

Course Code: **MABS 01**

Course Title: **Buddhist Doctrines of Pāli Nikāyas: Analysis and Interpretation**

Aim: To give a critical and comprehensive knowledge of Buddhist doctrines of Pali Nikāyas

Contents: Fundamental teachings of Early Buddhism, questions raised and solutions offered by the modern scholars on the interpretation of early Buddhist doctrines, the diverse trends discernible in the Early Buddhist Discourses as to the nature of the world of sensory experience and the reasons that could be adduced in grasping their significance within the context of the religion and philosophy.

The course unit will be based on Suttapiṭaka and supplemented, where necessary, with the Abhidhammic and commentarial expositions. It is in the interests of the student to gain an ability to read the Pali suttas in the original texts.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Two Short Essays (40%) and Final Examination (50%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to elaborate critically the fundamental teachings of Suttapiṭaka and to read and understand relevant discourses in the original sources

Recommended Reference:

- Conze, E. (1967). *Buddhist Thought in India*, London: George Allen Unwin.
- Davids, Rhys (1978). *Sakya or Buddhist Origins*, New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation.
- Grimm, George (1994). *The Doctrine of the Buddha: The Religion of Reason and Meditation*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Jayatilleke, K. N. (1980). *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Jennings, J. G. (Eds.) (1974). *The Vedantic Buddhism of the Buddha*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Johansson, E.A. Rune (1970). *The Psychology of Nirvāna*, London: George Allen Unwin.
- _____, (1979). *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism*, London: Curzon Press.
- Keith, A.B. (1931). *The Doctrine of the Buddha*. Bulletin of the school of Oriental Studies, Vol. VI.
- Ling, Trevor (1973). *The Buddha*, England: Penguin.
- Murti, T. R. V. (2008). *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, London: Routledge.
- Pande, G. C. (1983). *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Radhakrishnan, S. (1941). *Indian Philosophy*, London: George Allen Unwin.
- Robinson, R. (1970). *The Buddhist Religion*, California: Wadsworth Pub. Co.
- Beyer, S. (1974).

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Stcherbatsky, Th. (2005). *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Dass.
- _____, (1965). *The Conception of the Buddhist Nirvana*, The Hague: Mouton and Co.
- Warder, A.K. (1980). *Indian Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Dass.
- Winternitz, M. (1936). *Problems of Buddhism*, Visva-Bharati Quarterly, Vol. II.

Course Code: **MABS 21**

Course Title: **Buddhist Aesthetic Concepts: Analysis and Evaluation**

Aims: To examine the Buddhist teachings and observation on beauty

Contents: As a religio-philosophical system embracing the multiplex dimensions of human life, Buddhist teachings and observations on beauty and its appreciation will constitute the main body of this study. It will take into consideration the following aspects in order to identify the Buddhist aesthetic concepts: the Buddhist teaching on compassionate kindness and love for all forms of life; art and artistic creativity in Buddhist perspectives; poetry (*kāvya*); analysis and appreciation; the *udāna* form of poetry; the early Buddhist literature and the concept of *aucitya* and *anaucitya*; Buddhist observations on *rasa*, *hāsa*, *pīti*, *pamoda* and, *kāma*; the concept of *sukha* in Buddhist perspectives; how the Buddha and the earliest disciples saw the mundane beauty of life and nature; the supra-mundane experience and the highest level of harmony, an evaluation of the Buddhist contributions in the field of painting, sculpture, iconography, architecture and other forms of artistic creation, together with an examination of their theoretical background.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to admire, appreciate and express beauty in accordance with Buddhist teachings

Recommended Reference:

- Agrawala, P. K. (1980). *Aesthetic Principles of Indian Art*, Varanasi: Prithivi Prakashan.
- Aryan, K. C. (1981). *Basis of Decorative Elements in Indian Art*, New Delhi: Rekha Prakashan.
- Coomaraswamy, A. K. (2004). *The Transformation of Nature in Art*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers.
- Dhirasekera, J. D. (1980). *Buddhism and Beauty*, Bodhi Leaves A II, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Seckel, Dietrich (1964). *The Art of Buddhism*, New York: Crown Publishers.
- Zimmer, H. (1972). *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Course Code: **MABS 22**

Course Title: **Buddhist Art and Architecture - I (Indian Sub-continent)**

Aims: To give descriptive knowledge of monastic art and architecture in Indian sub-continent

