

Centre of Buddhist Studies
The University of Hong Kong
Master of Buddhist Studies Language Courses
Course Outline 2025-2026

(Course details laid out in this course outline are only for reference. Please always refer to the latest version presented in the course moodle.)

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BSTC7006 Pāli I (6 credits)

Academic Year 2025–2026

Lecturer	Dr. Dipen Barua
Office	Rm 4.12, 4/F, Centre of Buddhist Studies, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Mob./ Office Tel.	
E-mail address	dipen@hku.hk
Offering Semester	Semester I
Schedule	Every Saturday from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm
Class Venue	To be confirmed

Course Description

Pāli is the language of Theravāda Buddhism commonly practiced in South and Southeast Asia. This Theravāda school of Buddhism is the only Buddhist school that has preserved a complete canon since the 3rd century B.C.E. This course is meant for those students who have no prior knowledge of the language and who wish to become familiar with Pāli expressions and idioms, and with the basic requirements to understand Pāli Buddhist texts. The main focus of the course is to introduce basic grammar together with exercises, including phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read simple Pāli sentences and understand their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Course Content

This introductory course is designed for students who have no prior knowledge of Pāli language. The content of this course deals with Pāli grammar that includes nouns and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, secondary and primary derivatives, particles, and combinations. These are intended to serve as a primer to read the Pāli primary sources with glossary and dictionary. Examples and exercises will be done from the Pāli *suttas* which will help students understand early Buddhist teachings.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to understand basic Pāli grammar such as declensions, conjugations, tenses, and other grammatical forms, and literature with an understanding of its importance for the study of Pāli Canon and

Theravāda Buddhism.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (15%)
 - Mid-term test (25%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-textbook exam.

Lecture Schedule for Semester 1

Lesson	Date	Contents
Lesson 1	6 Sept 2025	(a) Introduction to the Pāli language and its alphabet <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Phonological remarks▪ Vowels short and long▪ The letter classified▪ Pronunciation (b) Nouns: Masculine (m), Neuter (n) and Feminine (f) (c) Cases: Declension of nouns ending in- <i>a</i> (d) Verbs: Present tense (e) Example of Pāli sentences
Lesson 2	13 Sept 2025	(a) Adjectives (b) Indeclinable (c) Declension of pronouns (d) Exercises
Lesson 3	20 Sept 2025	(a) Genitive case used for expressing “to have” <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Three grades of root strength (b) Conjugation of verbs <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Thematic and athematic verbs (c) Classes of verbs I and X (d) Usage of the instrumental case

		(e) Ablative of reason (f) Exercises
Lesson 4	27 Sept 2025	(a) The vocative case (voc) (b) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>ā</i> (f) (c) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (m) (d) More on adverbial usages (e) Exercises
Lesson 5	4 Oct 2025	(a) Prefixes (b) Class VI verbs (c) Class IV verbs (d) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (m): <i>bhikkhu</i> ‘monk’ (e) Exercises
Lesson 6	11 Oct 2025	(a) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (n): <i>cakkhu</i> ‘eye’ (b) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (f): <i>dhenu</i> ‘cow’ (c) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (f): <i>jāti</i> ‘birth’ (d) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (n): <i>akkhi</i> ‘eye’ (e) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>ī</i> (f): <i>nadī</i> ‘river’ (f) Causatives (g) Exercises
No class	18 Oct 2025	Reading Week
Lesson 7	25 Oct 2025	(a) Denominatives (b) Class II verb <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conjugation of <i>atthi</i> (exist/is) (c) Declension of consonant-ending nouns: <i>bhagavant</i> (m) and <i>bhavant</i> (m) (d) Possessive suffixes- <i>vant</i> and- <i>mant</i> (e) Example of Pāli sentences (f) Exercises
Lesson 8	1 Nov 2025	(a) Gerund (b) Possessive suffix - <i>in</i> , - <i>vin</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Declension of <i>rūpin</i> (c) Past Participle Passive (PPP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formation of PPP ▪ PPP as adjective (d) Exercises

