**Andrew O. Fort Buddhism Office Hours**

**TBH 313 Thought and Practice TThF 11-11:45**

**257-6448 RS 30533 or by appointment a.fort@tcu.edu Spring 2015 personal.tcu.edu/afort**

**Course Description:** This course will introduce the religious tradition called Buddhism. We shall trace its development from India through Southeast Asia, Tibet, China, Japan, and North America. Description and analysis of Buddhist thought will be emphasized, although Buddhist practice will also be considered. Our exploration will, of course, use the concepts and modes of inquiry common in the academic study of religion.

**Outcomes:** Through two short papers, a midterm exam, meditation and precepts exercises, and a final course review and reflection, as well as class participation, you will be assessed on your ability:

To understand and analyze continuity and change in the Buddhist tradition, and Asian cultures more generally,

To comprehend some Buddhist ways of thinking and acting, and thereby some of the diversity of human experience found among other cultures and peoples.

To read critically, think analytically, speak persuasively, and write effectively through the description, analysis and evaluation of Buddhist ideas, practices, and social organization.

To perform some "self"-exploration; existential inquiry is an inevitable component of this course.

**Expectations:** You are expected to attend all classes (come on time, but come even if late), and to read (and think about) the assignments before class. Both are necessary to gain a full understanding; they also help you to get a good grade. If you miss four or more classes, your grade can be lowered automatically unless you have a legitimate and documented excuse. Bring the relevant books to class; we will analyze the readings. Be ready to listen, think, question, and speak. All topics are open, but civil and respectful discourse is required.

**Assignments:** There will be two short (c. 4 pg. or 1000 words) papers (15% of grade each), meditation and precept observation projects (required, graded high pass/pass/no credit, 10% each), a midterm exam (20%), and a final 7-8 page course review and analysis (25%). You are also required to make a weekly entry (generally Thursday) into a computer journal on eCollege/Learning Studio; it is mandatory but ungraded. Other handouts will provide more information. Papers and exams will cover material from lectures and readings, and are intended to bring out both academic information and personal reactions to what you are learning. Unless you contact me beforehand, late papers or exam absence will be permitted only for officially excused absences. Your presence and participation in class are also part of the grade (5%).

A=always present, contributed often (in class and journal) thoughtfully and intelligently; consistently assumed responsibility for keeping discussion going; B= almost always present, contributed mostly thoughtfully and intelligently; aided in keeping discussion moving but did not always assume responsibility; C= usually present, contributed sporadically without taking much responsibility; D=missed a number of classes, contributed occasionally; did not take ownership of class discussion.

You are also expected to visit at least one of the nearby Buddhist temples by the end of March (due April 2 at the latest). You may go alone or with a group. Please write a 2 page (500 word) reaction paper about your experience. Here are three suggestions:

Vajradakini Buddhist Center. 609 Truman St. (off Collins) Arlington TX 76011. (817) 460-2781. [www.meditationintexas.org](http://www.meditationintexas.org).

Wat Buddharatanaram, 13089 Sehapayak Rd. Fort Worth, TX 76244, (817) 430-1365

<http://www.watbuddharatanaram.com/>

Maria Kannon Zen Center, 6532 Hunnicut Rd, Dallas, TX 75227. [www.mkzc.org](http://www.mkzc.org)

***Grades: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60. I use +/-, and use the following grade scale: .0-.3=grade minus, .31-.7=grade, .71-.99=grade plus***

***You may check in with me about your course standing at any time.***

If you have a problem affecting your course participation, or must miss class, let me know. Also, if you have a disability which may affect your class performance, please inform me during the first week of class. Here are some policy statements:

*Disability Statement approved Fall 2007 by the Undergraduate Council / Revised Summer 2011*: Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities.  Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010.  Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations.  Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator.  Guidelines for documentation may be found at <http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp>.

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

**Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) –Any act, such as cheating or plagiarism, that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog (Student Policies>Academic Conduct Policy Details; <http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current_year/undergraduate/>).

Finally, feel free to see me after class or in my office.

**RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

Campus Life (257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006); TCU Library (257-7117); Center for Academic Services (257-7486, Sadler Hall 1022); Writing Center (257-7221, Reed 419); Student Development Services (257-7855, BLUU 2003); Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (257-7830, Jarvis Hall), and Counseling, Testing, and Mental Health Center (257-7863, Brown Lupton Health Center).

**Required books** (available at the bookstore):

D. Mitchell, *Introduction to Buddhism, 3rd edition*

J. Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism, 3rd edition*

And a number of readings found on eCollege/Learning Studio

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Jan. 13 Introduction to course text: 1, 31-32

Jan. 15 Indian thought at Buddha's birth text: 6-15

Strong: 7-mid13, 17-23, 29-33

Jan. 20 Life and teachings of the Buddha text: 15-18, 32-47

Strong: 38-44

Jan. 22 " " " (Four Noble Truths) text: 48-63, 79-82

**READING 1** Strong: 114-18, 128-36

Jan. 27 meditation and the Buddha's death text: 19-30, 149-51

Strong: 45-48, 60-63, 97-99, 101-04

Jan. 29 early canon and doctrines text: 65-76

**READINGS 2 AND 3** Strong: 63-70, 120-26, 75-82

Feb. 3 early religious life Strong: 72-73, 89-92, 94-95

**PAPER DUE: Reflections on the Buddha’s life and teaching**

What has been particularly striking, positive or negative? What do you think was most important to the Buddha? What has it taught you about your culture and yourself?