Contents: Evidence of Buddhist architecture from the Pali Canon; the monastic residence and its gradual evolution from early timber structures to buildings of a permanent nature; the rock-cut sanctuaries and their functions as residences and places of worship; Stūpa and its evolution as a symbol of religious worship; stūpa-decorations as a form of mass media; the an iconic representation of the Buddha and the subsequent introduction of the Buddha image as an object of worship; the different schools of Buddhist iconography and the areas of their origin; the development of the Bodhisattva image and other Buddhist deities; Buddhist sculpture and painting in the Gupta era; the Gandhāra school of Buddhist art; the Greek and Iranian influences on its sculpture and iconography; the role it played in the diffusion of Buddhist art in Central and East Asia; Buddhist art and architecture in South India with special reference to Amarāvati, Nāgarjunikonda and Jaggyyapeta; the last phase of Buddhist art under the Pala and Sena dynasties; refinements of its sculpture; the heavy influence of Tantrayāna on sculpture; the development of the Śakti cult and its influence on Buddhist iconography.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to describe the origins of Buddhist monastic art and architecture in Indian Sub-continent, socio-economic influences on ancient monastic art and architecture, and characteristics of relevant art works and architectural constructions

Recommended Reference:

- Barett, D. (1954). *Sculpture from Amaravati in the British Museum*, London.
- Bhattacharyya, B. (1958). *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, Calcutta.
- Brown, P. (1949). *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, Bombay: 2nd Edition.
- Coomaraswamy, A. K. (1927). *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, London.
- Foucher, A. (1918). *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art and other Essays on Indian and Central Asian Archaeology*, London.
- Getty, A. (1914). *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, Oxford.
- Ingholt, H. (1957). *Gandharan Art in Pakistan*, New York.
- Marshall, J. (1960). *Taxila*, Cambridge.
- Marshall, J. and A. Foucher (1940). *Monuments of Sanchi*, Calcutta.
- Rawson, P. (1959). *Indian Painting*, London.
- Rowlands (Jr.), A. (1953). *The Art and Architecture of India*, London.
- Smith, V. A. (1911). *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, Oxford.
- Yazdani, G. (1983). *Ajanta, Pts. I, II, III, IV*, New Delhi.
- Zimmer, H. (1955). *The Art of Indian Asia*, New York.

Course Code: **MABS 26**

Course Title: **Buddhist Psychotherapy**

Aims: To give a descriptive knowledge of Buddhist analysis of mind and Buddhist approach to physical and mental health

Contents: Buddhist concept of the individual and the related world with reference to the analyses of aggregates, elements, faculties, senses, and four great elements, analysis of personality types based on internal and external facts, causes and conditions that influence the personal behaviour with reference to the teaching of dependent co-origination; analysis of *citta*, *mano*, *viññāna* and the process of mental behaviour, analysis of psycho-physical problems, behavioral, spiritual and herbal treatments recommended for psycho-physical problems.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussions, assignments and practicals

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to describe the usefulness of Buddhist teachings for physical and mental health

Recommended Reference:

- Galmangoda, Sumanapala (2006). *Buddhist Social Philosophy and Ethics*, Colombo: Author.
- Hall, Manly, P. (1978). *Buddhism and Psychotherapy: The Healing of Heart Doctrine*. California, Philosophical Research Society.
- Harischandara, D. V. J. (2015). *Psychiatric Aspects of Jātaka Stories*, Galle, Vijitha Yapa Publications.
- Jung, C. G. (1978) *Psychology and the East*, USA: Princeton University Press.
- Kawai, Hayao (1996). *Buddhism and the Art of Psychotherapy*, USA: Texas A & M University Press.
- Magid, Barry (2002). *Ordinary Mind, Exploring the Common Ground of Zen and Psychotherapy*, Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Nissanka, H. S. S. (1993). *Buddhist Psychotherapy*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Silva, Padmasiri de (1978). *Buddhist and Freudian Psychology*, Colombo: Lake House Investment Ltd.

Course Code: **MABS 27**

Course Title: **Buddhist Social Dimension**

Aim: To give a comprehensive and critical knowledge of the selected topics pertaining to the Buddhist social philosophy

Contents: The social and political background of Buddhism as reflected in the Buddhist discourses, Buddhist stratification of society, Buddhist theory of state, social significance of Buddhist path, five precepts and their social application, Buddhist attitude towards the functional problems of language, Buddhist way of conflict resolution, the importance attached to the teaching and learning in Buddhism, ethnic identity, Buddhist position of gender, position of rites and rituals in Buddhism, the Buddhist concept of development, the Buddhist norms on environmental impact assessment, Buddhism and socio-anthropological interpretations of Buddhism

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to critically and comprehensively explain topics of Buddhist social philosophy with reference to Tipiṭaka sources and understand their relevance to present day society

Recommended Reference:

