

PHIL 3010: *Phil. Traditions: Buddhist Philosophy from its Origins to Modern Engaged Buddhism*  
Fall 2011, Carleton University

Meeting time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:35 am - 12:55 pm

Instructor: Gordon Davis  
Office: Paterson Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, rm. 3A48 (in the Philosophy Dept.)  
Office hours: Thursdays 3:00-4:30, or by appointment  
Email: Please email me via WebCT.  
WebCT: Regular visits to the course website – on Carleton’s WebCT – are required. At a minimum, you are expected to check for general announcements that will usually be posted on Fridays. However, please note that very little of the course material will be posted on WebCT – it is not possible to complete the course by using the website instead of attending classes.

REQUIRED READING:

1. Mark Siderits, *Buddhism as Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007) – available at Haven Books.
2. Paul Williams, *Buddhist Thought: A Complete Introduction to the Indian Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2000) – available as an ebook on Carleton’s library catalogue.
3. Excerpts from Charles Goodman, *Consequences of Compassion: An Interpretation and Defense of Buddhist Ethics* (Oxford: OUP, 2009) – available as an ebook on Carleton’s library catalogue (note that there are more restricted conditions for the use of this ebook; this means that certain sections will be assigned as to be read within a certain period, but not just before a particular date)
4. Sungtaek Cho, “Selflessness: Toward a Buddhist Vision of Social Justice”, available at: <http://www.buddhistethics.org/7/cho001.html>
5. Readings from <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/> ... for Weeks 2-7: the ‘Suttas’ indicated below can be found by typing the titles in this site’s search engine.
6. *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (available at: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/sbe15/sbe15053.htm>)
7. Excerpts from *The Questions of King Milinda* (available at: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/sbe35/index.htm> , in Rhys Davids translation)
8. Excerpts from the *Lankavatara Sutra*: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/mzb/mzb03.htm>
9. Excerpts from B.R. Ambedkar, *The Buddha and his Dhamma*, including Book III; available at: [http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/ambedkar\\_buddha/](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/ambedkar_buddha/)

\* Depending on the topic you choose for the final term paper, other readings may also be required (as specified in WebCT material relating to essay topics... See also: library reserve books listed below).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the metaphysics, epistemology and ethics of both ancient and modern Buddhism, and examines how all these compare to and differ from Hindu antecedents, and how they compare to and differ from Western philosophical conceptions and theories. The life and teachings of Gautama, the Buddha, will be discussed, but most of the course will focus on the intense philosophical debates that swept across India, Sri Lanka and Tibet around a thousand years after his time. Ultimately, we will pay particular attention to Buddhist ethical ideas, and how these evolved from the Pali Canon (now central to Theravada Buddhism) towards different emphases in the Mahayana tradition between 100 and 1000 C.E. (A.D.). It is not possible

to appreciate these ethical insights, however, without attending to Buddhist metaphysics (in Indian, Chinese, Korean and Japanese incarnations) and to some of the epistemological developments associated with such Indian schools as the Madhyamaka and Yogacara. Finally, we will consider the phenomenon of ‘socially engaged Buddhism’ in the West, as well as in South Asia and East Asia, and various questions about its philosophical roots in traditional Buddhist ethics.

At first, it will sometimes be important to consider Buddhist beliefs and practices in their own right, doing our best not to color them with Western lenses. As the course progresses, it will help to draw comparisons first with ancient Greek philosophy, and then with modern Western philosophy, especially contemporary ethical theory – which some developments in the Mahayana tradition anticipated to a surprising degree.

These comparisons will allow us to pursue some more general philosophical aims: (1) to explore how, in general, metaphysical insights can guide ethical theory – including, in particular, how the metaphysics of personhood bears on egoism, altruism, compassion, rights, dignity and norms of prudence; (2) to consider whether divine or other supernatural agencies are necessary to explain the force of moral imperatives and obligations; (3) to examine whether logic and epistemology differ in any fundamental way in different cultural and philosophical traditions; (4) to examine whether divergent ethical traditions may have underlying commonalities, and whether ancient texts are sufficient evidence for underlying moral values or principles; (5) to explore how modern social and political engagement might be justified on the basis of values articulated by ancient authors unfamiliar with such social and political issues, and how modern ideals of social justice and humanitarianism might be prefigured in classical Buddhist ethical writings.

#### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS:

(Please note that the order and/or timing of topics or readings may change – though with as much advance notice as possible.)

