

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

1. Course Description:

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 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 %

(4) 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):

Lecture	Topic
1	Introduction
2	Origin and development of Zen Buddhism
3	The acceptance and development of Zen in Japan
4	Japanese aesthetic values 1
5	Japanese aesthetic values 2
6	Traditional Japanese arts
7	Influence on arts and literature
8	Influence on architecture and landscaping
9	Zen and design
10	Zen and lifestyle
11	Influence across the globe
12	Zen and contemporary aesthetics

5. Recommended Readings (additional reading list available on Moodle):

Barnhill, David Landis (2004), tr. *Basho's Haiku: Selected Poems by Matsuo Basho*, USA: State University of New York Press.

Buswell, Robert E. ed. (2005). *Currents and Countercurrents: Korean Influences on the East Asian Buddhist Traditions*, Chapters 3 & 4, USA: University of Hawaii Press, [294.309519 C97]

Cheng, Hsueh-Li (1996). *Asian Thought and Culture Volume Two: Exploring Zen*, USA: Peter Lang. [special collection: BQ 9268.6.C47 1996]

Dumoulin, Heinrich (1953, 1988). *Zen Buddhism: A History*. Tr. by James W. Heisig and Paul Knitter. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. [294.392709 D89 vols. 1 & 2]

- Ferguson, Andrew E (2000). *Zen's Chinese Heritage: the Masters and Their Teachings*, USA: Wisdom Publications. [294.39270951 F352]
- Hershock, Peter D. (2005). *Chan Buddhism*, USA: University of Hawaii Press (Dimensions of Asian Spirituality Series) [294.39270951 H57 c]
- Korean Buddhist Research Institute (1985). *The Studies of Korean Zen Thoughts*, Seoul: Dongguk University Press.
- Nakamura, Hajime (1964, 1981). *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii. [Main Circ Counter – X 181 N1]
- Plustschow, Herbert (2003). *Rediscovering Rikyu and the Beginning of the Japanese Tea Ceremony*, USA: Global Oriental.
- Reynolds, E & Carbine, Jason A, ed. (2000). *The Life of Buddhism*, Chapter 5: The Ordination of Monks and Novices (Korea), USA: University of California Press. [294.3 L72 R46]
- Suzuki, D.T.(1988). *Zen Buddhism and Japanese Culture*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co. (originally published by Princeton University Press, 1959) [294.3927 S96 z]
- Suzuki, D.T.(1991). *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, UK: Rider. [294.3927 S96i]
- Williams, Duncan Ryuken (2005). *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Soto Zen: Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan*, USA: Princeton University Press.

(Last updated: July 18, 2024)