- Abeynayake, O. (1995). *Fundamentals of Buddhist Polity*, Colombo: Author.
- _____, (2016). *The Social and Economic Dimension of Early Buddhism*, Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.
- Bhagavat, D. (1940). *Early Buddhist Jurisprudence*, Poona: Cosmo Publications.
- Cakravarti, Uma (1987). *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publisher.
- Deegalle, Mahinda, (Eds.). (2006). *Buddhism, Conflict and Violence in Modern Sri Lanka*, London: Routledge.
- Frauwallner, E. (1956). *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginning of Buddhist Literature*, Rome: M.E.O.
- Gnanarama, Ven. Pategama (1996). *An Approach to Buddhist Social Philosophy*, Singapore: Thisarana Buddhist Association.
- Gross, Rita M. (2000). *Soaring and Setting: Buddhist Perspective on Contemporary Social and Religious Issues*, New York: Continuum.
- Guruge, Ananda W. P. (Eds.). (2004). *Hsi Lai Journal of Humanistic Buddhism*, Vol 5. California: International Academy of Buddhism, University of the West.
- Hettiaracchi, Dharmasena (2001). *Buddhist Economic Philosophy*, Battaramulla: Education Department.
- Jayatilleke, K. N. (1969). *Aspects of Buddhist Social Philosophy*, Kandy: BPS.
- _____, (1958). *Buddhism and the Race Question*, Kandy: BPS.
- Jones, Ken (2003). *The New Social Face of Buddhism: A Call to Action*, Boston: Wisdom Publications.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Mallikarachchi, Desmond (2003). *Buddha and Marx: on Man and Humanity*, Colombo: Author Publication.
- Queen, Christopher S. & Sallie B. King (Eds.). (1996). *Engaged Buddhism*, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Ratnapala, Nandasena (1997). *Buddhist Democratic Political Theory and Practice*, Ratmalana: Wishwa Lekha.
- Spiro, M. (1982). *Buddhism and Society*, California: University of California.
- Swaris, Nalin (1999). *The Buddha's Way to Human Liberation: A Socio Historical Approach*, Author Publication.
- Seneviratne, H. L. (1999). *The Work of Kings: The New Buddhism in Sri Lanka*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Sivaraksa, Sulak (2005). *Socially Engaged Buddhism*, Delhi: Thai Inter Religious Commission.
- Tilakaratne, Asanga (2012). *Theravada Buddhism; The View of the Elders*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Weber, Max (1958). *Religions of India*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publisher.
- Wijesekara, O. H. de. A. (1972). *Buddhism and Society*, Kandy: PBS.

Course Code: MABS 33

Course Title: Buddhist Economic Philosophy

Aim: To give the ability to analyze the fundamental Buddhist teachings with a view to discovering possible solutions to the contemporary problems in the sphere of the world economy

Contents: The course unit highlights the fundamental Buddhist teachings related to what may be termed a Buddhist perspective of economics. The analysis is based on the Pali suttas and Vinaya texts. The topics discussed in this course unit include: the economic social structure in India during the Buddha's time, the influence of Buddhist thought on economy in India especially during the period of Emperor Asoka, the Buddhist influence on Sri Lankan economy in the subsequent era; the Buddhist teaching on individual and state economy.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to explain the concepts of Buddhist economic philosophy and its applicability to provide possible solutions to the contemporary problems

Recommended Reference:

- Hettiaracchi, Dharmasen (2001). *Buddhist Economic Philosophy as Reflected in Early Buddhism*, Battaramulla: Education Publication Department.
- Karunatilake, H.N.S. (1976). *This Confused Society*, Colombo: Buddhist Information Centre.
- Macy, Mark (1987). *Solutions for a Troubled World*, Earthview Press.
- Schumacher, E.F. (1974). *Small is Beautiful*, London: Abacus.
- Silva, de Padmasiri (1975). *Value Orientation and Nation Building*, Colombo: Lake House.
- _____, *The Search for Buddhist Economics*, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Weber, Max (2000). *The Sociology of Religion*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

Course Code: **MABS 52**

Course Title: **History of Indian Buddhism: From its Origins to the Emergence of Mahayana**

Aim: To give an objective understanding of the development of Indian Buddhist traditions that pre-suppose a proper historical perspective

Contents: The course unit is designed to provide students with a foundational and general, but not superficial, survey of Indian Buddhism from a historical perspective highlighting all the important developments up to the emergence of Mahayana. The main themes for the course unit include: the origins of Buddhism and the Indian Background; process of the compilation of the Canon; the classification of the Buddha's teachings; the Councils; the popularization of Buddhism; the emergence and development of the major Buddhist sects; Emperor Asoka and his contribution to the Buddhist cause; spread of Buddhism outside India; rise of Mahayana Buddhism and other related topics.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. gain a foundational knowledge of the history of Indian Buddhism up to the emergence of the Mahayana movement;
2. critically examine different views and theories related to the history of Buddhism in India;
3. apply the knowledge derived from this foundational course unit to examine and appreciate the subsequent developments of Buddhism in India and beyond.