Week 1 (September 8) Introductory Overview: History, Geography, Culture and Philosophy in Buddhism

Week 2 (Sept. 13, 15) Some contemporary issues in and around ‘Engaged Buddhism’ / No-Self Reflections as Bridge from the Personal to the Social / Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana in the modern world

Readings: Siderits, ch. 1; Sungtaek Cho, “Selflessness: Toward a Buddhist Vision of Social Justice”, available at: <http://www.buddhistethics.org/7/cho001.html> ; and a reading from [www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka](http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka) : the *Karaniya Metta Sutta*)

- **IN-CLASS ESSAY** (Essay # 1): **September 15**, Topic: Definitions and Conceptions of Philosophy (full topic description TBA on Sept. 13 – **NOTE: chapter 1 of Siderits** is essential reading for this)

Week 3 (Sept. 20, 22) Hinduism and the Evolution of Karma / The ‘Five Fires’ in the Upanisads / Purusarthas, Moksha, Early Sankhya and other ‘orthodox’ philosophies of ancient India

Rdgs: Ch. 1 of Williams; Chs. 1-2 of Siderits; excerpts (TBD) from the *Brihadaranyaka Upanisad* (available at: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/sbe15/sbe15053.htm>); and *Adittapariyaya Sutta*, (at [www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka](http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka) )

Also in Week 3, the **topic of Essay # 2 will be announced**, and will be discussed regularly, especially in weeks 4-6... For more on this, see Week 7 below, and make note of the **October 20** date for writing this second in-class essay.

Week 4 (Sept. 27, 29) Life of Gautama and Teachings of the Buddha / Two Ways to Enlightenment: Personal Mindfulness (*Bojjhanga*) and Moral Qualities (*Brahmavihara*)

Rdgs: Ch. 2 of Siderits; Chs. 1-2 of Williams; and from the Pali Canon: *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, *Dhammapada* excerpts, *Satipatthana Sutta* (all at [accesstoinsight.org](http://www.accesstoinsight.org))

Week 5 (October 4, 6) Arguments for Non-Self: The Metaphysics of ‘Empty Persons’ / Nirvana

Ch. 3 of Siderits; *The Questions of King Milinda* (excerpts TBA); excerpts from *Maha-nidana Sutta* (at [accesstoinsight.org](http://accesstoinsight.org)) ... AND: \* Some sections of Goodman’s *Consequences of Compassion*, are to be discussed throughout early October, especially pp. 92-98 and 109-121.

Week 6 (Oct. 11, 13) Prudential and Moral Implications of Non-Self (*Anatta*, *Upekkha* and *Karuna*) / The Status of Moral Reasons in THERAVADA Buddhism

Rdgs: Chs. 4-6 of Siderits; review of Goodman (pp. 92-121); reprise of *Karaniya Metta Sutta*

Week 7 (Oct. 18, 20... **Note: in-class essay this week (see below)**) The Raft: Epistemic Instrumentalism / Early MAHAYANA Developments (Main readings: *Alagaddupama Sutta* and *Cula-Malunkyovada Sutta* at [accesstoinsight.org](http://accesstoinsight.org); and last section of ch. 1, Williams)

- **IN-CLASS ESSAY** (Essay # 2): **October 20** (Topic: Consequences of the Non-Self Doctrine)

Week 8 (Oct. 25, 27) Aspects of Mahayana: Two Truths Doctrine, Emptiness Generalized, Bodhisattvas

Rdgs: Ch. 7 of Siderits (& review pp. 62-64 in ch. 3); Ch. 3 of Williams; excerpts from the *Lankavatara Sutra*, TBA; optional background on two truths: “The Theory of Two Truths in India”, by Sonam Thakchoe, at <http://plato.stanford.edu>

- **TOPICS POSTED on WebCT, for FINAL TERM PAPER (due Friday, December 2)**

Week 9 (Nov. 1, 3) Metaphysics and Epistemology in Mahayana: Madhyamaka vs. Yogacara

Rdgs: Ch. 9 of Siderits (on Madhyamaka); Ch. 5 of Williams; Ch. 2 of Goodman

Week 10 (Nov. 8, 10) Ethics and Meta-Ethics: Yogacara in Tibet, China and Japan

Karma: Action-guiding but not norm-guided / Virtue and Nirvana: action-guiding and norm-guided

Rdgs: Ch. 8 of Siderits; Ch. 5 of Williams; Chs. 2 and 4 of Goodman

Week 11 (Nov. 15, 17) Consequentialism in Mahayana and Vajrayana / ‘Buddhism without Beliefs’

