (6 credits)
- BSTC2017. Buddhism and economics (6 credits)
- BSTC2021. Buddhist ethics (6 credits)
- BSTC2022. The evolution of Buddhist meditation (6 credits)
- BSTC2023. History of Buddhism in India (6 credits)
- BSTC2024. The Buddhist conquest of China (6 credits)
- BSTC2025. Early Buddhist philosophy (6 credits)
- BSTC2026. Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy (6 credits)
- BSTC2027. Tibetan Buddhism (6 credits)
- BSTC2028. Making sense of Chan Buddhism (6 credits)
- BSTC2029. Reading Chinese Buddhist texts (6 credits)
- BSTC2030. Chinese Buddhist calligraphy (6 credits)
- BSTC2048. Buddhism and science: view and meditation in the light of physics and neuroscience (6 credits)
- BSTC2049. Buddhism and gender (6 credits)
- BSTC2050. Buddhism and ecology: integrating thought with action (6 credits)
- ARTH2047. Arts of India (6 credits)
- ARTH2087. Buddhist art of East Asia (6 credits)
- CHIN2253. Chinese philosophy III: Buddhism (6 credits)
- PHIL2800. Buddhist philosophy (6 credits)

- BSTC2008. Sanskrit language I (6 credits)
- BSTC2020. Sanskrit language II (6 credits)
- BSTC3040. Sanskrit language III (6 credits)
- BSTC3041. Sanskrit language IV (6 credits)
- BSTC2015. Tibetan language I (6 credits)
- BSTC2018. Tibetan language II (6 credits)

BSTC3042.	Tibetan language III (6 credits)
BSTC3043.	Tibetan language IV (6 credits)
BSTC2016.	Pāli language I (6 credits)
BSTC2019.	Pāli language II (6 credits)
BSTC3044.	Pāli language III (6 credits)
BSTC3045.	Pāli language IV (6 credits)
BSTC2046.	Buddhist Chinese language: Indian Buddhist texts (6 credits)
BSTC2047.	Buddhist Chinese language: native Chinese texts (6 credits)

Note: Please refer to the course description of non-BSTC courses from the relevant Programme's syllabuses. They may have prerequisite(s).

Core Courses

BSTC1003. Introduction to religious studies (6 credits)

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the academic study of religion, exploring its diverse manifestations, historical developments, and methodological frameworks. Students will examine the beliefs, practices, and historical trajectories of major world religions—including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Taoism, and Shinto—while critically engaging with the theological, sociological, psychological, and phenomenological interpretive approaches that scholars employ to interpret religious phenomena. The course also traces the evolution of Religious Studies as a discipline, from its early antecedents to contemporary debates, equipping students with the analytical tools to understand how religions shape and reflect human thought, culture, and society. Through this interdisciplinary lens, students will develop a nuanced appreciation of religion's intellectual and cultural significance while honing their ability to assess religious traditions with scholarly rigor.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC1004. Introduction to Buddhism (6 credits)

Buddhism, being a major world religion, is an important cultural heritage of mankind. Its teachings have not only influenced art and philosophy throughout history, but have also become a source of inspiration for contemporary researchers in the fields of psychotherapy, neuroscience and education.

This course will systematically introduce to students the essence of Buddhist teachings. Special emphasis will be placed on the core teachings of the Buddha, which include the Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, Prajñā wisdom, Bodhisattva ideal, etc. and their practical applications.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

Advanced Courses

BSTC2002. Life and Buddhism (6 credits)

This course guides students to explore the thought, values and practices of Buddhism through the application of its fundamentals of philosophical theories and principles. Buddhist teachings entirely focus on the analysis of human life and offer a unique way to solve life's problems and achieve happiness. Just as the Buddha said, he taught one thing: suffering and its cessation. In this course, the basic Buddhist teachings of dependent arising, the relationship of mind and body, human behaviours and their consequences, the human condition and its causes, the concept of happiness, etc. will be investigated on the basis of the earliest Buddhist literatures namely the Pali Nikayas and Chinese Agamas.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2003. The Influence of Zen Buddhism on Japanese aesthetics (6 credits)

