

Religion 340: Buddhism (Fall 2017)

Professor Luke Whitmore

(CCC 417. Office Hours: Tues. 3:30-5:30, Wed. 1:30-2:30 and by appointment)

lwhitmor@uwsp.edu

Description

The worlds of Buddhism stretches in space and time from approximately the fifth century BCE in north India and western Nepal to the numerous Buddhist communities in Wisconsin today. This course will orient you to the diverse set of ideas, cultures, beliefs, and practices that make up the Buddhist world, and give you the tools to understand the diversity of Buddhisms today. In this course you will be asked, in many different ways, to view the world from perspectives radically different from your own, a skill essential for our times. What we do in class and what you do to prepare for class are both designed to facilitate this goal.

Learning Outcomes

(These outcomes are designed to work with the General Education Program goals for the Humanities and Global Awareness designations.) This course gives you the tools to accomplish the following:

- 1) Explain core Buddhist practices and ideas
- 2) Describe the diversity of Buddhism in different times and places
- 3) Analyze different kinds of Buddhism as they are lived in the world today
- 4) Obtain reliable information on specific Buddhism-related topics

Required Texts: For Rental

We are NOT reading these text rental books in their entirety.

The Experience of Buddhism (Strong)

The Life of Buddhism (ed. Reynolds and Carbine)

Required Texts: For Purchase

Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction by Damien Keown **(2nd edition)**

ISBN-10: 0199663831 ISBN-13: 978-0199663835. **Note: Please be sure that you are purchasing the 2013 version of this book.**

Monkey: A Journey to the West, trans. Kherdian (Shambhala, 2005).

Assessments and Requirements

Pop quizzes (lowest grade dropped): 15%

Attendance: 5%. Everyone is automatically entitled to two unexcused absences. Anything beyond this should be discussed with me and will impact your final grade. If you miss more than 4 classes we will need to meet in person to discuss how class is going. Your presence and participation matter. Please place a copy of any absence-related information (including emails to me) in the Absence-Related Info Dropbox on D2L.

Class Participation: 10%

Unit 1 Take-Home Test: 15%

Unit 2 Take-Home Test: 20%

Book Report: 20% (800 words)

Final Paper: 15% (approx. 1000 words)

Percentage to Letter Grade Conversion

A: 94-100, A-: 90-93, B+: 87-89, B: 83-86, B-: 80-82, C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72, D+: 67-69, D: 65-66, F: 64 or lower

Learning Accommodations

UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu. <https://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>

Written Assignments

If you are not able to turn in on time due to particularly extenuating circumstances, some flexibility may be possible. If this is the case, you must have asked and received permission from me no later than the day before the assignment is due. Without permission, a grade penalty will be assigned at my discretion or I may not allow you to submit.

Required Readings

If I do not provide photocopies of an assigned reading not in one of our books, you must print out the reading (you will find PDF versions on our D2L site) and bring to class.

Smart Phones

Please do not use a smart phone in class without permission. Tablets or laptops for the purposes of note-taking are fine, with permission. If your smart phone use is causing our collective energy to decrease I will let you know. If it continues to be an issue it will impact your grade.

Attendance

Everyone is automatically entitled to two unexcused absences. Anything beyond this should be discussed with me and will impact your final grade. If you miss more than 4 classes we will need to meet in person to discuss how class is going. Your presence and participation matter. Please place a copy of any absence-related information (including emails to me) in the Absence-Related Info Dropbox on D2L.

Assignments

Assignments will change. Be sure to check D2L before each assignment.

Mutual Respect (avoid bad *karmas*)

<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/CommunityRights.pdf>

Academic Misconduct (avoid bad *karmas*)

<http://library.uwsp.edu/guides/vrd/plagiarism.htm>

<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/CommunityRights.pdf#page=11>

Emergency Response Guidance:

- In the event of a medical emergency call 9-1-1 or use the Red Emergency Phone outside of CCC Room 227 (located near the middle of each of the two long hallways on this floor). Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim.
- In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure. Our classroom is one of these designated rooms.
- In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet in the middle of Parking Lot E (the parking lot between CCC and NFAC).
- Active Shooter/Code React – Run/Escape, Hide, Fight. If trapped hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Call 9-1-1 when it is safe to do so. Follow instructions of emergency responders. See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Procedures at www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point.”

Schedule of Assignments

Unit 1: Foundations

Week 1

Tuesday, September 5: Beginnings

Thursday, September 7: Buddha

- Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction (henceforth KEOWN): 17-31 (Chapter 2: The Buddha)
- The Experience of Buddhism (henceforth STRONG): 1.2. (A Royal Pilgrim Retraces the Life of the Buddha). Note: Always read the introductory remarks by the translator (Strong) in addition to the primary source.
- Answer the About Me questions listed under Important Course Materials on D2L and upload to the D2L dropbox labeled About Me.
- Study Question: Why did the Buddha leave his family?