Lesson 9	8 Nov 2025	<p>(a) Declension of nouns ending in <i>-an</i>: <i>attan</i> (m), <i>rājan</i> (m), <i>brahman</i> (m), <i>san</i> (m), <i>kamman</i> (n)</p> <p>(b) Declension of demonstrative pronouns: <i>ayaṃ</i> (m, f), <i>idaṃ/imaṃ</i> (n)</p> <p>(c) Declension of personal pronouns: <i>ahaṃ</i>, <i>tvam</i>, <i>so</i> (m), <i>tam</i> (n), <i>sā</i> (f)</p> <p>(d) Exercises</p>
Lesson 10	15 Nov 2025	<p>(a) Pronominal adjectives</p> <p>(b) Declension of <i>sabba</i> ‘all’ as pronominal adjective</p> <p>(c) Class V verbs (the <i>nu</i> Class)</p> <p>(d) Conjugation of √<i>śru</i> ‘hear’</p> <p>(e) Class VIII verbs (the <i>tanādi gaṇa</i>)</p> <p>(f) Conjugation of √<i>kṛ</i> ‘do’, ‘make’</p> <p>(g) Examples of sentences with Class V and Class VIII verbs</p> <p>(h) Exercises</p> <p>Mid-term test</p>
Lesson 11	22 Nov 2025	<p>(a) Declension of <i>-as</i> and <i>-us</i> ending noun</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Declension of <i>vacas</i> (n) ‘speech’ ▪ Declension of <i>manas</i> (n) ‘mind’ ▪ Declension of <i>āyus</i> (n) ‘life’, ‘life-span’ <p>(b) Class IX verbs</p> <p>(c) Present Participles (PrP)</p> <p>(d) Relative pronouns and relative clauses</p> <p>(e) Exercises</p>
Lesson 12	29 Nov 2025	<p>(a) Present participles</p> <p>(b) Relative pronouns and relative clauses</p> <p>(c) Interrogative pronouns <i>kad</i></p> <p>(d) Interrogation and interrogative clauses</p> <p>(e) The optative mode</p> <p>(f) Revision and discussion for final exam</p>

Note: The content above may be adjusted based on feedback from students during the class.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*.

Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course (Parts I & II)*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997. Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrisna Ghosh. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Oxford: The Pāli Text Society. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia.

Updated in Feb 2017. <https://dsal.srv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>

Pāli Dictionary. Available on Buddhistdoor Global.

<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/dictionary/search/?k=Buddha&l=3>

BSTC7007 Pāli II (6 credits)

Academic Year 2025–2026

Lecturer	Dr. Dipen Barua
Office	Rm 4.12, 4/F, Centre of Buddhist Studies, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Mob./ Office Tel.	
E-mail address	dipen@hku.hk
Offering Semester	Semester II
Schedule	Every Saturday from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm
Class Venue	To be confirmed

Course Description

The main focus of the course is to introduce more practical knowledge of Pāli that enables students to read easy Pāli passages both prose and verse extracted directly from the Pāli texts. It also introduces remaining grammatical components not included in Pāli I such as basic grammar together with exercises, including phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read simple Pāli sentences and understand their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Course Content

This course is designed for students who have completed the course BSTC7006 Pāli I. The main focus of Pāli II is to introduce grammar that includes past, present, future participles, numerals, syntax, compounds, conditional tense, causative and reading passages from the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, etc.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to

- acquire elementary reading skills in Pāli;
- practice the fundamentals of Pāli grammar, syntax and pronunciation;

- demonstrate the skills of translation and apply their knowledge to other academic disciplines to gain a better understanding;
- understand the value of the Pāli language as a gate to appreciate Theravada culture and its relation to other forms of Buddhist culture.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC7006 Pāli I or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%)
 - Quiz (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-textbook exam.

Lecture Schedule for Semester 2

Lesson	Date	Contents
Lesson 1	24 Jan 2026	a) Optative mode b) Optative of <i>labhati</i> (\sqrt{labh} 'obtain') c) Optative of <i>atthi</i> (\sqrt{as} 'be') d) Optative of <i>karoti</i> (\sqrt{kr} 'do') e) Examples of sentences with optative f) Future Passive Participles (FPP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \sqrt{vad} (<i>vadati</i>); $\sqrt{dā}$ (<i>dadāti/deti</i>); $\sqrt{bhū}$ (<i>bhavati</i>); etc. (g) Exercises
Lesson 2	31 Jan 2026	(a) Class III verbs (b) Conjugation of $\sqrt{dā}$ 'give' (c) Numerals (cardinal)

		(d) Declensions of <i>eka</i> ‘one; <i>dve</i> ‘two’; <i>ti</i> ‘three’ (e) Exercises
Lesson 3	7 Mar 2026	(a) Locative and genitive absolute (b) Imperative mood (c) Conjugation of √ <i>labh</i> ‘obtain’; √ <i>kr</i> ‘do’; and √ <i>sru</i> ‘hear’ (d) Exercises
Lesson 4	14 Mar 2026	(a) Imperative mood (b) <i>attanopada</i> verb forms (c) Conjugation of future tense √ <i>labh</i> ‘obtain’; √ <i>kr</i> ‘do’ in the <i>attanopada</i> (d) Passive voice (pas): present and future passive verbs (e) Exercises
Lesson 5	28 Mar 2026	(a) Aorists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The root-aorist ▪ Example: √<i>dā</i> ‘give’; √<i>bhū</i> ‘become’; √<i>as</i> ‘be’ ▪ The a-aorist (b) Class VII verbs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conjugation of Class VII verbs (c) Exercises
Lesson 6	7 Mar 2026	(a) Infinitive (b) Declension of – <i>ū</i> ending m and f nouns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Subbaññū</i> (m) ‘omniscient’ ▪ <i>Jambū</i> (f) ‘rose-apple tree’ (c) Exercises
No Class	14 Mar 2026	Reading Week
Lesson 7	21 Mar 2026	(a) Suffixes and nominal derivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary suffixes ▪ Secondary suffixes (b) Some irregular declensions: <i>sakhi</i> (m) and <i>go</i> (m) (c) Nominal compounds (<i>samāsa</i>): <i>dvanda</i> , <i>tappurisa</i> , <i>avyayībhāva</i> , <i>kammadhāraya</i> , <i>digu</i>