Recommended Reference:

- Bapat, P. V. (1959). *2500 Years of Buddhism*, New Delhi: Government of India.
- Dutta, Nalinaksha (1998). *Buddhist Sects in India*, Wilsele: Peters Publishers.
- Hazara, K.L. (1995). *The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India*. New: Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal.
- Hirakawa, Akira (Tr. & Ed. by Paul Groner) (1990). *A History of Indian Buddhism*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Lamotte, E. (1988). *History of Indian Buddhism: from the Origins to the Saka Era Sakyamuni to Early Mahayana*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsdass.
- Nakamura, Hajime (1980). *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographical Notes*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Pande, G.C. (1995). *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Thapar, Romila (2012). *Asoka and the Decline of the Maurya*, India: Oxford University Press.
- Warder, A. K. (2000). *Indian Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Zhi Lian Jing Yuan, (2008). *The First and Second Buddhist Councils, Five Versions*: (English Tr. Anuruddha, K. et al.) Hong Kong: Chi Lin Nunnery.

Course Code: **MABS 54**

Course Title: **Mahayana Buddhism: A Doctrinal Survey**

Aim: To provide a foundation knowledge of Mahayana Buddhism for students with no or little background in Buddhist studies

Contents: This is a foundation course unit. Its contents are mainly focused on the historical and doctrinal development in Early Indian Buddhism - the source for all later development. The course unit begins with a survey on the contemporary theories of the origins of Mahayana, and proceeds to examine the conception and formulation of the Bodhisattva Ideal in the earliest extant Mahayana texts such as the *Aṣṭa-sāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, *Ugra-pariprcchā*, etc. (including those preserved in Chinese translation). It further examines the question of the Primitive *Prajñāpāramitā*, the emptiness doctrine (*śūnyatā*) expounded by Nāgārjuna, the doctrines of the early Yogācāra and *tathāgatagarbha* thoughts. Other fundamental Mahayana doctrines examined include the *trikāya*, the six *pāramitās*, and the ten-stage progression (*daśabhūmi*). Some important scriptures are also selected for discussion, including the Diamond-cutter sutra, the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa*, and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. gain an informed and objective historical perspective of the doctrinal development of the early Mahayana tradition, which is necessary for a proper comprehension and appreciation of the subsequent development of later Mahayana doctrines;
2. demonstrate the ability to critically examine the fundamental doctrines of Indian Mahayana;
3. critically appraise traditional and modern scholars' accounts on doctrinal and historical issues related to Buddhism in general and Mahāyāna in particular;
4. apply their knowledge of the ethical and spiritual teachings of Mahayana - such as compassion, wisdom, the perfection practices (*pāramitās*), etc. in their living, and thereby adding a spiritual dimension to their individual existences.

Recommended Reference:

- Chang, C.C. (1971). *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality*, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Conze, Edward (1975). *The Larger Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom*, California: University of California.
- _____, (1958). *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and its Verse Summary*, New York: South Asia Books.
- _____, (1957). *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā*: Edited and translated with introduction and Glossary, Rome: M.E.O.
- Lamotte, Étienne et Boin, Sara, (1962, 1976). *The Teaching of Vimalakīrti (Vimalakīrtinirdeśa)*: from the French Translation with Introduction and Notes,

London, PTS.

- Nakamura, Hajime (2007). *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographical Notes*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Nattier, Jan (2005). *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path according to The Inquiry of Ugra (Ugrapariprcchā)*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii.
- Sangharakshita, (2006). *The Eternal Legacy of the Buddha: An Introduction to the Canonical Literature of Buddhism*, Cambridge: Windhorse Publications.
- _____, (2004) (9th end). *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrines and Methods Through the Ages*, Australia: Windhorse Publications.
- Suzuki, D.T. (1983). *The Essence of Buddhism*, Kyoto: The Buddhist Society.
- _____, (1968). *Studies in the Lankāvatāra*, London: Routledge.
- Warder, A. K. (1980). *Indian Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Williams, Paul (2009). *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*, London: Routledge.