Rdgs: Chs. 6-9 of Goodman; “First Visible Fruit of Contemplative Life” in *Samannaphala Sutta*

Week 12 (Nov. 22, 24) Early Phases of Engaged Buddhism in Sri Lanka, India and Tibet

Excerpts from Ambedkar: [www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/ambedkar\\_buddha/](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/ambedkar_buddha/)

Week 13 (Nov. 29, Dec. 1) Engaged Buddhism: Applied Ethics vs. Ethical Theory / Review of Essay topics

**Dec. 2 – Final term paper due by midnight via WebCT email (topics posted on WebCT)**

EVALUATION (w/ weight of assignments as percentage of total mark):

In-Class Essay # 1	20 %
In-Class Essay # 2	30 %
Final term paper	40 % (instructions on WebCT specify minimum, max. length, etc.)
Short WebCT assignment	10 % (details TBA)

(\* Regarding term papers that are significantly beyond the word limit, please note: while I would normally request a resubmission, this will not be possible for final term papers, due to timing constraints. I have no choice, then, but to read only as much of your paper as fits within the maximum length; any resulting incoherence, due to this incomplete reading, will be reflected in the mark.)

The main components of evaluation concern the following: clarity of thesis statement (and other ‘signposting’), logical and effective use of argument, due consideration of objections (with effective replies), balanced essay structure, effective use of relevant readings (with full and consistent citations), sensitive interpretation of primary texts, effective writing style (including basics such as grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as clarity in wording and phrasing), and originality in thesis and/or arguments.

More will be said in class about these expectations and their role in how we evaluate the essays. A point to be emphasized here, though, concerns ‘originality’. There are two different senses in which essays should be ‘original’. In one sense, ‘originality’ involves coming up with ideas and arguments that are novel (or outside the norm for this level); this can be quite difficult, and those earning the highest marks generally do well on this score, while good essays may show only a modest degree of originality in this sense. In another sense, an essay is ‘original’ when it is a student’s own work – i.e. own composition – and when any ideas in it that derive from the work of others are duly credited in citations of these sources. In this sense, ‘originality’ is not a component of the mark, but is simply an absolute minimum requirement. See next:

#### UNIVERSITY POLICY ON PLAGIARISM:

According to the Undergraduate Calendar’s definition (in section 14 of “University Regulations”), it constitutes *plagiarism* “to use and pass off as one’s own idea or product work of another without expressly giving credit to another.” It is the responsibility of each student to understand this definition, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding/abetting plagiarism by other students. Penalties for plagiarism are decided by the Dean’s office, and can range from an automatic zero on the assignment to suspension or expulsion from the university.

#### OTHER POLICIES:

Presentation of essays: Essays must be in Times New Roman font, size 12. **Pages must be numbered.** Re. methods of citation: I accept MLA, APA or Chicago style, provided you stick to one throughout your paper; however, I add some requirements of my own, which you must observe regardless of which style you use. These will be mentioned in class and on WebCT.

Consultations re. essays: I will not be able to read pre-submission drafts of essays. I may be able to look at summary outlines (of less than a page) – well in advance of a due date – but only during office hours or after class (i.e. not by email). If you feel you need help with structuring your draft(s), you can contact the university’s ‘Writing Tutorial Service’ (see the list of addresses below).

Collaboration with other students: An essay may not be submitted as the joint work of two or more students (or as a ‘group project’ of any kind). If you share ideas with others in the class, and/or proofread for one another, bear in mind that the same rules apply (as above) regarding plagiarism.

Extensions: Extensions will be granted only upon presentation of a medical certificate, or other documented emergency or crisis. *It is essential that I have documents that have been signed by a professional whose contact info. is well indicated.* Requests based on conflicts with other coursework will not be granted.

Submission of essays: Essays should be attached to an **email sent via WebCT**. To be counted as arriving on time, your essay must arrive before midnight on the due date. (*If you do not have regular internet access or you have other limitations re. computing, such that you prefer to submit hard copies, see me asap.*)

Late essays: Late submissions will lose 5 % per day. (See below for other dept./univ. policies...)