Zen (禪) is a significant element in the cultural backbone of Japan. In this course, attention will be focused upon the impact of Zen thought and practice on Japanese culture. The course will begin with the introduction of proto-Zen from India to China, followed by the transmission and development of Zen in Japan. The aesthetic impacts of Zen practices are an important component of this course. Zen's influence on the aesthetics of everyday objects, experience, and judgments will be examined through examples in architecture, landscaping, arts, literature, spirituality, and lifestyle. From this course, students will gain a basic understanding of Zen Buddhism and the impact it has had upon the everyday thought and culture of the Japanese people.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2004. Chinese Buddhism and ritual (6 credits)

From the very early period and throughout the entire history of its transmission, Buddhism has adopted indigenous rituals and practices, and devised a great variety of its own rituals. This course provides an introduction to Buddhist ritual practice in Chinese Buddhism from the perspectives of their psychological, religious and spiritual significance. It begins by exploring several theories and research methods of ritual adopted in anthropology and religious studies and proceeds to studies of the doctrinal, mythic and other dimensions of Buddhist practice, examining the structural patterns of various rituals, surveying the different categories of ceremonies, and analysing the most important types of rituals, including the recitation of sutras (scriptures) and mantras, funeral ritual, ritual of liberation of living animals, and the ritual of saving all sentient beings from water and land (shuilu fahui) are examined in some detail. The focus of concerns will be the effort of ritual experiences on individual enlightenment, effect of ritual, and the expression of participants' understanding of Buddhist teaching. As a comparative approach to Buddhist rituals, the course will use related myths, texts, and video recordings of rituals. Fieldwork studies may also be conducted. Students therefore can personally witness how Hong Kong Buddhists perform some of these rituals.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2005. Buddhism in today's world (6 credits)

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2006. Buddhist psychology and mental cultivation (6 credits)

This course offers a systematic exploration of Buddhist psychology through its classical texts and contemporary applications, examining how the Buddha's teachings on the mind provide transformative frameworks for understanding human experience. Students will engage with core Buddhist principles

and practices of mental cultivation that presents unique perspectives on individual, family, society, and world. The main topics covered in this course include psychology of dhamma and the theory of dependent co-arising, mind-body dynamics, sensory perception and obsession, intentional actions and human wellbeing, positive thinking and self-initiative, controlling emotions and mindfulness practice, selfless being and awakened mind.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2009. Japanese culture and thought: the Buddhist impact (6 credits)

Buddhism was perhaps the first instance of cultural globalization particularly in Asia beginning from the 3rd century B.C.E. Through missionary zeal it spread far and wide beyond the shores of the Indian subcontinent touching and influencing the lives of many Asian peoples. Since its introduction from Korea to Japan in the 6th century C.E., Buddhism played a pivotal role in moulding the ways of thinking of the Japanese people. This course introduces Japanese culture from Buddhist perspectives especially in light of Buddhist global developments by making constant references to both shared and distinct features in the ways of thinking between Chinese and Japanese peoples, and examining how Japanese Buddhism and culture including Zen, the tea ceremony, and Japanese cuisine became a global phenomenon after the 19th century. The aim is to critically appraise this cultural diversity based on Buddhism and heighten awareness of other cultures through the understanding of Japanese culture and thought.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2010. Buddhist art of Asia (6 credits)

Visual art has always played a key role in delivering the message of the Buddha throughout the long history of Buddhism. During the process of its dissemination, various forms of visual art were created with symbolic meanings to facilitate and enhance the practice of Buddhist ritual and meditation. Therefore, when Buddhism was transmitted to China from the Eastern Han dynasty onwards, not only did it influence the religious belief of Chinese people, it also had great impact on the development of Chinese art, culture and science. This course will study and examine Chinese Buddhist art from historical and cultural perspectives to explore its origin, evolution and influence. The transmission of Buddhism as well as its transformations will also be studied through the investigation of the various art treasures found along the Silk Road. A study of these archaeological artefacts, religious monuments, and art and sculpture from the area would reveal to us the fascinating story of the development of Buddhism from India to Central Asia, China, South and Southeast Asia, and eventually to Korea and Japan.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2013. Buddhism through film (6 credits)