		(d) Exercises
Lesson 8	28 Mar 2026	(a) Perfect tense (b) Agent nouns: \sqrt{ah} I ‘say’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Declensions of <i>sattar</i> (m) ‘teacher’; <i>pitar</i> (m) ‘father’ and <i>mātar</i> (f) ‘mother’ (c) Periphrastic future (d) Example of Pāli sentences (e) Exercises
Lesson 9	11 Apr 2026	(a) Ordinal numeral (b) Nouns and adj compounded with <i>–kṛ</i> and <i>–bhū</i> (c) <i>Bahubbīhi-samāsa</i> (d) Exercises Quiz
Lesson 10	18 Apr 2026	(a) Prohibitive (b) <i>Bahubbīhi</i> formed with <i>–kāma</i> as the last member (c) Adverbial suffix: <i>-tra</i> , <i>-thā</i> , <i>-dā</i> , <i>-dhā</i> , <i>-to</i> , <i>-so</i> (d) Exercises
Lesson 11	25 Apr 2026	(a) Past Participle Active (PPA) (b) Conditional tense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conditional tense for $\sqrt{bhū}$ ‘become’ (c) Exercises
Lesson 12	2 May 2026	(a) Desiderative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desiderative adjectives and nouns (b) The Intensive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adjectives of intensive forms (c) Revision and discussion for final exam

Note: The content above may be adjusted based on the feedback from students during the class.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*.

Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Recommended Readings

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Buddhadatta, A.P. The New Pali Course (Parts I & II). *Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre*, 1997. Geiger, Wilhelm. A Pāli Grammar. Translated by Batakrisna Ghosh. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Oxford: The Pāli Text Society. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia.

Updated in Feb 2017. <https://dsal.srv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>

Pāli Dictionary. Available on Buddhistdoor Global.

<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/dictionary/search/?k=Buddha&l=3>

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BSTC3044 Pāli language III

Academic Year 2025–2026

Lecturer	Dr. Dipen Barua
Office	Rm 4.12, 4/F, Centre of Buddhist Studies, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Mob./ Office Tel.	
E-mail address	dipen@hku.hk
Offering Semester	Semester I
Schedule	Every Sunday from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm
Class Venue	To be confirmed

Course Description

Pāli is the language of a large body of Theravāda canonical and non-canonical Buddhist literature. Here we find a rich variety of texts that contain valuable information on the religious, social, political, literary and linguistic history of South Asia. Important contributions are made in Pāli to philosophy and psychology through the analysis of the nature of *dharmas*, the classification of various kinds of mind and mental states, phenomenal processes and their causal relations. All of these topics can be understood through a careful study of Pāli literature. The course is devoted to the understating and translating of selected Pāli passages, as well as explaining the content of the Pāli canon and its commentaries and gradually building sufficient vocabularies for the purpose of reading the Pāli texts independently.

Course Content

This course helps students to practice translating selected texts from Pāli to English. It introduces sentences, passages, and sections chosen from a variety of Pāli canonical texts, such as the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, for students to learn grammar and practice translation skills with a focus given to analyzing Pāli passages meaningfully. Students will get the opportunity to develop their skills in understanding and translating the texts, while also acquainting themselves with the vast Pāli canonical literature.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to read the Buddhist texts in Pāli with doctrinal value of early Buddhist teachings and culture. Students will also understand the nature of the Buddhist teachings within the context of the religion-philosophical system of ancient Indian thought.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC7007 Pāli II or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Mid-term test (20%)
 - Short essay (20%) (In the essay, students are required to provide full grammatical analysis, including the meaning, of selected Pāli *sutta* or passages)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-book exam. Students can use lecture notes, glossary and dictionary during the exam.