Week 2

Tuesday, September 12: Dharma

- KEOWN: 32-47 (Chapter 3: Karma and Rebirth)
- STRONG: 3.5.4 (Making and Sharing Merit)
- Study question: How does karma relate to the following: morality, rebirth, and consciousness?

Thursday, September 14: Dharma

- KEOWN: 48-60 (Chapter 4: Four Noble Truths)
- STRONG: 3.2.1., 3.2.2 (Milinda and the Chariot); 2.1.3 (The Conversion of Sariputra and Maudgalyayana); OPTIONAL: 3.2.4 (Channa is Taught the Middle Way)
- Study questions: How would you apply the sentence “the truth will set you free” to the 4 Truths? What would YOUR version of the 4 Truths be?

Week 3

Tuesday, September 19, Dharma

- KEOWN: 96-111 (Chapter 7: Meditation)
- STRONG: 3.5.5 (Mindfulness)
- Study questions: What were the goals of meditation for early Buddhists?

Thursday, September 21: Sangha

- KEOWN: 112-118 (parts of Chapter 8: Ethics).
- STRONG: 2.1.4 (The Acceptance of Women into the Order); 2.4 (Sangha Situations); 2.4.1 (Nagasena Disobeys His Master and Preaches to a Layman); 2.1.2 (The Laywoman Sujata)
- Study questions: What specific connections did you see between Keown's discussion of Buddhist ethics and the different specific examples in Strong?

Week 4

Tuesday, September 26: Sangha

- KEOWN: 61-62, 76-78. (Beginning of Chapter 5 - Mahayana and Chapter 7 -The Spread of Buddhism).
- STRONG: 2.1 and 2.1.1 (First Disciples of the Buddha; 1.10 (Death and Parinirvana of the Buddha); 1.12 (A Story of a Buddha Image); 3.6, 3.6.1 (A Theravadin Claim to Orthodoxy); 3.6.3 (Mahasamghikas on the Buddha); OPTIONAL, FOR THE INTREPID: 3.6.2
- TAKE HOME TEST HANDED OUT
- Study question: What were some of the most important factors that contributed to the survival and eventual growth and spread of Buddhism after the death of the Buddha?

Thursday, September 28: Review

- selection from *Buddhadhamma*: "Things that Should be Understood First": 37-49 (PDF on D2L)
- Life of Buddhism (henceforth LOB): 2-11
- Note: This is a big picture reading. Focus on "when" and "where" the action is happening.
- Study Questions: Review the unit and come to class with a list of questions.
- **OPTIONAL BUT USEFUL: Watch the PBS documentary *The Buddha: A Film* by David Grubin (available through Films on Demand on UWSP library site)**

Week 5

Tuesday, October 3

- TAKE HOME TEST DUE BY BEGINNING OF CLASS TO DROPBOX.
- Beginning Theravada.

Thursday, October 5

- Strong 6.1.2
- LOB (Life of Buddhism) Ch. 3: "A Tooth Relic and the Legitimation of Power" (also read explanatory intro)
- LOB (Life of Buddhism) 11-14 Ch. 9 "The Cremation of a Senior Monk" (also read explanatory intro)
- Keown 76-84

Week 6

Tuesday, October 10

- STRONG: 1.7.4, **NOW OPTIONAL!! 6.4.2**
- Life of Buddhism (LOB): Chapter 2 ("Image Consecrations", p. 35-44, also read explanatory intro)
- Life of Buddhism (LOB): Chapter 4 ("Village Rituals and Ceremonies", p. 61-70, also read explanatory intro)

Thursday, October 12

- The Bhikkhuni Ordination Controversy in Thailand (PDF on D2L)
- Optional: LOB Chapter 6 (Theravadin Religious Women)

Week 7

Tuesday, October 17

- Monkey 1-13
- "Interbeing" (Thich Nhat Hanh, PDF on D2L)
- KEOWN: 61-75 (Chapter 5: The Mahayana)
- start browsing in *Zen Sourcebook*
- Study Questions: How is Monkey like the Buddha? How does Mahayana differ from Theravada at first glance?

Thursday, October 19

- Monkey 13-40
- Introduction to the Chinese Cosmos (take good notes)
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/bgov/cosmos.htm>
- Sanjiao: The Three Teachings
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/ort/teachings.htm>
- continue browsing in *Zen Sourcebook*
- Study Question: What does the idea of Sanjiao say about the relationship of Buddhist dharma to Daoism and Confucianism?