Feb. 5 Buddhism in Southeast Asia text: 91-98

Strong: 221-22, 228 and 231 (intros), 233-44

Feb. 10 Southeast Asian Buddhism today text: 98-112

Strong: 246-55

**introduce meditation project**

Feb. 12 Mahayana Buddhism text: 115-22

Strong: 143, 145-55

Feb. 17 visit from Judith Simmer-Brown, Naropa University

Feb. 19 Madhyamika text: 155-63 Strong: 157-62

Feb. 24 Vijnanavada/Yogacara text: 124-26, 166-71

Strong: 163-64, 168-69

**MEDITATION PROJECT DUE**

Feb. 26 Mahayana soteriology and pantheon text: 128-36, 143-48

Strong: 173-83, 191-94, 196-202

March 3 Tantra text: 173-75, 182-88

Strong: 206-15, 219-20

March 5 **EXAMINATION**

**SPRING BREAK**

March 17 Tibetan Buddhism text: 188-211, 177-81 (optional)

**READING 4** Strong: 256-57, 259-64, 271-77, 280-87

March 19 Tibet video and discussion text: 211-19 Strong: 264-71

March 24 Chinese Buddhism and monasticism

text: 222-29 **READING 5**

Strong: 294-300, 306-10

March 26 Chinese Buddhist schools text: 233-35, 243-56

**READING** **6** Strong: 171-72

**PAPER DUE:** what are the most significant similarities and differences between “Buddha-ism” and later forms of Buddhism?What aspects of Buddhism are most convincing to you and what are least plausible? Why?

March 31 Ch'an Buddhism Strong: 301-03, 326-29

**READING** **7**

April 2 modern Chinese Buddhism text: 256-72 Strong: 310-14

**Introduce precepts exercise**

April 7 Japanese Buddhism text: 309-321

Strong: 315-20, 335-37

April 9 " " “ (Amidism) text: 321-29, 335-39

Strong: 332-34, 337-40

**PRECEPTS EXERCISE DUE**

April 14 Zen Buddhism (Dogen) text: 329-34, 339-46

April 16 Modern Japanese Buddhism and start Buddhism in West

text: 346-67 Strong: 341-42 **READING 8**

April 21 American Buddhism

text: 367-82 (383-90 optional) Strong: 347-62

**READINGS** **9 and 10**

April 23 American Buddhism: psychology and science text: 390-403

**READINGS 11-13**

April 28 Buddhism today

text: 403-15 Strong: 342-45, 362-65

**READING** **14**

**Course review and analysis due 3 pm TUESDAY, May 5**

Review your notes, papers, and readings. What was most striking about the Buddhist worldview, and seeing it manifest in many cultures? What was persuasive and what hardest to grasp? What have you learned about your own culture and worldview by studying Buddhism, especially in the last section? What has been your most significant learning experience in the course?

**PAPER WRITING SUGGESTIONS**

Papers should be typed and double-spaced (with a common font). A clean-looking paper will help you. Proper spelling and grammar are important, and will affect your grade.

Unless otherwise specified, your paper should focus on an idea or a few ideas related to the assigned topic which intrigue you. Set aside some time to think about the paper *before* you write. Make notes of your thoughts. Review the assigned material and look for passages related to your topic. Construct an outline. Include brief but accurate summation of the relevant readings and some self-investigation. Why are you interested in what you wrote about? After writing a first draft, check to see if you clearly state, then address, the main issue(s) or theme(s), and if your paper has an introduction and conclusion.

I am looking for clear self-expression and increased self-understanding in addition to understanding and critical analysis of textual material.

You may rewrite, and at times I will encourage you to rewrite. Remember that there is a library nearby, and that you can consult with me about research resources. If you refer to or quote course books, page numbers may be put in parentheses after references. We also have an excellent Writing Center (Reed 419, 257-7221), if you need help.

Your paper will be graded on:

1) form (presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation).

2) clarity of focus, organization, and expression.

3) comprehension and utilization of course material.

4) critical reflection and personal insight.

USEFUL WEB SITES FOR LEARNING ABOUT BUDDHISM (1/15)

Excellent starting places for information on Buddhism:

Resources for the Study of Buddhism website: <http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~rone/Buddhism/Buddhism.htm>

A very good set of resources (note practice centers): <http://dharma.ncf.ca>

Two other extensive listings of resources: <http://www.buddhanet.net> and

<http://www.Dharmanet.org>

**Some other interesting sites**

A very good resource for Theravada Buddhism is: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/index.html>

A Vipassana Meditation site: <http://www.dhamma.org>

A local (Dallas) Zen Center: <http://www.mkzc.org>

Other good sites on Zen are <http://www.obcon.org/> and [www.thezensite.com](http://www.thezensite.com)

Buddhist Peace Fellowship, an organization of Buddhists who are interested in

promoting social justice, peace and ecology: [http://www.bpf.org/](http://www.bpf.org)

On Soka Gakkai Buddhism: <http://www.sgi-usa.org>

International Campaign for Tibet: <http://www.savetibet.org>

Women Active in Buddhism:  <http://lhamo.tripod.com/>

## Books etc.

Parallax Press (connected with Thich Nhat Hanh),: <http://www.parallax.org>

Books and Tapes on Vipassana: <http://www.pariyatti.com>

A major site of books dealing mainly with Tibetan Buddhism is<http://www.shambhala.com> (now linked with <http://www.snowlionpub.com>)

The best-known magazine about Buddhism in America is *Tricycle*: <http://www.tricycle.com>