Film is an important medium for reflecting and constructing not only contemporary cultural values, but also religious sentiments and stereotypes. In this course we will explore: a) how Buddhist doctrines, rituals, practitioners, and institutions are portrayed through films and documentaries produced in Asia and the West; and b) how Buddhist films may be used as forms of religious expression, practice and mission. During the course, students will acquire critical perspectives towards films and documentaries as multi-layered texts that use sound, visual narratives, and symbolic referents to portray religious subject-matters.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2014. Chinese Buddhist art (6 credits)

The course introduces students to the rich world of Chinese Buddhist art from historical and thematic perspectives, through an examination of important Buddhist caves, paintings, sculptures, calligraphy, architecture, and renowned world cultural heritage sites in China. Starting with an introduction on Indian Buddhist art, this course comprises a series of thematically designed topics and issues from different historical periods and regions of China. In this course, students will be exposed to the ways Buddhism influenced Chinese art and come to appreciate how some distinct movements of Chinese Buddhist art, such as Pure Land, Lotus Sutra, Maitreya, Bodhisattva path, Chan, and Huayan, influenced East Asian art in general. This course will enable students to achieve visual literacy and gain a historical understanding of the origins and evolution of Chinese Buddhist art and iconography as a result of social, political and philosophical changes. Furthermore, they will learn to critically analyze how Buddhist art conveys the Buddhist teachings and serves as an instrument of propagation for Buddhism at large.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2017. Buddhism and economics (6 credits)

Living in a market economy where short-term profit and economic growth appear to be the ultimate goal, can the Buddhist teachings bridge the divide between our spiritual and material needs and reconcile the tension between doing good and doing well? In this course we will introduce some core Buddhist teachings and explore ways of achieving sustainability in individuals, society and the environment through the cultivation of morality and well-being. The efficacy of Buddhist perspectives on decision-making and their practical implications to our daily life will be discussed. Prior knowledge of Buddhism and Economics may be useful but it is not required for this course.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2021. Buddhist ethics (6 credits)

Buddhism assigns ethics a crucial place in the daily life of its practitioners and their pursuit of the final spiritual goal. This course introduces students to core doctrines and teachings that underpin Buddhist ethical approaches alongside several essential Buddhist social, ritual and contemplative practices aimed at nurturing an ethical disposition. Through the lens of Buddhist perspectives, it critically explores a range of contemporary ethical issues, including animals and the environment, war and violence, sex and gender, abortion, suicide and euthanasia, and AI. The course also fosters a historically informed understanding of lived approaches to ethical issues across diverse Buddhist traditions, cultures and societies. Students will analyse complex ethical issues using insights from Buddhist teachings, refining their skills in critically evaluating ethical discourse.

Assessment: 100% coursework

BSTC2022. The evolution of Buddhist meditation (6 credits)

During the past decades, mindfulness practice, a form of Buddhist meditation, has not only become popular among mainstream culture embraced by some of the world's biggest corporates, including Google, Facebook, P&G, etc. but also become the building blocks of several important stress reduction psychosocial interventions such as Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). In this course, students will have a chance to study the evolution of Buddhist meditation: from its origination to its latest manifestation as psychosocial interventions spanning more than 2000 years. Through the study of Buddhist meditation texts and experiential learning, the theories and practices of several important Buddhist meditation methods will be introduced, such as mindful-breathing, compassionate meditation, samadhi and vipassana. Students will be expected to allocate time to practice at home what they have experientially learned in class. In order for

students to gain both a theoretical and practical understanding about the different types of meditation, this class will include weekly lectures and meditation workshops.

Assessment: 100% coursework

BSTC2023. History of Buddhism in India (6 credits)

This course aims to provide a comprehensive introduction to the history, doctrines and philosophy of Indian Buddhism. The main themes of the course include: the cultural background out of which Buddhism arose; the life of the historical founder and his teachings; the compilation of the Buddhist canon; the classification and development of the Buddha's teachings; interpretations and debates during the Buddhist Councils; the emergence and development of the major Buddhist sects; King Aśoka and his contribution to the propagation of Buddhism; the rise of Mahāyāna and Tantric Buddhism; the spread of Buddhism outside India; and the decline of Buddhism in India.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2024. The Buddhist conquest of China (6 credits)

