

University of Calgary
Faculty of Arts
Department of Religious Studies
RELS 329 L01: Buddhism in East Asia
Winter 2012, MWF 14:00—14:50

Instructor: Sam Borsman
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Office: SS 1330
Office Hours: W 12:00-13:00

Required Textbooks:

Richard Bowring (2008) *The Religious Traditions of Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kenneth Ch'en (1972) *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Course Description: This course traces the development of Mahayana Buddhism in East Asia, with a focus on China and Japan. Our discussion of Chinese Buddhism will include such topics as the influence of Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese folk religion on Buddhism and the Buddhist response to early critiques that it was apolitical, anti-social, and unfilial. In the Japanese context, we will look at the influence of Shinto on Buddhism and the development of a militaristic and nationalistic Buddhist ideology during World War II. Finally, we will explore modernist and reform movements in East Asian Buddhism, movements which have deeply influenced the practice of East Asian Buddhist traditions in the West.

Learning Objectives: This course will give you a wide-ranging overview of the artistic, social, philosophical, and political influence of Buddhism on East Asian cultures. You will develop the skills to critically examine syncretism and the cultural transformation of a religious tradition, while reflecting on the important question of how the “West” studies the “East.” Through class discussion and written assignments, you will gain competence in presenting your ideas to your peers.

Course Website: Blackboard (<https://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/webapps/login/>). Our course website will contain additional required readings, a discussion board and information about assignments. If you have problems accessing Blackboard, please let me know.

Assignments and Evaluations:

1) Mid-term exam. This exam consists of multiple choice and short essay questions, and covers Chinese Buddhism and methodological issues in the study of Eastern religions. A study guide will be handed out before the exam.

2) Essay. In consultation with me, you will choose a topic for a 10 page essay. After writing your essay, you will present a 10 minute synopsis to the class, taking questions from your peers. Finally, you will write a one page response to your peers' comments and suggestions, noting how you might have changed some of your arguments or research. The grade for the essay includes both the essay itself and your response paper. Failure to submit the response paper will result in a penalty of one letter grade deducted from your essay grade.

3) Final exam. The format is similar to the mid-term, and it covers Japanese Buddhism and modernist/reform movements in East Asian Buddhism. The exam is partially cumulative, in that you will have to be familiar with some of the key themes and ideas from the first section of the course.

Mid-term Exam	25% (Feb. 17 th)
Essay	40% (Due Apr. 11 th)
Final Exam	35% (Registrar Scheduled)

Grading:

A numerical mark will be given for each course assignment. A letter grade will be assigned according to the following scheme, standardized within the Department of Religious Studies:

A+	96-100	A	90-95	A-	85-89
B+	80-84	B	75-79	B-	70-74
C+	65-69	C	60-64	C-	55-59
D+	53-54	D	50-52	F	Under 50

Policy on Missed or Late Assignments:

If an emergency or illness prevents you from handing in an assignment or writing an exam on the due date, you must inform me as soon as possible and provide acceptable documentation (e.g. medical certificate, notice of death). It is extremely important to follow these guidelines as our assignments involve class discussion.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is not tolerated at the University of Calgary and has serious consequences. Your essays/presentations must be your own work and inadequate referencing may be seen as plagiarism. Please see the relevant sections on Academic Misconduct in the current University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than **fourteen (14) days** after the start of the course.

Blackboard Help

Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/computersupport/online-services/blackboard> for Student Help and FAQ's about Blackboard. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are available at <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/blackboard/students>. Instructions for using the Digital Drop Box are available here: http://library.blackboard.com/docs/r6/6_1/student/bbls_r6_1_student/digital_drop_box.htm.

Gnosis

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email:

gnosis@ucalgary.ca or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Student Ombudsperson and Students' Union Representative

The Office of the Student Ombuds provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. See

www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at arts1@ucalgary.ca.

Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints. Please check this website and not the nearest assembly point for this course.

Safewalk

The Safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout campus to request a walk.