

**The UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**Religious Studies 323 L20: Mahāyāna Buddhism
Course Outline - Spring 2011**

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Class Time: MW 10:00am-12:45pm
Location: ST027
Office Hours: MW 1:30-2:30pm or by appointment

Required Text

Paul Williams. *Mahāyāna Buddhism, The Doctrinal Foundations*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge, 2009.

Additional short readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Description

This course will acquaint students with the beliefs and practices of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India, China, Tibet and Japan. In this course, students will examine the cultural, historical, and philosophical contexts of these traditions through lectures, assigned readings and films.

Learning Outcomes

This course provides students the opportunity to develop a wide range of critical and practical skills necessary for reflective thinking, communication of ideas, and ethical reasoning. Over and above gaining an understanding of the Mahāyāna Buddhism of India, Tibet, China and Japan, this course challenges students to reflect upon and assess how we and those we study organize, live in, and relate to the Mahāyāna Buddhism. It challenges students to identify and to call into question the presuppositions, central concepts, agendas, and cultural biases of both the scholar and the subjects of our inquiry. The analytical and self-reflective skills emphasized in this course will find application in the bulk of courses offered at the university as well as in life outside the academic setting.

Course Requirements

I. Tests

Students will write two tests (midterm and final) each worth 30% of the final grade. The first test will be held at the beginning of class (i.e. 10:00 – 11:15 am) on June 01 and the final on the day scheduled by the registrar. The tests are not cumulative. Students will be tested on their understanding of the key concepts presented in the texts, lectures, and films. The format of the

exams consists of two sections. In section A (40%), participants must correctly define 10 key terms. In section B (60%), students must provide a brief answer (a short paragraph) to each of four questions.

II Short Research Paper

- (a) A short research paper of not more than 2,500 words (6-8 pages, double-spaced, including bibliography and note) should be submitted at the final day of the class (June 22). The short research paper is worth 30% of the final grade.
- (b) Outline to indicate contents, methodology, and proposed Bibliography of the research paper should be submitted on June 1, 2011 and is worth 10% of the final grade.
- (c) The students should consult a reference book on how to compose a research paper before attempting to write the paper. The Chicago Manual of Style or the MLA Style Sheet is highly recommended.
- (d) Other details of the research paper will be announced and discussed in the class.

Policy Regarding Missed Requirements

Test dates and the deadline of the research paper are firm. Without acceptable documentation (i.e. a medical or counsellor's certificate, police report, bereavement notice, confirmation of religious observance, or court summons) missed requirements will be awarded an "F".

This policy is intended to encourage diligence and integrity on the part of each student as well as to uphold the principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class.

Although there is no formal policy for class attendance, students are encouraged to attend all classes in order to take full advantage of the course.

Grading Scale

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Letter	GPA	Percentage	Description From Calendar
A+	4.0	96-100	<i>Excellent</i> – superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.
A		90-95	
A-	3.7	85-89	
B+	3.3	80-84	<i>Good</i> – clearly above average performance with knowledge of the subject matter generally complete.
B	3.0	75-79	
B-	2.7	70-74	
C+	2.3	65-69	<i>Satisfactory</i> – basic understanding of the subject matter.
C	2.0	60-64	
C-	1.7	55-59	
D+	1.3	53-54	<i>Minimum Pass</i> – marginal performance, generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in same subject.
D	1.0	50-52	
F	0	<50	<i>Fail</i> – unsatisfactory performance or failure to complete assignments.

Integrity of Student Work & Plagiarism

The University of Calgary Calendar states:

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge is cumulative and further advances are predicated on the contributions of others. In the normal course of scholarship these contributions are apprehended, critically evaluated, and utilised as a foundation for further inquiry. Intellectual honesty demands that the contribution of others be acknowledged. To do less is to cheat. To pass off contributions and ideas of another as one's own is to deprive oneself of the opportunity and challenge to learn and to participate in the scholarly process of acquisition and development of knowledge. Not only will the cheater or intellectually dishonest individual be ultimately his/her own victim but also the general quality of scholarly activity will be seriously undermined. It is for these reasons that the University insists on intellectual honesty in scholarship. The control of intellectual dishonesty begins with the individual's recognition of standards of honesty expected generally and compliance with those expectations.

With respect to student work in a course, it is the responsibility of the instructor to specify the academic requirements of the course.

Intellectual dishonesty and plagiarism are serious offenses, the penalty for which may be:

- a) reduction of the grade on the assignment, test, or examination;*
- b) reduction of the final grade;*
- c) failure of and expulsion from the course; or*
- d) expulsion from the University.*

Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the General Academic Regulations, Grading Policy and Integrity of Student Work in the University of Calgary Calendar.

Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule

5/11: Introduction

The early Buddhist teaching
The sectarian (*abhidharma*) Buddhism
Reading: Paul Williams, pp.1~20

5/16: The origin of Mahāyāna

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 20~44

5/18: *Prajñāpāramitāsūtras*

Reading: Paul Williams, pp.45~62
Reading on blackboard: *Āgama* and *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*

5/23: Victoria Day (no class)

5/25: *Madhyamaka*

Reading: Paul Williams, pp.63~75

5/30: *Madhyamaka* II

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 76~ 83

Yogācāra I

Reading: Paul Williams, pp.84~91

6/1: Midterm test & *Yogācāra* II (*TERM PAPER OUTLINE DUE*)

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 92~103

6/6: The *tathāgatagarbha*

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 104~118

Reading on blackboard: The Origin of the *Tathāgatagarbha* Teaching

6/8: The later *Madhyamaka* and *Yogācāra*

Reading on blackboard

6/13: The Eastern Asia tradition I

The Chan (Zen) tradition

Reading on blackboard: The development of Chinese Buddhism

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 129~ 131.

Lotus-sūtra tradition

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 149~164.

6/15: The Eastern Asia tradition II

The Huayuan tradition

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 132~148.

6/20: The Eastern Asia tradition II

The Pure-land traditions

Reading: Paul Williams, pp.212~217, 231 ~268.

6/22: The cult of Bodhisattvas (*TERM PAPER DUE*)

Reading: Paul Williams, pp. 218~230.

6/27~29: *FINAL EXAM* (scheduled by the registrar)