<b>BOOKS ON RESERVE in the library</b> (Relevance to essay topics noted...)	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>CALL NUMBER</b> (Use title if 'Prof's copy')
<a href="#">Buddhism &amp; bioethics</a> (Re. e.g. SUICIDE)	Keown, Damien	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- BJ1289.K43 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">Dissertations and discussions: political, philosophical and historical</a> (incl. essay on MILITARY INTERVENTION)	Mill, John Stuart, 1806-1873.	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- B1603 .D6 v. 3 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">Essays, moral, political, and literary / David Hume</a> (incl. his essay on SUICIDE)	Hume, David, 1711-1776.	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- B1475 1985 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">The ethics of war and peace : an introduction to legal and moral issues</a>	Christopher, Paul	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- KZ6396 .C48 1999 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">An introduction to Buddhist ethics : foundations, values, and issues</a> (Re: VIRTUE, SUICIDE, PUNISHMENT)	Harvey, Peter	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- BJ1289 .H37 2000 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">The Lankavatara Sutra; a Mahayana text</a>	Lankavatara- sutra.	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- BQ1722.E5S8 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">Lectures on ethics</a> (unlike Groundwork, this incl. material on punishment, war, animals, virtue, etc.)	Kant, Immanuel, 1724-1804	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- B2794.E892 E5 1996 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">The metaphysics of morals</a> (1797)... unlike Groundwork, this incl. material on punishment, war, animals, virtue	Kant, Immanuel, 1724-1804.	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- B2785.E5G7413 1996 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">The morality of war</a>	Orend, Brian	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- U22 .O725 2006 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">Nicomachean ethics</a> (Hackett)	Aristotle (Irwin tr.)	DAVIS/Prof's copy-In library
<a href="#">Perpetual peace, and other essays on politics, history, and morals</a>	Kant, Immanuel, 1724-1804.	Floor 2 Circ Desk Reserves RSV -- B2758 .H86 1983 -- IN LIBRARY
<a href="#">Practical ethics, 2nd ed.</a> (Re. Util'n views on ANIMALS, e.g. Bentham's)	Singer, Peter	DAVIS/Prof's copy-In library
<a href="#">The Nature of Buddhist Ethics</a> (Re. Buddhist views on VIRTUE)	Keown, Damien	DAVIS/Prof's copy - In library
<a href="#">Consequences of Compassion: An Interpretation and Defense of Buddhist Ethics</a> (Re. Buddhist views on VIRTUE, PUNISHMENT)	Goodman, Charles	DAVIS/Prof's copy - In library

## Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies

### **Assignments:**

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

- must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips
- must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box)
- must include the following in the lower right corner of the cover sheet:
  - student name
  - student number
  - course number and section
  - instructor's name
- The Philosophy Department does not accept assignments by FAX. You may send them by courier, if necessary.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work.
- Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by 4:15 on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
- Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

### **Deferrals for Term Work:**

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral of examination/assignment. For deferred examinations, you must apply within 5 working days after the scheduled date of your exam. To apply for deferral of a final assignment, you must apply within 5 working days of the last scheduled day of classes. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information.

### **Plagiarism:**

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. (Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations, section 14.3, or <http://www4.carleton.ca/calendars//ugrad/current/regulations/acadregsuniv14.html#14.3>)

### **Academic Accommodation:**

**For Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC every term to have a Letter of Accommodation sent to the Instructor by their Coordinator. In addition, students are expected to confirm their need for accommodation with the Instructor no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm. If you require accommodations only for formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, you must request accommodations by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term.

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website:

<http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/holy-days/>

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

### **Important Dates:**

Sept. 8	Classes start (after Orientation events).
Sept. 21	Last day for registration and course changes in Fall term and two-term courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 7	University Day – no classes.
Oct. 10	Thanksgiving Day – university closed.
Nov. 21	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000 level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 5	Last day of classes, Fall term. Last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Dec. 5	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Dec. 8-21	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses.
Jan. 4	Winter term classes begin.
Jan. 17	Last day for registration and course changes in Winter term classes.
Jan. 31	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter courses or winter portion of two-term courses.
Feb. 20	Family Day – university closed
Feb. 20-24	Winter Break, classes suspended.
Mar. 22	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000 level before the Final Examination period.
Apr. 5	Last day of Fall/Winter and Winter term classes. Last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Apr. 5	Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
Apr. 6	Good Friday – university closed.
Apr. 11-24	Final Examinations.

### **Addresses:**

Department of Philosophy:	3A46 Paterson Hall <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/philosophy">www.carleton.ca/philosophy</a> 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/registrar">www.carleton.ca/registrar</a> 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/sasc">www.carleton.ca/sasc</a> 520-7850
Paul Menton Centre:	500 University Centre <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/pmc">www.carleton.ca/pmc</a> 520-6608
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Library <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/wts">www.carleton.ca/wts</a> 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	<a href="http://www.library.carleton.ca/">http://www.library.carleton.ca/</a> 520-2735