Course Code: **MABS 57**

Course Title: **The Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal in Theravada Buddhism**

Aim: To provide the students with knowledge of historical perspective of the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal from the earliest Canonical texts to the exegetical literature of Theravada Buddhism

Contents: This course unit is designed to examine from a historical perspective the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal from the earliest Canonical texts to the exegetical literature of Theravada Buddhism. For this, the main topics for examination will include: the Buddha's biography; beginnings of his apotheosis; "great man" (*mahāpurisa*); "great compassion" (*mahākarunā*); "four confidences" (*catu-vesārajja*); "omniscient knowledge" (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*); "spiritual power" and "physical power"; "80 minor bodily marks" (*asītianuvyañjana*); and "18 qualities of the Buddha" (*atṭhārasabuddhadhamma*). The course will also examine the Bodhisatta Ideal, an integral part of the Buddha-concept in Buddhism, and the topics for discussion will include the "perfections" (*pāramitā*), "aspirations" (*abhinibhāra*), "18 impossible states of birth for a Bodhisatta", and others.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. acquire a clear understanding of the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta Ideal as developed in Theravada Buddhism;
2. comprehend clearly the differences of the Buddha-concept among various Buddhist traditions;
3. gain a basic knowledge of the development of the Buddha-concept and Bodhisatta doctrine in the Pali commentarial literature

Recommended Reference:

- Dayal, Har (1978). *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, Samuel Weiser.
- Dube, S.N. (1980). *Cross Current in Early Buddhism*, New Delhi: Manoharlal Publication.
- Dutt, Sukumar (1987). *The Buddha and Five After-centuries*, London: Luzac and Company.
- Endo, Toshiichi (1997). *Buddha in Theravada Buddhism*, Colombo: Author.
- Hirakawa, Akira (Ed.) (1993). *A History of Indian Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Dass.
- Horner, I. B. (1979). *The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected*, New Delhi: Oriental Books.
- _____, (1978). *The Clarifier of the Sweet Meaning (Madhuratthavilāsinī)*, London: Routledge.
- _____, (1969). *Milinda's Questions*, 2 Vols, London: PTS.
- Katz, Nathan (1982). *Buddhist Images of Human Perfection*, New Delhi: Motilal

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

Banarsi dass.

- Kern, H. (1974). *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsi dass.
- Khantipalo, Phra (1976). *The Splendour of Enlightenment —A Life of the Buddha*, 2 Vols, Bangkok: Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Press.
- Kloppenborg, Ria (1974). *The Pacceka Buddha: A Buddhist Ascetic — A Study of the Concept of the Pacceka Buddha in Pali Canonical and Commentarial Literature*, Kandy: BPS.
- Nānamoli, Bhikkhu (1992). *The Life of the Buddha*, Kandy: BPS.
- Nakamura, Hajime (1989). *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographical Notes*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsi dass.
- _____, (1974). *Gotama Buddha: The Life of Sakyamuni*, Tokyo: Kosei Publishing.
- Oldenberg, H (1992). *Buddha*, New Delhi: Indological Book House.
- Thomas, E. J. (1993). *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History*, USA: Kessinger Publisher.

Course Code: **MABS 60**

Course Title: **Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma: Doctrines and Controversies**

Aim: To enable students to understand basic knowledge of Abhidharma in general and doctrinal and controversial teachings in Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma

Contents: The period of the Abhidharma represents the historical stage when Buddhist—philosophy so-called truly began. A foundation knowledge of the Abhidharma doctrines will enable the students to acquire an integrated perspective of the Buddhist development as a whole: on the one hand, equipped with this knowledge which serves as a commentarial guide, they will be in a better position to comprehend the Buddhist tradition’s conceptions of the sūtra teachings in the preceding stage. On the other hand, they will be able to meaningfully relate the subsequent Mahayana development to the Abhidharma development thereby gaining a deeper insight of the teachings of the former.

This course unit has as its scope the Abhidharma development in the northern tradition. It focuses primarily on the doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda Vaibhāśikas and the Dārśtāntika-Sautrāntikas. While detailing the Abhidharma controversies, the relevant doctrines of the Mahāsāṅghikas and Vātsīputrīya-Sāṃmitīyas, etc., will also be discussed. The early part of the course unit will outline the historical and doctrinal background necessary for understanding the controversial doctrines to be examined in detail subsequently. The bulk of the course unit that follows will focus on selected controversial doctrines of importance, such as the tri-temporal existence of all dharma-s (*sarvāstivāda*), simultaneous causality, the ontological status of the *cittaviprayukta-saṃskāra*-s, the avijñapti and the unconditioned dharma-s, etc. The discussion on these controversies will mainly be based on the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, supplemented with commentarial material from the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Nyāyānusāra* of Saṅghabhadra, the *Abhidharmadīpa* with *Vibhāṣā prabhāvṛtti*, and the *Sphuṭārthā Ābhidharmakośa-Vyākhyā* of Yaśomitra.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussions

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. demonstrate proper understanding of the intellectual roles and doctrinal contribution of the Abhidharmika masters of the different affiliations;
2. critically examine the specific Buddhist doctrines in the Abhidharma literature;
3. show deeper insights into the doctrinal and spiritual concerns of the ancient masters in this period, and how these concerns fervently stimulated progressive articulation and development of Buddhist thoughts.

