

BSTC2030. Chinese Buddhist Calligraphy (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Tsui, Chung-hui

Venue: CPD-1.24

Time : THU. 16:30-18:20

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COURSE DESCRIPTION :

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.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion, students will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of issues in the history and culture of Chinese Buddhist calligraphy;
2. Integrate theoretical and aesthetic knowledge into practical experience;
3. Appreciate and analyse various styles in Buddhist calligraphy;
4. Put into practice of writing calligraphy in daily life;
5. Develop basic skills of writing calligraphy.

ASSESSMENT

1. Attendance and class participation (10%)
2. Short quiz (15%) (on Mar.14)
3. Group presentation (15%) (On Apr.25)

4. Final essay (30 %) : 1500 words written essay (submission deadline: on or before 2 May, 2024)
5. Final assignment (30%) : design a Buddhist calligraphy artwork written with brush from Buddhist texts (such as a paragraph of Heart-sūtra, Diamond-sūtra or from any other Buddhist sūtra) **(The assignment can be done on Apr.18 during the tutorial workshop.)**

LECTURES AND WORKSHOPS

1. [Jan.18] Introduction to Chinese calligraphy
2. [Jan.25] The development of Buddhist scriptural calligraphy
3. [Feb.1] Tutorial workshop (sample calligraphy of Heart-sūtra (I))
4. [Feb.8] Art and culture of Buddhist calligraphy from Dunhuang
5. [Feb.22] Tutorial workshop (sample calligraphy of Heart-sūtra (II))
6. [Feb.29] Buddhist writing on rock and stone (Longmen grottoes)
7. [Mar.14] Tutorial workshop (sample calligraphy of Heart-sūtra (III))(with Mid-term quiz)
8. [Mar.21] Buddhist stone inscriptions and rubbings (Rock carved stone sūtra in Shandong)
9. [Mar.28] Tutorial workshop (sample calligraphy of Diamond-sūtra (I))
10. [Apr.11] Chan calligraphy
11. [Apr.18] Tutorial workshop (sample calligraphy of Diamond-sūtra(II))
12. [Apr.25] Presentation

【READINGS】

"Zen in the Art of Writing," *Zen & the Art of Writing*, Capra Chapbook Thirteen, Capra Press, 1973.

Stevens, John. *Sacred Calligraphy of the East*. 3rd ed. Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 1995.

Tseng, Yuho. *A History of Chinese Calligraphy*. Hong Kong, 1993.
Zhongguo shufa quanji. Beijing, 1991.

Tsui, Chung-hui. "*Chinese Calligraphy and Early Buddhist Manuscripts*" (Oxford: Indica et Buddhica, New Zealand,2020) ISBN : 9780473540104; 9780473540098.

Tsui, Chung-hui. *Practicing Calligraphy to Cultivate the Mind: Writing the Heart Sutra in the Standard Script*, Dharma Drum Publishing Co., Taipei. (妙筆耕心-楷書心經，台北：法鼓文化，ISBN：9789575989538)