Buddhism was introduced to China from India over 2,000 years ago and has been successfully integrated into Chinese culture and society, contributing to the development of Chinese civilization. In this course, we will examine how this foreign religion's conquest of China played out from a historical perspective and how it became part of Chinese society, culture, and other religions. The aim of this course is to examine the trials and tribulations which Buddhism went through while establishing itself in China and how it became an integral part of the Chinese culture.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2025. Early Buddhist philosophy (6 credits)

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of Buddhist philosophy as preserved in the Chinese Āgamas and Pāli Nikāyas which are considered among the earliest Buddhist literature. We will offer a description of the religious and philosophical milieu in which Buddhism arose in order to show how the polarization of intellectual thought into spiritualist and materialist ideologies gave rise to Buddhism. The following central topics will be discussed critically and analysed for presenting the epistemological, metaphysical and ethical foundation of Buddhist philosophy — dependent arising, an analysis of mind, moral theory and practice, the doctrine of non-self, and the conceptualization of *nibbāna*.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2026. Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy (6 credits)

The aim of this course is to provide a foundational knowledge of Mahāyāna Buddhism for students with no or little background in Buddhist Studies. At the end of the course, students will acquire fundamental knowledge of the Mahāyāna tradition. In keeping with this aim, this course will include: a survey of contemporary theories on the origins of Mahāyāna; an examination of the conception and formulation of the Bodhisattva ideal in the earliest extant Mahāyāna texts, such as the *Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, *Ugra-pariprcchā*, and so forth; discussions surrounding the question of primitive *Prajñāpāramitā*, the emptiness doctrine (*śūnyatā*) expounded by Nāgārjuna, the doctrines of the early Yogācāra and *tathāgatagarbha*. Other fundamental Mahāyāna doctrines examined include the *trikāya*, the six *pāramitā*, and the ten-stage progression (*daśabhūmi*). Some important scriptures are also selected for discussion, including the *Diamond-cutter sutra*, the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa*, and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2027. Tibetan Buddhism (6 credits)

Tibetan Buddhism is a form of Mahāyāna Buddhism that developed in Tibet, Mongolia, parts of Russia, and the Himalayas over the course of more than one thousand years. In this course we will examine the history, institutions, teachings, and ritual practices of Tibetan Buddhism. We will do so by following two parallel tracks, one historical and the other thematic, providing on the one hand a sense of the origins and development of Tibetan Buddhism, and on the other a general overview of some central topics such as Tibetan Buddhist art; meditation practices on the Buddhist path of liberation, pilgrimage, death and dying; and more. Although foundational knowledge of Buddhism will be provided in the opening weeks, some prior basic knowledge of Buddhism would be helpful for students wishing to take this course.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2028. Making sense of Chan Buddhism (6 credits)

Chan Buddhism is the most important and influential Buddhist school in China. It is characterized by its enigmatic stories and dialogues about religious epiphany, known as gong'an. This course introduces the origin, development, basic doctrines, and cultural influence of Chan Buddhism and some eminent Chan masters such as Bodhidharma, Huineng, and Mazu Daoyi. Students will be guided to appreciate and decipher a number of well-known gong'an stories.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2029. Reading Chinese Buddhist texts (6 credits)

This course focuses on an in-depth reading of selected texts from major genres in the Chinese Buddhist Canon translated at different historical periods including histories, biographies, and doctrinal treatises. Through a combination of selected readings, the students will not only learn about a range of Buddhist doctrines, religious practices, ethical values, cosmologies, myths, and the lives of individual monks in Indian Buddhist society, but also about how Indian Buddhism was received by the Chinese as reflected in the translation of Indian texts and Chinese commentaries.

Prerequisite: "BSTC1004. Introduction to Buddhism"

Assessment: 100% coursework.

Note: Chinese is an integral part of this course and course materials will be in Chinese or, where appropriate, in English translation. Students are expected to have an understanding of basic classical Chinese. Those with no prior knowledge of Chinese characters should seek advice from the teacher prior to enrolling in this course.

