

Undergraduate Courses offered by Centre of Buddhist Studies in 2025-2026
ELECTIVE COURSE
(OPEN TO ALL FACULTIES)

BSTC2020
Sanskrit language II

Offering Semester	Second Semester
Lecturer	Dr. Amrita Nanda
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Schedule	TBC
Class Venue	TBC

Course Description:

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

Objectives

- (1) To enable students to read and comprehend Sanskrit texts.
- (2) To enable understand the structure, and grammar of the Sanskrit language.
- (3) To help students to understand Sanskrit Buddhist Literature.

Course Content: The course begins with Sanskrit grammar along with exercises selected from Buddhist texts. As the students learn and attempt the graded passages, all the grammars involved will be analyzed and doctrines explained to them in a gradual build-up manner. This includes the following: possessive nouns, numerals, relatives, and future passive participle, present participle, passive voice, imperative mood, and optative mood, different forms of past tense, declensions and conjugations.

Teaching and Learning Method: Lectures, class discussions and tutorials.
Assessment:

- **50% Coursework**
 - 10 % class participation
 - 25 % mid-quiz (open-book in class quiz)
 - 15 % weekly Homework
- **50% Final examination** at the end of the semester. (Open-book exam).

Faculty Grade Expectations. http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf

Lecture Schedule

Lesson 1

- Introduction to the course
- Introduction to Possessive Suffix —*in*
- Future Passive Participle (FPP)

Lesson 2

- Introduction to Relatives and Correlatives in Sanskrit
- Introduction to Sanskrit Numerals
- Vocabularies and Reading selected Sanskrit Passages

Lesson 3

- Introduction to Possessive Suffixes—*mant* and —*vant*
- The Future Tense
- Infinitive

Lesson 4

- Introduction to Sanskrit Compounds:
 - *dvandva* compound
 - *tatpuruṣa* compound
- Declension of Sanskrit Demonstrative (that)
- Vocabularies and reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 5

- Introduction to Sanskrit Consonant ending nouns
- The Passive Voice
- The Class II verbs.
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 6

- Present participles.
- Continuation of Sanskrit Compounds — *Karmadhāraya-samāsa*.

Lesson 7

- Vocabularies and reading selected Sanskrit passages

- **Mid-term quiz**

Lesson 8

- Compounds — *Avyayībhāva-samāsa*.
- Declension of Consonant ending Nouns.
- Vocabulary and reading selected Sanskrit passages.

Lesson 9

- Class IX verbs.
- The Imperative Mood.
- Declension of Agent Nouns.
- Vocabulary and reading selected Sanskrit passages.

Lesson 10

- Periphrastic Future.
- Conjugation of Class V verbs.
- Conjugation of Class VIII verbs.
- The Optative Mood.

Lesson 11

- Compounds — *Bahuvrīhi*.
- The Past Participle Active.
- Conjugation of Class III verbs.

Lesson 12

- The Imperfect Tense.
- The Aorist Tense

Lesson 13

- Perfect Tense
- Review for the exam

Note: This schedule is both approximate and flexible. We may deviate from it depending on the pace of students' comprehension and feedbacks.

Textbook:

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015), *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide* (3rd edition), The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Ltd. Hong Kong.

Note: we will not follow the textbook exactly. Handouts will be given to students in every class.

Reference books:

Ruppel A.M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*. Cambridge University Press.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

Thomas, Egenes (1994). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.
— (2000). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.
Whitney, Williams D. (1979). *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.
— (2003). *Sanskrit Grammar*. Dover Publications, Inc, New York.
Goldman Robert P. & Goldman Sutherland Sally J. (2011). *An Introduction to Sanskrit Language*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, Delhi.

Online basic Sanskrit Grammar: <http://www.learnsanskrit.org/grammar>

Online Sanskrit-English Dictionary <http://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/monier/>

Writing Devanāgarī Script <http://enjoylearningsanskrit.com/sanskrit-alphabet-tuto>

Note:

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>