Recommended Reference:

- Cox, Collet (1995). *Disputed Dharmas: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence*, Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies.
- Dhammadajoti, K. L. (4th ed.) (2009). *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*, Colombo: Centre for Buddhist Studies.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- _____, (2008) (2nd ed). *Entrance into the Supreme Doctrine, Skandhila's Abhidharmāvatāra*, Colombo: PGIPBS.
- _____, (2007) (3rd end). *Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception*, Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong.
- Frauwallner, Erich (1995). *Studies in Abhidharma Literature and Origins of Buddhist Philosophical Systems, Translated from the German by Sophie Francis Kidd under the supervision of Ernst Steinkellner*, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Jaini, P.S. (2001). *Collected Papers on Buddhist Studies*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Dass Publishers.
- _____, (1959). *Abhidharmadīpa with Vibhāsā-prabhāvr̥tti*, Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute.
- Karunadasa, Y. (2014). *The Theravada Abhidhamma: Its Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality*, Hong Kong: Centre for Buddhist Studies.
- _____, (1996). *The Dhamma Theory: Philosophical Cornerstone of the Abhidhamma*, Kandy: BPS.
- Poussin, de La Vallee Louise & Lodro Sangpo (2012). *Abhidharmakośa bhāṣya of Vasubandhu*, 4 Vols, Berkely: Asian Humanities Press.
- Willemen, et al. (1998). *Sarvāstivāda Buddhist Scholasticism*, Brill.

Course Code: **MABS 63**

Course Title: **Doctrines of Early Indian Yogācāra**

Aim: To introduce students the doctrinal development of Indian Yogācāra up to the period of Dharmapāla

Contents: This course unit introduces the doctrinal development of Indian Yogācāra up to the period of Dharmapāla. The study begins with a brief survey of the doctrinal contribution by the Sarvāstivādins in the milieu of the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* particularly the early yogācāras. It will then proceed to examine the doctrines in the Basic Section (本地分) (maulī bhūmi) of the Yogācāra-bhūmi which is the whole constitutes the earliest stratum of the textual sources of the Yogācāra as a Mahayana school. Particular emphases are laid here on its doctrines of the two intrinsic natures, *prajñaptivāda-svabhāva* and *nirabhilāpya-svabhāva*, and its epistemological doctrines - both representing a realistic standpoint characteristic of this section. This will be followed by a study of the relatively more developed doctrines in the texts of the Maitreya Asaṅga complex and of Vasubandu, et al., including the system of eight consciousnesses (particularly the ālaya-vijñāna doctrine), the Threefold Intrinsic Nature, the Threefold Absence of Intrinsic Natures, *vijñaptimātratā* and *āśrayaparāvṛtti*. The course unit will end with a discussion on the developed doctrines in Xuanzang's *Vijñaptimātrā siddhi* (成唯識論).

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. adequate understanding of the historical background of the origins and development of the Indian Yogācāra tradition;
2. critically analyze the doctrinal signification of the major Indian Yogācāra teachings developed in the various texts pertaining to the different historical strata;
3. understand and apply the Yogācāra teachings related to spiritual praxis in their own lives

Recommended Reference:

- Chatterjee, K. N. (1980). *Vasubandhu's Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi with Sthiramati's Commentary* (Text with English Translation).
- Deleanu, F. (2006). *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvakabhūmi*, 2 Vols.
- Dhammadhoti, K. L. (2009). *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*, Colombo: Centre for Buddhist Studies.
- _____, (2007). *Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception*, Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong.
- Powers, John (1995). *Wisdom of the Buddha: The Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, Tibetan Translation Series 16.
- Poussin, De La Vallée (1928-1948). *Vijñaptimātrasiddhi. La Siddhi de Hiuan-tsang*.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Sakuma, Hidenori S. (2011). “*The Historical Development of the Āśrayaparivṛtti Theory*”. In Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism (Sambhāśā) 29: 39-59.
- Schmithausen, Lambert (2014). *The Genesis of Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda. Responses and Reflections*, International Institute for Buddhist Studies.
- _____, (2000). “*On the Yogācārabhūmi Passages Mentioning the Three Svabhāvas or Lakshanas.*” In: Silk 2000 (ed.). *Wisdom, Compassion and the Search for Understanding*. The Buddhist Studies Legacy of Godjin M. Nagao: 245-263.
- _____, (1987). *Ālayavijñāna. On the Origin and the Early Development of a Central Concept of Yogācāra Philosophy*.
- Wei Tat. (1973). *Ch'eng Wei-shih Lum-The Doctrine of Mere consciousness by Tripitaka Master Hsuan Tsang*.