BSTC2030. Chinese Buddhist calligraphy (6 credits)

Since the introduction of Buddhism to China, Buddhist sacred writing culture enriched and enhanced the development of Chinese calligraphy. This course includes lectures and experiential workshops which provides an introduction of Buddhist writing culture from the perspectives of religious art and history of Chinese calligraphy. It will guide students to explore the theories, research methods and practice of Buddhist calligraphy through examining the calligraphy of Dunhuang manuscripts, Buddhist stone sutras, stone stele inscriptions from various ancient archaeological sites. The master calligraphers and Buddhist scribes will be examined. In addition to workshop demonstrations by the teacher, students will acquire the basic techniques, methods and practice of writing with brush. It will enable students learning how to write calligraphy mindfully with tranquility as the quintessence of Buddhist mental

cultivation and modalities of writing cultures. They will also appreciate the essence of Buddhist texts, such as the Heart-sūtra and Diamond-sūtra

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2048. Buddhism and science: view and meditation in the light of physics and neuroscience (6 credits)

Buddhism and science have developed models of reality based on empirical evidence and logic. Eastern models of reality tend to be structured around mind, and one idealist current of Buddhist thought even reduces matter to mind on the presupposition that mind alone exists (cittamātra). Western scientific models, however, are inclined to privilege matter, to the extent that for extreme proponents of scientific materialism mind has no place in a naturalistic account of the world. Given this situation, the grounds on which Buddhism and science can meet are models of reality that do not attempt to reduce mind and matter to each other. The acceptance of such a view inevitably leads to the question of whether and, if yes, how mind and matter are capable of mutual interaction. Some models of quantum physics suggest that consciousness, or the act of observation, may play a fundamental role in determining the outcome of quantum events. Numerous neuroscientific and medical experiments with experienced meditators have also shown that systematic mental training leads to a physical change in the brain and in the biochemistry of our body cells. This suggests a mutual influence of mind and matter in a complex process of dependent arising, which according to the Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna presupposes emptiness in the sense that everything involved in this fundamental process lacks an independent existence. Modern science and Buddhism thus share in common that there is no objective reality independent of observation.

The course is designed to help students understand the many facets of the dialogue between Buddhism and science. To this end, the course will explore the relevance of Buddhist philosophy and contemplative practices in providing models of reality for the unusual experiential results in modern physics and also in current science-based formats of working with the mind.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC2049. Buddhism and gender (6 credits)

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

BSTC2050. Buddhism and ecology: integrating thought with action (6 credits)

The adoption of pre-ecological thinking and engagement in environmental action are of paramount importance for the future of the planet and humanity. Within the context of Buddhism, there exists a profound emphasis on the interconnectedness of all entities and their inseparable connection to the natural world. Buddhism acknowledges the significance of embracing the environment and recognizes the karmic consequences of human actions.

This course aims to delve into the foundational principles of ecological thought within Buddhism. It will explore the ethical and doctrinal considerations of Buddhism regarding ecological issues, as well as examine perspectives on the interplay between humanity and nature. Furthermore, the course will scrutinize Buddhist environmental thought and activism, focusing on contemporary trends within the Buddhist community and their endeavors in addressing environmental challenges such as climate change, renewable energy, consumerism, deforestation, and education.

By integrating Buddhist philosophy and action into ecological consciousness, students will not only engage in critical analysis of Buddhism's role in fostering pro-ecological thinking and action, but they will also evaluate how these principles can be applied to foster both individual and communal activism that advances ecological well-being.

Assessment: 100% coursework

BSTC2008. Sanskrit language I (6 credits)

Sanskrit, being one of the most ancient languages known to humankind, is considered by some 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 Indian Buddhism, a reading knowledge of Sanskrit is essential. 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 simple Sanskrit passages by the end of the course.

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

BSTC2020. Sanskrit language II (6 credits)

Sanskrit is one of the most ancient languages known to humankind. It is a key to understanding 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. It is one of the four languages in which many Buddhist teachings are preserved. Indian Buddhist schools such as Sarvāstivāda, Yogācāra, Mādhyamikā composed most of their texts in Sanskrit. Many Mahāyāna texts such as the Prajñāpāramitā literature, *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā-sūtra* and many more treatises were composed in Sanskrit. Therefore, for students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Indian Buddhism, a reading knowledge of Sanskrit is essential. This course will cover the structure and grammar of the language, including topics such as, possessive nouns, numerals, relatives, future passive participle, present participle, passive voice, imperative and optative mood, different forms of the past tense, declensions, and conjugations.