Lecture Outline for Semester 1

Lesson	Date	Contents
Lesson 1	7 Sept 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the course• <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) [SN V 420 – 421]<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 2	14 Sept 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) [SN V 421– 422]<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 3	21 Sept 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) [SN V 422– 424]<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 4	28 Sept 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i> (The Establishing of Mindfulness Discourse) [MN I 55 – 56]<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lesson 5	5 Oct 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i> (The Establishing of Mindfulness Discourse) [MN I 57 – 58] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 6	12 Oct 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i> (The Establishing of Mindfulness Discourse) [MN I 61 – 63] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
No Class	19 Oct 2024	Reading Week
Lesson 7	26 Oct 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nidānaṣaṃyutta</i> (Connected Discourses on Causation): Chapter 1 – <i>Buddha Vagga</i> [SN II 1–4] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 8	2 Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maggasaṃyutta</i> (Connected Discourses on the Path): <i>Vibhaṅga Sutta</i> [SN V 8 – 9] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis. <p>Essay submission due</p>
Lesson 9	9 Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gahapati Vagga</i> (Householders) [AN IV 208–212] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 10	16 Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bāla Vagga</i> (Fools) [AN I 61] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis. <p>Mid-term test</p>
Lesson 11	23 Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mettānisaṃsa Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Advantages of Loving-kindness) [AN V 342] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis. • <i>Dhammapada–Yamaka Vagga</i> (The Path of the Dhamma–Pairs) [Dhp 1–2] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Notes: Lecture notes and supplementary materials will be provided in class throughout the semester.

Textbooks

The Dīgha Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids and J.E. Carpenter. Oxford: PTS, 1889-2007.

The Majjhima Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by V. Trenckner, T.W. Rhys Davids, J. Estlin Carpenter, Robert Chalmers. Oxford: PTS, 1888-2001.

The Saṃyutta Nikāya Vol I-IV, edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, Leon Feer, and G.A. Somaratne. Oxford: PTS, 1884-2000.

The Aṅguttara Nikāya, Vol I-V, edited by A.K. Warder, Rev. Richard Morris, E. Hardy. Oxford: PTS, 1855-1999.

The Dhammapada, edited by Oskar von Hinüber and K.R. Norman. Oxford: PTS, 1994-1995.

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course (Parts I & II)*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997. Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakriśna Ghosh. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Dhammajoti, K.L. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*. Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2018 (2nd edition).

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Oxford: The Pāli Text Society. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Feb 2017. <https://dsalsrv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>

Pāli Dictionary. Available on Buddhistdoor Global.

<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/dictionary/search/?k=Buddha&l=3>

BSTC3045 Pāli language IV

Academic Year 2025–2026

Lecturer	Dr. Dipen Barua
Office	Rm 4.12, 4/F, Centre of Buddhist Studies, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Mob./ Office Tel.	
E-mail address	dipen@hku.hk
Offering Semester	Semester II
Schedule	Every Sunday from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm
Class Venue	To be confirmed

Course Description

This course enables students to independently read Pali texts with the help of dictionaries. Every assigned reading will be self-contained in its relation to Buddhist teachings and their significance. The main focus of this course is to make grammatical explanations as clear as possible, while also gaining access to Pāli original sources for textual studies research using the Pāli dictionary and vocabulary. Each lesson includes a set of readings with an accompanying glossary and grammatical notes covering different nouns and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, compounds, primary and secondary derivatives, syntax, clause and numerals.

Course Content

Building on their learnings in Pāli Language I, II, and III, this course introduces skills to analyze and understand complex grammatical structures of Pali texts, with a special focus given to reading, understanding, and translating the selected passages from the discourses in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Udāna*, and the *Milindapañha*, together with their counterpart commentarial literature.

Learning Outcome

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to

- read and analyze the Pāli passages grammatically and doctrinally and their importance for the study of Pāli canonical and non-canonical literature;
- consult the many scholarly sources on Buddhist concepts and philosophy;
- enhance the knowledge of technical Buddhist terms with commentarial explanation;
- interpret original Pāli sources.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC3044 Pāli language III or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Mid-term test (20%)
 - Short essay (20%) (For this essay, students can select any Pāli passages. Students are required to provide a detailed grammatical analysis of each word with the passage with meaning. Additionally, key doctrinal terms should be analyzed and interpreted with reference to their commentarial explanation)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-book exam. Students can use lecture notes, glossary and dictionary during the exam.

Lecture Outline for Semester II

Lesson	Date	Contents
Lesson 1	25 Jan 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the course• <i>Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation)</i> [DN II 55 – 57]<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 2	1 Feb 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation)</i> [DN II 58–63]<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 3	8 Feb 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation)</i> [DN II 64–71]<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 4	15 Feb 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mahaāparinibbāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on parinibbāna)</i> [DN II]<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 5	1 Mar 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mahaāparinibbāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on parinibbāna)</i> [DN II]<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 6	8 Mar 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I]<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
No Class	15 Mar 2026	Reading Week
Lesson 7	22 Mar 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I]<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.

Lesson 8	29 Mar 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary <p>Essay submission due</p>
Lesson 9	5 Apr 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination)</i> [selected passages] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 10	12 Apr 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination)</i> [selected passages] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary. <p>Mid-term Test</p>
Lesson 11	19 Apr 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)</i> [selected passages] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart sources from other texts.
Lesson 12	26 Apr 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)</i> [selected passages] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart sources from other texts.