Course Code: **MABS 64**

Course Title: **History of Chinese Buddhism**

Aim: To provide knowledge of history of Chinese Buddhism and its major characteristics

Contents: This course unit examines the major events and thoughts in the history of Chinese Buddhism with a particular emphasis on the establishment of Chinese Buddhist Schools. A major aim is to show how Buddhism came to be gradually and successfully incorporated into and became one of the three pillars of Chinese thought and culture. The important Chinese Buddhist masters will also be examined against their historical background to show their contribution to the development of Chinese Buddhism.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. critically examine historical issues related to Chinese Buddhist tradition from an informed objective;
2. critically appraise the doctrinal issues in the various Chinese Buddhist schools;
3. develop an appreciation of the Chinese Buddhist tradition and their influence and impact on Chinese culture.

Recommended Reference:

- Chang, Garma Chen-chi (1971). *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hwa-yen Buddhism*, Penn State University Press.
- Cheng, Chung-Ying (Editor). *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii.
- Ch'en, K. S. Kenneth., (1973). *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*.
- _____, (1972). *Buddhism in China, A Historical Survey*, Princeton University Press.
- Cleary, Thomas (1983). *Entry into the Inconceivable: An Introduction to Hua Yen Buddhism*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Cook, Francis H. (1977). *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of India*, Penn State University Press.
- De Bary, Theodore and Irene, Bloom (1999). *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1 & 2, Colombia University Press.
- Donner, Neal & Stevenson, Daniel (1993). *The Great Calming and Contemplation: A Study and Annotated Translation of the First Chapter of Chih-i's Mo-ho Chih-Kuan*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii.
- Gimello, Robert & Peter N. Gregory (1983). *Studies in Ch'an and Hua Yen*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Gregory, Peter N. (Ed.) (1987). *Sudden and Gradual Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, China: Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House.
- Lopez, Donald S. Jr. (Ed.) (1996). *Religions of China in Practice*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Tsukamoto, Zenryu (1985). *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism: from its*

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

Introduction to the Death of l-lui-yuan. Translated from the Japanese by Leon Hurvitz.

- Wright, Arthur F. (1959). *Buddhism in Chinese History*, Stanford University Press.
- _____, (1957). “*Buddhism and Chinese Culture: Phases of Interaction*”, In: The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol.17, No. 1,17-42.
- Yampolsky, Philip (1967). *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, Columbia: Columbia University Press.
- Zurher, Erik (2007). *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of in Early Medieval China*. 2 Vols.

Course Code: MABS 67

Course Title: Readings in Pali Suttas

This course unit consists of two parts, each equivalent to a single-semester course unit.

MABS 67 Readings in Pali Suttas I: Grammatical Foundation (30 lecture hours)

MABS 67 Readings in Pali Suttas II: Readings of Selected Sutta Passages (30 lecture hours)

Unless specially exempted, the intending student for MABS 67 II must have acquired a pass in MABS 67 I as the prerequisite,

Aim: To familiarize students with Pali idioms and systematically provide them with an elementary grammatical foundation for reading the Pali suttas

Contents: The first part includes Pali grammar, Pali phonetics, parts of speech, different nouns and their declension, different verbs and their conjugation, participles and their function, absolutives, sandhi, syntax and classification of sentences. The second part is mainly devoted to the understanding and translating of selected Pali-suttas and to progressively building up sufficient vocabularies for the purpose of reading the Pali-suttas. This is an introductory course unit meant for those who have no knowledge of the language of Pali. The purpose of this course unit is to familiarize students with Pali idioms and systematically provide them with an elementary grammatical foundation for reading the Pali suttas. It is expected that, at the end of the course unit, the students will be able to read the Pali discourses at least with the help of a good dictionary. The course unit is divided into two parts. In the first part, basic grammar is taught along with Pali exercises.

The contents of this grammatical part include the following: Pali phonetics, parts of speech, different nouns and their declension, different verbs and their conjugation, participles and their function, absolutives, sandhi, syntax and classification of sentences. The second part is mainly devoted to the understanding and translating of selected Pali suttas and to progressively building up sufficient vocabularies for the purpose of reading the Pali suttas.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussions

Assessment Method: Attendance and In-class Participation (20%), Mid-term Test (30%) and Final Examination (50%)

Expected Learning Outcome:

At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. critically analyse the sentence patterns and read the Pali sentences correctly;
2. demonstrate mastery of the Pali language and comprehend the content of the prescribed texts;
3. demonstrate the ability to understand the Buddhist teachings as shown in selected Pali passages;
4. begin to access the Pali original sources for research involving textual studies.