Prerequisite: "BSTC2008. Sanskrit language I" or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

BSTC3040. Sanskrit language III (6 credits)

Sanskrit is one of the most ancient languages in the world and is studied by scholars of language and literature, religion, history and anthropology and by anyone who is interested in India's Buddhist cultural heritage. Sanskrit is the language not just of the religious literature of Hinduism and Buddhism, but extends to the fields of philosophy, science, art, music, mathematics, architecture, history, covering over three thousand years of development. Knowledge of Sanskrit grants access to an enormous body of Indian and Buddhist literature. The main focus of this course is grammar of the language, covering parts of speech, nouns of different gender and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles

and their functions, syntax and reading and translation of selected Sanskrit passages from the *Jātakamāla* and the *Mahāvastu*. Students will be able to read and comprehend simple Sanskrit passages by the end of the course.

Prerequisite: “BSTC2020. Sanskrit language II” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Non-permissible combination: BSTC2040

BSTC3041. Sanskrit language IV (6 credits)

Sanskrit, being one of the most ancient languages, is studied by scholars of language, religion, literature, history and anthropology and anyone who is interested in Indian and Buddhist cultural heritage. It is one of the three languages in which Buddhist teachings are preserved. Indian Buddhist schools such as Sarvāstivāda, Yogācāra, Mādhyamikā and Indian Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna composed their texts in Sanskrit. Therefore, for students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, a reading knowledge of Sanskrit is essential. Students of Buddhist philosophy and history will discover that knowledge of the Sanskrit language greatly enrich their studies. This course is designed for students who wish to read and comprehend Buddhist Sanskrit texts and employ Sanskrit Buddhist resources for their future research.

Prerequisite: “BSTC3040. Sanskrit language III” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Non-permissible combination: BSTC2041

BSTC2015. Tibetan language I (6 credits)

Tibetan is the language of Tibetan Buddhist canon comprising for the most part translations of Sanskrit texts of Indian Buddhism and indigenous compositions of Tibet. The purpose of this course is to provide a working knowledge of classical Tibetan and a comprehensive overview of the history, structure, and grammar of the language, covering topics such as scripts, syntax, phonetics, and transliteration. The students will also learn to read and write basic Tibetan, while acquiring a practical understanding of grammar and the ability to translate sentences and short Buddhist passages mainly from Tibetan to English, but also from English to Tibetan. As an introductory course, the students are not expected to have any prior knowledge of the Tibetan language.

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

BSTC2018. Tibetan language II (6 credits)

This course is designed for students with basic knowledge of literary Tibetan and grammar. It will cover advanced features of Tibetan grammar, syntax and complex sentences. Students will be introduced to reading and translating selected passages from different genres of Tibetan literature. Tibetan I or an equivalent qualification is required for enrolling in this course. At the end of the course, the students are expected to acquire a standard to write basic Tibetan, and the ability to translate selected passages from different genres of Tibetan literature.

Prerequisite: “BSTC2015. Tibetan language I” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

BSTC3042. Tibetan language III (6 credits)

The purpose of this course is to provide comprehensive knowledge of classical Tibetan Buddhist texts translated from Sanskrit. These include both canonical and later commentarial texts written by Indian scholars. In this course students will be guided in reading, comprehension and translation of classical

Tibetan texts from different genres. At the same time idiomatic and typical expressions and terminologies will be explained. This course will not deal with topics such as basic grammar, phonetics and transliteration.

Prerequisite: “BSTC2018. Tibetan language II” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Non-permissible combination: BSTC2042

BSTC3043. Tibetan language IV (6 credits)

The purpose of this course is to provide comprehensive knowledge of classical Tibetan Buddhist texts composed for the most part by native Tibetan Buddhist scholars. Some translations made from Sanskrit into Tibetan may also be included for the purpose of comparison with native Tibetan writings. This course will focus on understanding the structure and syntax of classical texts of different genres. Idiomatic and typical expressions and terminologies will be explained to aid students in their translation.

