

Academic Year 2026-2027
Centre of Buddhist Studies
The University of Hong Kong
BSTC2018 Tibetan language II
(6 Credits)

(The course is open to students from all faculties as a free elective)

Course Description

Building upon a foundational knowledge of Classical Tibetan, this course provides systematic instruction in advanced grammar and syntax. Topics include relative clauses, nominalization, verbal constructions, auxiliary particles, case relations, and other features characteristic of Classical Tibetan literature. Through the guided reading and translation of selected prose and verse texts, students will apply these concepts directly to primary sources and develop greater proficiency in the interpretation and translation of Classical Tibetan writings. By the end of the course, students will be able to analyze complex grammatical structures and produce accurate translations of selected Tibetan texts.

Prerequisite

Students must have successfully completed BSTC2015 Tibetan language I or obtained permission from the instructor prior to enrollment.

Course Assessment

50% Coursework

50% Examination

Offering Semester:	Second Semester
Lecturer:	Dr. Drukgyel Tsering
Office:	To be confirmed
Email:	To be confirmed
Schedule:	Saturday 6:30 – 9:30pm
Classroom:	To be confirmed

Faculty Grade Expectations:

https://arts.hku.hk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/grade_expectations.pdf

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>

Course outline (Weekly lecture materials and lesson plan will be made available on Moodle)

Lesson 1	Auxiliary verbs Comparatives and superlatives
Lesson 2	Nominalization Relative clauses
Lesson 3	Analytical verb constructions Case converbs
Lesson 4	Direct speech Indirect speech
Lesson 5	Modal verbs Causative verbs
Lesson 6	Passive Possessive attributes Complex attributes
Lesson 7	Impersonal clauses Light verbs
Lesson 8	Postpositions and postpositional phrases Indefinite pronouns
Lesson 9	Idioms Double case particles
Lesson 10	Auxiliary particles Purposive particles Concessive auxiliary
Lesson 11	Determiners Reduplications Numerals
Lesson 12	Review of previous lessons Reading and Translation

References

Textbook list

1. Bialek, Joanna. 2021. *A Textbook in Classical Tibetan*. London: Taylor & Francis.
2. Hodge, Stephen 2019. *An Introduction to Classical Tibetan*. Bangkok: Orchid Press.
3. Rockwell, John, Jr. 1991. *A Primer for Classical Literary Tibetan*. Vol. 1, The Grammar. Revised ed. Pinecliffe, CO: Samadhi Publishing.

I Dictionaries / Glossaries

1. Das, Sarat Chandra. 1970. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary with Sanskrit Synonyms*. Reprint. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
2. Hackett, Paul G. 2003. *A Tibetan Verb Lexicon: Verbs, Classes, and Syntactic Frames*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications.
3. Hopkins, Jeffrey. 2011. *Uma Institute Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Charlottesville, VA: UMA Institute for Tibetan Studies.
4. Jäschke, Heinrich August. 1980. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary, with Special Reference to the Prevailing Dialects*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1881. Reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980.
5. Nagano, Yasuhiko. 1997. *A Morphological Index of Classical Tibetan*. Tokyo: Seishido.
6. Rikey, Thubten and Andrew Ruskin. 1992. *A Manual of Key Buddhist Terms: a Categorization of Buddhist Terminology with Commentary by Lotsawa Kaba Paltseg*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.
7. Thubten Nyima (Alak Zenkar Rinpoche) & Dr. Gyurme Dorje. *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*. Volume 1. The Nationalities Publishing House & The School of Oriental and African Studies.
8. Tsepa Rigzin. 2008. *Tibetan English Dictionary of Buddhist terminology* (Revised and Enlarged Edition). Reprint. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

II Grammar

1. Beyer, Stephen. 1992. *The Classical Tibetan Language*. NY: State University of New York Press
2. Hannah, Herbert Bruce. 1973. *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language, Literary and Colloquial*. Reprint. Delhi: Cosmo Publications.
3. Jäschke, H. A. 1989. *Tibetan Grammar*. Reprint. Delhi: Sri Sat Guru Publications.
4. Miller, Roy Andrew. 1993. *Prolegomena to the first two Tibetan Grammatical treatises*. Vienna: Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 30.
5. Preston, Craig. *How to Read Classical Tibetan*, Vol. I and II. Boston & London: Snow Lion Publications.
6. Tournadre, Nicolas. 2003. *Manual of Standard Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.
7. Wilson, Joe B. 1992. *Translating Buddhism from Tibetan: An Introduction to the Tibetan Literary Language and the Translation of Buddhist Texts from Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.

III. Tibetan Script and Translation

1. Cabezon, José Ignacio, and Roger Jackson. 1996. *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*. New York: Snow Lion Publications.
2. Halkias, Georgios T. 2004. "Tibetan Buddhism Registered: An Imperial Catalogue from the Palace Temple of 'Phang-thang." *The Eastern Buddhist* 36 (1–2): 46–105.
3. ———. 2014. "Translating the Foreign into the Local." *Translation and Global Asia*. Chinese University Press, 143–166.
4. Laufer, Berthold. 1918. "Origin of Tibetan Writing." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 38: 34–46.
5. Raine, Roberta. 2014. "'Translation Archaeology' in Practice: Researching the History of Buddhist Translation Tibet." *Meta: Journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 59 (2): 278–296.
6. Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina. 1999. "Translation, Transmission, Tradition: Suggestions from Ninth-Century Tibet." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27 (1–2): 67–77.
7. Van der Kuijp, Leonard. 1996. "The Tibetan Script and Derivatives." In *The World's Writing Systems*, edited by Peter T. Daniels and William Bright, 431–441. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
8. van Schaik, Sam. 2011. "A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 45–96. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
9. ———. 2012. "The Origin of the Headless Script (*dbu med*) in Tibet." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 411–446. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
10. Verhagen, Pieter Cornelis. 2000. *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet. Vol. 2, Assimilation into Indigenous Scholarship*. Leiden: Brill.
11. Wylie, Turrell. 1959. "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22: 261–267.

III Other Online Sources

Online Dictionaries

1. Tibetan-English-Sanskrit Dictionary: <https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/>
2. The Tibetan and Himalayan Library: <https://ttt.thlib.org/>
3. Sambhota Dictionary Search: <https://dict.dharma-treasure.org/>

Tibetan Romanization

1. THL Wylie transliteration: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/transliterate>
2. THL Tibetan Phonetics: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/phonetics>

Tibetan Letters Pronunciation

1. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=2.%09Tibetan+Consonants+and+the+ir+Sounds+