COURSE DESCRIPTION

Contemporary Buddhist Movements:
Nightstand Buddhists and other globalized Buddhisms

This seminar course for graduate and 4th year students will engage students in the examination of Buddhist and Buddhist-inspired movements in contemporary societies. We will explore the modern Buddhist involvement with environmentalism, religious reform and secular humanism, psychotherapy and personal well-being, as well as issues relating to Buddhism and the State. Students can choose their presentation topics from a wide range of Buddhist traditions and movements manifest in places such as China, Bhutan, Burma, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan, and Canada/USA. A primary goal of the course is to break down stereotypes and dichotomies such as traditional versus modern, native versus convert, socially engaged versus apart from the world, pacifist versus aggressive etc. and to allow students to appreciate the complexity of the ways in which religious systems and their adherents continually negotiate their place and function within local and global societies. Prior exposure to Buddhist philosophy is helpful but not mandatory as the course is focused on cultural and socio-political issues. Necessary information relating to Buddhism as a religion will be provided in lectures and readings.

Required Reading:


- Additional weekly readings will be available via links and PDFs through the ARES system of the Carleton library
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

**All Students:** Participation: 20% based on weekly reading response papers, 10x2%

**Response Papers**

Since the success of a seminar course depends on class participation and discussion, students will be asked to submit a typewritten double-spaced, 1 – 2 page response to the assigned readings for the week, consisting of *two or more central points* of the reading for that week, and *two or more critical questions* that you have regarding it. These questions can arise from points you did not understand, points that could be considered further, or points on which you disagree with the author, etc. Since these questions are intended to facilitate discussion, students are asked to bring two copies to class, one for yourself and one for me. Eleven responses are required, the best ten will be counted or you may miss one submission without penalty.

**For students registered in 4852B:**

**One Critical Review and Class Presentation: 20%**

Beginning in the third week of classes, one student will be responsible for writing a critical review (3-5 pages, double-spaced) of the readings for each session, presenting it to the class, and leading discussion on it. At the beginning of term, each student will sign up for one class presentation. The critical review will be essentially a more formal and expanded version of the response paper. It should include an introductory paragraph, a summary/description of the thesis and main points of the reading, your critical questions/comments, and concluding paragraph.

**Term paper proposal:** 10% Due March 7

The 2-3 page essay proposal should include: a working title, thesis statement or organizing question, outline of the plan for the paper, and a working bibliography.

**Term paper:** (12-15 pages) 50% Due April 4
For students registered in 5852:

Two Critical Reviews and Class Presentations: each worth 10% for a total of 20%
Beginning in the third week of classes, one student will be responsible for writing a critical review (3-5 pages, double-spaced) of the readings for each session, presenting it to the class, and leading discussion on it. At the beginning of term, each student will sign up for two class presentations. The critical review will be essentially a more formal and expanded version of the response paper. It should include an introductory paragraph, a summary/description of the thesis and main points of the reading, your critical questions, and concluding paragraph.

Term paper proposal: 10% Due March 7
The 2-3 page essay proposal should include: a working title, thesis statement or organizing question, outline of the plan for the paper, and an annotated bibliography.

Term paper: (18-20 pages plus abstract) 50% Due April 4

COURSE READINGS
January 8 – Course introduction (no reading)
January 10

Jan. 15/17
- Victor Hori “How Do We Study Buddhism in Canada?” in Wild Geese: Buddhism in Canada, MQUP: 13-38

Jan. 22/24 and subsequently:
- Beginning with this class, we will make our way through the series of articles collected in McMahon’s “Buddhism in the Modern World.” Students will give presentations on these and other supplemental readings. A detailed reading list for the rest of the semester will be discussed with the students at the first class.
The last date to withdraw from WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY courses is DEC. 9, 2013. The last day to withdraw from FALL/WINTER (Full Term) courses is APRIL 8, 2014.