Prerequisite: “BSTC3042. Tibetan language III” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Non-permissible combination: BSTC2043

BSTC2016. Pāli language I (6 credits)

Pāli is the language of Theravāda Buddhist canon used by the Theravada Buddhist tradition commonly practiced in South and Southeast Asia. This canon is the only complete Buddhist canon dating back to the 3rd century B.C. This course is meant for those students who have no prior knowledge of Pāli and who wish to become familiar with Pāli expressions and idioms so as to understand simple passages of Pāli Buddhist texts. The main focus of the course is to introduce the basics of the Pāli language including its grammar phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. By the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read simple Pāli sentences and understand their religious and philosophical significance.

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

BSTC2019. Pāli language II (6 credits)

The main focus of the course is to introduce more practical knowledge of Pāli that enables students to read easy Pāli passages, both prose and verse, extracted directly from the Pāli texts. It also introduces remaining grammatical components not included in ‘Pāli Language I’ such as basic grammar together with exercises, including phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different gender and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. By the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read the Pāli discourses and produce philosophical presentations on Buddhist concepts.

Prerequisite: “BSTC2016. Pāli language I” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

BSTC3044. Pāli language III (6 credits)

Pāli is the language of a large body of Theravāda canonical and non-canonical Buddhist literature. Here we find a rich variety of texts that contain valuable information on the religious, social, political, literary and linguistic history of South Asia. Important contributions are made in Pāli to philosophy and psychology through the analysis of the nature of *dharmas*, the classification of various kinds of mind and mental states, phenomenal processes and their causal relations. All of these topics can be understood

through a careful study of Pāli literature. The course is devoted to the understating and translating of selected Pāli passages, as well as explaining the content of the Pāli canon and its commentaries and gradually building sufficient vocabularies for the purpose of reading the Pāli texts independently.

Prerequisite: “BSTC2019. Pāli language II” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Non-permissible combination: BSTC2044

BSTC3045. Pāli language IV (6 credits)

This course enables students to independently read Pali texts with the help of dictionaries. Every assigned reading will be self-contained in its relation to Buddhist teachings and their significance. The main focus of this course is to make grammatical explanations as clear as possible, while also gaining access to Pāli original sources for textual studies research using the Pāli dictionary and vocabulary. Each lesson includes a set of readings with an accompanying glossary and grammatical notes covering different nouns and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, compounds, primary and secondary derivatives, syntax, clause and numerals.

Prerequisite: “BSTC3044. Pāli language III” or possess equivalent knowledge

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Non-permissible combination: BSTC2045

BSTC2046. Buddhist Chinese language: Indian Buddhist texts (6 credits)

This course aims to guide students to systematically acquire the ability to read Chinese Buddhist canonical texts that are translated from Indic languages through a guided reading of the *Diamond Sutra*, and other texts. The textual sources used in the course mainly consist of the Buddhist texts in Chinese translated by Xuanzang and Kumarajiva. Grammatical guide to reading Buddhist Chinese language will be introduced in combination with reading the Diamond Sutra. This course will build a foundation for further studying Indian and Chinese Buddhist doctrines.

Prerequisite: Course instructor’s approval for students whose first language is not Chinese or Japanese

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Note: This course is designed for students who know at least 500 Chinese characters. Students whose first language is not Chinese or Japanese should check with the course instructor as to their suitability for the course before enrolling. Students may need to take a qualification test.

BSTC2047. Buddhist Chinese language: native Chinese texts (6 credits)

This course is designed for those who wish to read the Buddhist texts composed in Classical Chinese. The text sources used in this course are those which had significant impact on the development of Chinese Buddhism. Students will learn the fundamental grammar of the language and Buddhist vocabulary by reading selections of Buddhist texts. The course contents cover a wide range of Chinese Buddhist texts dating from the first century CE to the end of medieval China including the colloquial Chan Buddhist writings and rhetorical biographies of eminent monks. This course will build a foundation for further studying Chinese Buddhist history and doctrines.

Prerequisite: “BSTC2046. Buddhist Chinese language: Indian Buddhist texts” or course instructor’s approval for students whose first language is not Chinese or Japanese.

Assessment: 50% coursework and 50% examination.

Note: This course is designed for students who know at least 700 Chinese characters. Students whose first language is not Chinese or Japanese should check with the course instructor as to their suitability for the course before enrolling. Student may need to take a qualification test.