Week 8

Tuesday, October 24

- Monkey 41-66
- Buddhism: The Imported Tradition (take good notes)
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/ort/buddhism.htm>
- Defining Daoism: A Complex History (take good notes)
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/ort/daoism.htm>
- Confucius and the Confucian Tradition (take good notes)
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/ort/confucianism.htm>
 - Tao Te Ching 1-10: (take good notes)
 - <http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/taote-v3.html#1>
- The Dao of Cow: (take good notes)
 - <http://pages.ucsd.edu/~dkjordan/chin/LaoJuang/DawOfCow.html>
- continue browsing in Zen Sourcebook
- Study Question: Where did you see potential overlap between Buddhist dharma, Daoist teachings, and Confucian teachings? Where did you see potential difference?

Thursday, October 26: In-Class Group Quiz

- "The Earliest Tales of the Bodhisattva Guanshiyin" (PDF on D2L)
- Strong 8.6.2
- "Dragons" entry in the Encyclopedia of Religion (PDF on D2L), focusing on the segments relevant for East Asia
- "Avalokiteshvara" entry in the Encyclopedia of Religion (PDF on D2L)

Week 9

Tuesday, October 31

- Monkey 67-84
- *Zen Sourcebook*: 9-10, 19-30, 43-51, 61-65, 72-75

Thursday, November 2

- Monkey 85-105
- **Unit 2 Take-Home Test Handed Out**
- Read the stories of any TWO Filial Exemplars:

- <http://anthro.ucsd.edu/~dkjordan/chin/shiaw/shiawcontents.html>
- Popular Religion in China:
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/prb/whatis.htm>
- Continue browsing in Zen Sourcebook

Week 10

- Tuesday, November 7
 - Monkey 106-142
 - Understanding "Religion" in Context
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/bgov/religion.htm>
 - 19th Century: European Encroachment and the Assault on Traditional Chinese Thought
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/bgov/19th.htm>
 - 20th Century: Communism and Internal Challenges to Tradition
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/bgov/20th.htm>
- Thursday, November 9
 - Monkey 143-188 and to end
 - Religion in China Today
 - <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/bgov/today.htm>
 - "Confucianism Today" (PDF on D2L)

Week 11

- Tuesday, November 14
 - Introduction to Indian Tantric Buddhism
 - LOB: 109-120
 - Keown 92-95, 109-111
 - Strong 5.5, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.5.4
 - Avalokiteshvara Visualization
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88rrvBSKBzs>
- Thursday, November 16
 - continue with Tibet in-class
 - **Take-Home Test Due.**

Week 12

- Tuesday, November 21: AAR
 - Tibet Documentary Film Online Discussion **instead** of Class
 - Details:
 - https://docs.google.com/a/uwsp.edu/document/d/1WdTMLJFiErys_e6nOzBQCFI9qCZrgVn2tsaKBUopNoZQ/edit?usp=sharing

- Thursday: BREAK

Week 13: Japan

- Tuesday, November 28: **As we discussed in the class before break, today's focus is on Tibetan Buddhism and the Dalai Lama. Here are the materials:**
 - **Excerpts from Mitchell about Tibetan Buddhism (PDF on D2L).** Some of this reading reviews what we did just before break about Indian Tantric Buddhism and how that came to form the basis for Tibetan Buddhism. Feel free to spend more or less time on this part of the reading, depending on your specific interests. The Tibet-specific material begins on p.160. It starts with 10 pages that introduce the Tibetan situation which you should read carefully. It then returns to Tantric material but specifically with respect to Tibet (again, spend more or less time here depending on your interests). Then, on p. 178 it discusses the "schools of Tibetan Buddhism." You should read carefully from here until 194.
 - I have also provided links to relevant/representative segments of the official website of the Dalai Lama. Everyone should read something from each section — feel free to read more if it piques your interest.
 - His Holiness's Middle Way Approach for Resolving the Issue of Tibet: <https://www.dalailama.com/messages/tibet/middle-way-approach>
 - Reincarnation: <https://www.dalailama.com/messages/retirement-and-reincarnation/reincarnation>
 - Compassion and Human Values: <https://www.dalailama.com/messages/compassion-and-human-values>
 - Biography and Daily Life: <https://www.dalailama.com/the-dalai-lama>
- Thursday, November 30
 - Japanese Religions Reading (PDF on D2L)
 - Strong 9.1, 9.4, 9.6

Week 14: Special Topics TBD

- Tuesday, December 5
 - LOB 195-206
 - Preparatory reading for A Miyoshi Obon
 - http://www.dsmote.net/D._S._Mote/A_MIYOSHI_OBON.html
- Thursday, December 7
 - **Book Report Discussions, Book Report Due**

Week 15

- Tuesday, December 12

- Read one or both of the articles (“Dharma Diversity”; “Sex and Sexuality”) in the Week 15 D2I module, according to your interest.
 - Work on your question.
- Thursday, Thursday, December 14
 - Closing Conversations