Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies in 2024-2025

ELECTIVE COURSE
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

BSTC 2003 The Influence of Zen Buddhism on Japanese aesthetics (6 Credits)

Offering Semester 2nd Semester
Lecturer Dr. Tony Chui
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Day of the week Tuesday
Assessment 100% coursework
Class Venue MWT2

1. Course Description:

Zen (禅) 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 impact of Zen forms 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. In 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.

2. Objectives:

The course is intended for students who wish to gain a basic understanding of Zen Buddhism and its contribution to the culture and spirituality of Japan. Students at the end of this course are expected to gain the ability to: 1) describe the main teachings of Zen Buddhism; 2) recognize the unique teaching method of directly seeing into and training the mind; 3) describe different traditions and interpretations of Zen in China, Korea and Japan; 4) distinguish Zen’s impact on the Japanese aesthetics; 5) appreciate different cultural activities derived from Zen; and 6) realize the extent of Zen Buddhism’s influence upon the spiritual diversity of Japan.

3. Assessment Ratio:

100% coursework with the following breakdowns:
(1) Quiz 1 - 20%
(2) Quiz 2 - 25%
(3) Research Project (Essay 2000 words) – 45%
Participation – 10%

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

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

4. Schedule of Classes (Tentative):

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<th>Lecture</th>
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<td>Origin and development of Zen Buddhism</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The acceptance and development of Zen in Japan</td>
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<td>Japanese aesthetic values 1</td>
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<td>Influence across the globe</td>
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5. Recommended Readings (additional reading list available on Moodle):


*(Last updated: July 18, 2024)*