Notes: Lecture notes and supplementary materials will be provided in class throughout the semester.

Textbooks

The Dīgha Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids and J.E. Carpenter. Oxford: PTS, 1889-2007.

The Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Sumaṅgalavilāsinī) Vol I–III, edited by T.W.Rhys Davids, J.E. Carpenter and W. Stede. Oxford: PTS, 1968–1971.

The Majjhima Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by V. Trenckner, T.W. Rhys Davids, J. Estlin Carpenter, Robert Chalmers. Oxford: PTS, 1888-2001.

The Majjhimanikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Papañcasūdanī) Vol I – V, edited by J.H. Woods, D. Kosambi and I.B. Horner. Oxford: PTS, 1922–1979.

The Paṭisambhidāmagga Vol I–II, edited by A.C. Taylor. Oxford: PTS 1905–1979.

The Paṭisambhidāmagga-aṭṭhakathā (Saddhammappakāsinī) Vol I–III, edited by C.V. Joshi. Oxford: PTS, 1933–1979.

The Visuddhimagga, edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids. Oxford: PTS, 1975.

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course (Parts I & II)*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997. Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. Oxford: The

Pali Text Society, 1994.
Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*.
Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2018 (2nd edition).
Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy:
Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.
Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass
Publishers Private Limited, 1993.
Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Oxford: The Pāli Text
Society. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated
in Feb 2017. <https://dsal.srv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>
Pāli Dictionary. Available on Buddhistdoor Global.
<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/dictionary/search/?k=Buddha&l=3>

BSTC7008

Sanskrit I

(6 credits)

Course Description

Sanskrit, one of the most ancient languages known to humankind, is considered a key to understanding human civilization, particularly the rich cultural, philosophical, and religious heritage of India, whose influence on the 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. For students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, an ability to read and comprehend Buddhist Sanskrit texts is essential. This course provides an overview of the history of Sanskrit Buddhist literature, as well as the basic grammar and language, covering topics such as scripts, phonetics, declensions, conjugations, participles, and *sandhi*.

Course Content

This course is designed for absolute beginners. No prior knowledge of Sanskrit is required for this course. The course begins with the alphabet and the Devanāgarī script and gradually introduces elementary Sanskrit grammar along with exercises selected from Buddhist Sanskrit texts. As the students learn and attempt the graded passages, all the grammar involved will be analyzed, and doctrines will be explained to them in a gradual build-up manner. This course mainly covers the following grammatical parts: Sanskrit alphabets, writing Devanāgarī scripts, three genders, three numbers, different nouns and their declensions, Different classes of Sanskrit verbs are their conjugations, personal pronouns, Demonstrative pronouns, Interrogative pronouns, causative verbs, gerunds, present tense, past passive participle, *parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* verbs, and *sandhi*.

Expected Outcome

At the end of the course, students are expected to read simple Sanskrit passages and comprehend their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions, and tutorials.

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	Every Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm
Class Venue	

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- **50% Coursework**
 - 10 % Class-participation
 - 20 % Quiz 1 (Middle of the semester, open-book).
 - 20 % Quiz 2 (In the last class of the semester, open-book).
- **50% Final examination at the end of the semester. (Open-book examination)**

Lecture Schedule

Lecture 1 (06/09/2025)

- Introduction to the course
- Introduction to the Sanskrit Language and Literature
- Introduction to the Sanskrit Alphabet
- Writing Devanāgarī Scripts

Lecture 2 (13/09/2025)

- Writing complex Devanāgarī Scripts
- Introduction to Sanskrit Nominals:
 - Three Genders of Sanskrit Nouns
 - Introduction to the Eight Cases in Sanskrit
- Nominative, Genitive, and Locative cases
- Partial declension of masculine nouns ending in —a:

Lecture 3 (20/09/2025)

- Introduction to Adjectives
- ‘Verb to be’ (*bhavati*)
- Introducing the function indeclinable particles —*ca*, *vā*, and *api*
- Vocabularies

- Practicing Sanskrit-English translation exercises from lesson one of the textbooks.

Lecture 4 (27/09/2025)

- Continuation of Introduction to Sanskrit Nominals:
 - Accusative case
 - Ablative case
 - Partial declension of masculine nouns ending in *-a*:
 - Partial declension of neutral nouns ending in *-a*:
- Introduction to Sanskrit verbs:
 - Verbal prefixes
 - Three grades of strengthening verbs
 - Class I, IV, VI, and X verbs
 - Conjugation of class I verbs in the present tense

Lecture 5 (04/10/2025)

- Continuation of Introduction to Sanskrit Nouns:
 - Dative case
 - Vocative case
 - Partial declension of the masculine noun ending in *-a*
 - Partial declension of Feminine nouns ending in *—ā*
- Introducing the function of indeclinable particles —*iti*, *eva*, and *sma*
- Vocabulary and practice of Sanskrit-English translation exercises from lesson 3 of the textbook.

