

BSCT3040 Sanskrit III

Course Description

Sanskrit is one of the most ancient languages in the world and is studied by scholars of language and literature, religion, history and anthropology, and anyone interested in India's Buddhist cultural heritage. Sanskrit is the language not just of the religious literature of Hinduism and Buddhism but extends to the fields of philosophy, science, art, music, mathematics, architecture, and history, covering over three thousand years of development. Knowledge of Sanskrit grants access to an enormous body of Indian and Buddhist literature. The main focus of this course is the grammar of the language, covering parts of speech, nouns of different gender and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax, and reading and translation of selected Sanskrit passages from the *Jātakamāla* and the *Mahāvastu*. Students will be able to read and comprehend simple Sanskrit passages by the end of the course.

Prerequisite: BSTC2020 Sanskrit language II or possess equivalent knowledge

Course Content:

This Advanced Sanskrit course adopts a gradual and systematic approach to learning. It primarily focuses on reading and translating selected passages from Sanskrit Buddhist Literature. As the course progresses, all grammatical features, vocabulary, and doctrines involved in the selected passages will be explained, ensuring a thorough understanding of the material.

The course exposes different genres of Sanskrit Buddhist texts, including prose, verses, and hybrid Sanskrit Buddhist passages. This selection of readings is pedagogically designed to enrich and broaden students' understanding of Sanskrit Buddhist literature, building their confidence and skills in reading and translating different genres of Sanskrit Buddhist literature.

Learning outcomes

1. At the end of this course, students are expected to be able to read and comprehend Sanskrit texts.
2. Understand the development of Buddhist thoughts and civilization.
3. Understand the significance of Sanskrit Buddhist literature.
4. Students learn to examine and investigate Buddhist teachings from different perspectives.
5. Students will be able to chant and recite with a high degree of accuracy.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures and class discussions

Offering Semester	First Semester
Lecturer	Dr. Amrita Nanda
Office	Rm 4.09, 4/F Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Tel:	39175077/ 92850204
Email	nanda@hku.hk
Schedule	
Class Venue	

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- **50% - Coursework**
 - 10% class-participation
 - 25 % mid-term quiz
 - 15 % a short essay (It is either a comprehensive essay on a selected Sanskrit passage or a translation of a selected Sanskrit passage).
- **50% - Final examination at the end of the semester. (Open-book examination)**

Lecture Schedule

Detailed Lecture outlines:

Lecture 1:

- Introduction to the Course
- *Pratītyasamutpādaḥṛdayakārikā* (Nagārjuna's Verse on the Essence of Dependent Arising)
Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lectures 2 and 3

- *Pratītyasamutpādaḥṛdayavyākhyānam* (The Commentary on the Essence of Dependent Arising by Nagārjuna)
Guide to the text and translation of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lectures 4 to 7

- **Selected passages from the *Vajrachedikā Prajñāpāramitā sūtram*** (The Diamond-Cutter Wisdom-perfection discourse)
Guide to the text and translation of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lectures 8 to 12:

Selected passages from *Mahāvastu Avadānam*

Guide to the text and translation of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

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

Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor before the classes through Moodle.

Texts books (only selected chapters)

Pratityasamutpadahrdaya and aryadharmadhatugarbhavivarana (ed.) Namdrol, Gyaltsen. Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies. Sarnath: 1997.

Mahāyāna-sūtra-saṃgrahaḥ (part 1) (ed.) Vaidya, P. L. The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning. 1961. (*vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā*).

Mahāvastu (ed.) Senart Par É. Paris Imprimerie Nationale, Paris: 1882.

Reference books

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

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

Edgertonm Franklin. (1953). *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Vol. I & II. Indian Reprint, 2004.

Kale, Moreshwar R. (1884). *A Higher Sanskrit Grammar*. Indian Reprint 1977.

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

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

Whitney, William D. (1885). *The Roots, Verb-forms and Primary Derivatives of Sanskrit Language*. Reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, 1973.