Lecture 6 (11/10/2025)

- Suffixes—*tā*, *tva*, and *tas*
- Introduction to Sanskrit Personal Pronouns
- Instrumental case
- Complete declension of the masculine noun ending in *-a*
- Vocabulary and practicing Sanskrit-English translation exercises from lesson 3 of the textbook.

(No class on Oct 18, 2025) (Reading week).

Lecture 7 (25/10/2025)

- **Quiz 1.**
- Causative verbs
- Past Passive Participles

Lecture 8 (01/11/2025)

- Introduction to *—u* ending nouns:
 - Declension of masculine nouns ending in *—u*
 - Declension of neutral nouns ending in *—u*

- Introduction to Demonstrative Pronouns
- Introduction Interrogative Pronouns

Lecture 9 (08/11/2025)

- Introduction to —*i* ending nouns:
 - Declension of **masculine** nouns ending in —*i*
 - Declension of **neutral** nouns ending in —*i*
 - Declension of nouns ending in —*i*
- Imperfect Tense
- Vocabulary and Sanskrit-English translation exercise from lesson 4 of the textbook.

Lecture 10 (15/11/2025)

- *parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* verbs
- Gerunds
- Passive voice

Lecture 11 (22/11/2025)

- Introduction to *Sandhi* rules
 - Hard and soft Consonants
 - Vowel *Sandhi*
 - Consonant *Sandhi*
 - *Visarga Sandhi*

Lecture 12 (29/11/2025)

- Vocabulary and Sanskrit-English translation exercise from lesson 5 of the textbook.
- **Quiz 2**

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

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.

(Those who want to have a copy can directly buy from the Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong: <https://buddhadharma.co/Reading-Buddhist-Sanskrit-Texts-An-Elementary-Grammatical-Guide>)

Note: We will follow the textbook selectively. Therefore, handouts will be uploaded to Moodle before every class.

Reference books

- Ruppel, A.M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Thomas, Egenes (1994). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- _____ (2000). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Whitney, Williams D. (1979). *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- _____ (2003). *Sanskrit Grammar*. New York: Dover Publications.
- Goldman Robert P. & Goldman Sutherland Sally J. (2011). *An Introduction to Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Online Resources:

For Devanagārī script writing and alphabets pronunciation practice:

<https://enjoylearningsanskrit.com/sanskrit-alphabet-tutor/>

For additional Sanskrit Grammar practice:

<https://ubcsanskrit.ca/>

Sanskrit Dictionary

1. <https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/scans/MWScan/2020/web/webtc/indexcaller.php>
2. <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/apte/>

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>

BSTC7009
Sanskrit II
(6 credits)

Course Description

The main focus of the course is to guide students to read Buddhist Sanskrit passages and comprehend Sanskrit Buddhist literature. This course covers Sanskrit grammatical components together with exercises selected from Sanskrit Buddhist texts, which are not included in Readings in Sanskrit Buddhist Texts I. This course covers, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, compounds, different forms of past tense, future tense, locative and genitive absolutes, syntax and classification of sentences.

Prerequisite

BSTC7008 Sanskrit I or teacher's approval

Course Content

The course covers Present Participle, Future Passive Participle, Relative and Co-relatives, three forms of Past tense, Future Tense, Active and Passive voice, Imperative and Optative Moods and compounds, different nouns and their declensions, Class II, III, V, VII, VIII and IX verbs and their conjugations. All examples and exercises will be selected from Buddhist Sanskrit texts, all the grammar involved will be analyzed, and doctrines will be explained to them.

Expected Outcome

At the end of the course, students are expected to read Sanskrit passages and be able to handle Sanskrit Buddhist resources for their future research with the help of Sanskrit Dictionaries.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions, and tutorials.

Assessment

- **50% coursework**
 - 10 % class-participation
 - 20 % Quiz 1 (open-book)
 - 20 % Quiz 2 (open-book)
- **50% Final Examination at the end of the semester (open book)**

Offering Semester	Second Semester
Lecturer	Dr. Amrita Nanda
Office	Rm 4.09, 4/F Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Tel:	39175077/ 92850204
Email	nanda@hku.hk
Schedule	Every Thursday from 7:00 to 10:00 pm
Class Venue	

Lecture Schedule

Lesson 1 (22/01/2026)

- Introduction to the Possessive suffix *-in* ending nouns.
- Future Passive Participles.
- Introduction to Sanskrit Relatives and Correlatives.

Lesson 2 (29/01/2026)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Numerals
- Sanskrit Vocabularies
- Sanskrit—English translation exercises from lesson 6 of the textbook.

Lesson 3 (05/02/2026)

- Introduction to Possessive nouns ending in ‘—*mant*’ and ‘—*vant*’
- Introduction to Future Tense
- Introduction to Sanskrit Compounds — *dvandva* and *tatpuruṣa*

Lesson 4 (12/02/2026)

- Introduction to the Sanskrit Infinitive
- Vocabularies
- Sanskrit—English translation exercises from lesson 7 of the textbook

- (No class on Feb 19, 2026) Lunar New Year

Lesson 5 (26/02/2026)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Demonstrative ‘that’
- Introduction to Sanskrit nouns ending in *-an*
- The Class II verbs
- Sanskrit—English translation exercises from lesson 7 of the textbook

Lesson 6 (05/03/2026)

- Present participles
- Continuation of Sanskrit Compounds — *Karmadhāraya-samāsa* and *Avyayībhāva-samāsa*
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

(No class on Mar 12, 2026) Reading week

Lesson 7 (19/03/2026)

- Introduction to more Sanskrit nouns ending in —*an*
- Class IX verbs
- Vocabularies
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages
- **Quiz 1.**

Lesson 8 (26/03/2026)

- Sanskrit-English transition exercises from lesson 8 of the textbook.
- The Imperative Mood
- Sanskrit Agent Nouns
- Conjugation of Class V verbs
- Vocabularies
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 9 (02/04/2026)

- Sanskrit-English translation exercises from lesson 9 of the textbook.
- Conjugation of Class VIII verbs
- The Optative Mood
- Continuation of the Sanskrit Compound — *Bahuvrīhi*

Lesson 10 (09/04/2026)

- The Past Participle Active
- Conjugation of Class III verbs
- Aorist
- Vocabularies
- Sanskrit-English translation exercises from lesson 10 of the textbook.

Lesson 11 (16/04/2026)

- Class VII verbs
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 12 (23/04/2026)

- The Perfect Tense
- Reading selected passages from the Sanskrit Buddhist texts.

Lesson 13 (30/ 04/2026)

- **Quiz 2 (open book)**
- Exam Review

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

Textbook

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

Note: Handouts will be uploaded to Moodle before every class.

Reference books

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

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

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

Classical Sanskrit. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
Thomas, Egenes (1994). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
_____ (2000). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
Whitney, Williams D. (1979). *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
_____ (2003). *Sanskrit Grammar*. New York: Dover Publications.
Goldman Robert P. & Goldman Sutherland Sally J. (2011). *An Introduction to Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers.
Basic Sanskrit Gramma online <http://www.learnsanskrit.org/grammar>
Online Sanskrit-English Dictionary <http://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/monier/>

Note:

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<http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism>

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: BSTC7009 Sanskrit II or teacher's approval

Course Content:

This Advanced Sanskrit course adopts a gradual and systematic approach to learning. It primarily focuses on reading and translating selected passages from the 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 explores various genres of Sanskrit Buddhist texts, including prose, verse, and hybrid Sanskrit Buddhist passages. This selection of readings is pedagogically designed to enrich and broaden students' understanding of Sanskrit Buddhist literature, thereby building their confidence and skills in reading and translating various genres of Sanskrit Buddhist texts.

Learning outcomes

1. Upon completing 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	Every Thursday from 7:00 to 10:00 pm.
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)**

Reading materials for this semester:

Selected passages from the following Sanskrit Buddhist texts will be studied:

1. *Pratītyasamutpādaḥṛdayakārikā* (Nagārjuna's Verse on the Essence of Dependent Arising)
2. *Pratītyasamutpādaḥṛdayavyākhyānam* (The Commentary on the Essence of Dependent Arising by Nagārjuna)
3. *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā sūtram* (The Diamond-Cutter Wisdom-perfection discourse)
4. *Mahāvastu Avadānaḥ* (Great Story)—a canonical text of the Mahāsāṃghika Lokottaravāda school.

Lecture Schedule

Detailed Lecture outlines:

Lecture 1 (04/09/2025)

- 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 (11/09/2025)

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

Lecture 3 (18/09/2025)

- **Reading selected passages from the *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 (25/09/2025)

- **Reading 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 5 (02/10/2025)

- **Reading 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 6 (09/10/2025)

- **Reading 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.

(No class on Oct 16, 2025) (Reading week).

Lectures 7 (23/10/2025)

- **Reading 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 (30 /10/2025)

- **Reading 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 9 (06/11/2025)

- **Reading Selected Passages from the *Mahāvastu Avadānaṃ***
Guide to the text and translation of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lectures 10 (13/11/2025)

- **Reading Selected Passages from the *Mahāvastu Avadānaṃ***
Guide to the text and translation of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lectures 11 (20/11/2025)

- **Reading Selected Passages from the *Mahāvastu Avadānaṃ***
Guide to the text and translation of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lectures 12 (27/11/2025)

- **Reading Selected Passages from the *Mahāvastu Avadānaḥ***

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.

Text books (only selected chapters)

Pratītyasamutpadahrdaya and āryadharmadhatugarbhavivarana (ed.) Namdrol, Gyaltzen. 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.

BSTC3041 Sanskrit IV

Course Description

Sanskrit, being one of the most ancient languages, is studied by scholars of language, religion, literature, history, and anthropology, and anyone who is interested in Indian and Buddhist cultural heritage. It is one of the three languages in which Buddhist teachings are preserved. Indian Buddhist schools, such as Sarvāstivāda, Yogācāra, Mādhyamikā, and the various schools of Indian Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, composed their texts in Sanskrit. Therefore, for students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, a reading knowledge of Sanskrit is essential. Students of Buddhist philosophy and history will discover that knowledge of the Sanskrit language greatly enriches their studies. This course is designed for students who wish to read and comprehend Buddhist Sanskrit texts and employ Sanskrit Buddhist resources for their future research.

Prerequisite: BSTC3040 Sanskrit language III or teacher's approval

Course Content

The course is designed to equip you with the skills to read and understand Sanskrit Buddhist commentarial literature. We will delve into selected passages from key texts, such as Prajñākaramati's *commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatara*, Sthiramati's *commentary on Triṃśikārikā of Vasubandhu (Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ)*, and selected passages from *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṃ* (Commentary on the Abhidharmakośa). As we progress, we will systematically introduce advanced grammatical structures, empowering you to navigate the complexities of these texts with confidence.

The pedagogy behind this selection of readings is to immerse you in the rich tradition of Sanskrit Buddhist commentarial literature. These texts, each with its unique style, are not just academic exercises but windows into the historical and philosophical development of Buddhism. For instance, the commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatara* is a religious text that guides us on the path to the bodhisattva ideal. The *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ*, a key text of Yogācāra Buddhism, elucidates the three natures of realities. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṃ*, often described as a compendium of Buddhist philosophy, has left an indelible mark on the development of many Buddhist schools of thought.

Expected Learning Outcome

1. At the end of this course, students are expected to be able to read and comprehend classical Sanskrit Buddhist literature.
2. Students learn to examine and investigate Buddhist teachings from different perspectives.
3. Understand the development of Buddhist thoughts.
4. Students are enabled to present and utilize Sanskrit Buddhist sources for their future research.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures and class discussions

Offering Semester	Second Semester
Lecturer	Dr. Amrita Nanda
Office	Rm 4.09, 4/F Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus
Tel:	39175077/ 92850204
Email	nanda@hku.hk
Schedule	Every Monday from 7:00 to 10:00 pm.
Class Venue	

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- **50% - Coursework**
 - 10 %-Class-participation
 - 25 %- Mid-term Quiz (open-book).
 - 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)**

Reading Materials for this course:

Selected passages from the following Buddhist Sanskrit Texts will be studied:

1. *The Commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatara* by Prajñākaramati.
2. *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā* of the Vasubandhu
3. Sthiramati's *Triṃśikā-vijñaptibhāṣyam* (commentary on the *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā*)

Detailed Lecture outlines:

Lectures 1 (19/01/2026)

Selected passages from the *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā*

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

Lectures 2 (26/01/2026)

Selected passages from the *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā*

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

Lectures 3 (02/02/2026)

Selected passages from the *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā*

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

Lectures 4 (09/02/2026)

Selected passages from the *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā*

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

(No class on Feb 16, 2026) (University Holiday).

(No class on Feb 23, 2026) (Lunar New Year).

Lectures 5 (02/03/2026)

Selected passages from the **Sthiramati's** *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam*

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

Lectures 6 (09/03/2026)

Selected passages from the **Sthiramati's** *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam*

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

(No class on March 9, 2026) (Reading week).

(No class on March 16, 2026) (University Holiday).

Lectures 7 (23/03/2026)

Selected passages from the **Sthiramati's** *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam*

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

Lectures 8 (30/03/2026)

Selected passages from the **Sthiramati's** *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam*

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

(No class on April 6, 2026) (General Holiday).

Lectures 9 (13/04/2026)

Selected passages from **Prajñākaramati's** *commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatara*

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

Lectures 10 (20/04/2026)

Selected passages from **Prajñākaramati's** *commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatara*

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

Lectures 11 (27/04/2026)

Selected passages from **Prajñākaramati's commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra**
Guide to the text and translation of the passages chosen 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 class through Moodle.

Textbooks (only selected chapters).

Buescher, Hartmut (2007) *Sthimamati's Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya: Critical Edition of the Sanskrit Texts and its Tibetan Translation*. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, ÖAW,

Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva with the Commentary Panjika of Prajnakaramati (ed.). Vaidya, P. L. The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, Darbhanga:1960.

Vasubandhu: Abhidharmakosa-bhasya (rev. 2nd ed.) Pradhan P. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Center, 1975.

Reference books

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar 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.