Recommended Reference:

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Anuruddha, Kakkapalliy (2010). *A Guide to the Study of Pali-The Language of Theravada Buddhism*, Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies.
- Buddhadatta, A.P. (1997). *The New Pali Course - Parts I, II*, Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre.
- *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka* (online resources).
- Norman, K. R. (1983). *Pali Literature: Including the Canonical Literature in Prakrit and Sanskrit of All the Hīnayāna Schools of Buddhism*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Silva, Lily de (1994). *Pali Primer*, New Delhi: Vipassana Institute.
- Warder, A. K. (1995). *Introduction to Pali*, London: PTS.

Course Code: **MABS 68**

Course Title: **Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit Texts**

This course unit consists of two parts, each equivalent to a single-semester course unit.

MABS 68 Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit Texts I: Grammatical Foundation (30 lecture hours)

MABS 68 Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit Texts II: Readings of Selected Buddhist Sanskrit Texts (30 lecture hours)

Unless specially exempted, the intending student for MABS 68 II must have acquired a pass in MABS 68 I as the prerequisite.

Aim: To familiarize students with Sanskrit texts and systematically provide them with an elementary grammatical foundation for reading the primary Sanskrit texts

Contents: The design of this course unit is guided by the reasonable assumption that the most interesting and rewarding way to learn Classical Sanskrit as a beginner is to actually read some simple Sanskrit texts that interest him/her, under the guidance of a teacher. Classical Buddhist Sanskrit texts have their own styles, idiomatic expressions and technical terminologies with which the student must first be familiarised. As the course unit proceeds, the student is being gradually and systematically introduced to both Buddhist textual materials, and elementary grammar on the other.

For pedagogical reasons, all vocabularies, examples, and passages for the exercises in each lesson (except, understandably, the first one or two) are selected from the Prajñāpāramitā texts, particularly the Aṣṭasāhasrikā, to ensure linguistic and contextual homogeneity as much as possible. The selection is made on the basis of (i) simplicity in terms of grammatical structure and doctrinal meaning, and (ii) the existence of corresponding Chinese versions (particularly those translated by Xuan Zang and Kumārajīva). Occasionally, however, the need arises to select a few sentences from other Buddhist sources (such as the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya). Hybrid Sanskrit passages will be excluded. It can be an advantage if the student already has some familiarity with elementary Sanskrit grammar. However, neither familiarity with Buddhist scriptures and Classical Chinese nor knowledge of Sanskrit is an absolute prerequisite of this course unit.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussions

Assessment Method: Attendance and In-class Participation (20%), Mid-term Test (30%) and Final Examination (50%)

Expected Learning Outcome:

At the end of this course unit, the student will be able to:

1. demonstrate adequate proficiency in the Sanskrit grammar for the purpose of textual analysis;
2. read and understand Classical Buddhist Sanskrit texts with the help, where necessary, of a Sanskrit dictionary;
3. properly comprehend the meaning of fundamental Sanskrit Buddhist terminologies and idiomatic expressions - especially those in the *Prajñāpāramitā* texts;

4. begin postgraduate research studies involving textual analysis of Buddhist Sanskrit sources.

Recommended Reference:

- Bucknell R. S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Conze, Edward (1990). *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā: Edited and translated with Introduction and Glossary*, Rome: M.E.O.
- _____, (1990). *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and its Verse Summary*, South Asia Books.
- _____, (1979). *The Larger Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Dhammadhoti, K. L. (2015). *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*, Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.
- Edgerton, Franklin (2004). *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary 1 & 11*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Takayasu, Kimura (Eds.) (2007-2009). *Pañcavimśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā 1-VI*.
- Vaidya, P.L. (Eds.) (1960). *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Sanskrit Learning.
- Williams Monier (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, New Delhi: Bharatiya G.N.

Course Code: **MABS 71**

Course Title: **Buddhist Ethics: Concepts and Philosophical Interpretations**

Aim: To provide knowledge of the basic concepts in ethics, the ethics of Buddhism, the role of ethics in the Buddhist scheme of liberation and to provide familiarity with the interpretations of Buddhist ethics from the modern Western philosophical standpoint

Contents: The course unit aims primarily at examining the fundamental ethical teachings in the Pali canonical texts such as precepts pertaining to virtuous conduct (*sīla*), the noble eightfold path and *pāramitā*. Secondly, an attempt will be made to identify the role of ethics in the path of liberation in Buddhism. Thirdly, the relation between concepts belonging to the Buddhist world view such as kamma, rebirth, dependent arising and no-self and Buddhist ethics will be examined. And an attempt will also be made to understand contentious views among modern interpreters on certain contents such as *puñña-kusala* dichotomy and ethical transcendentalism. Finally, attention will be paid to understand the philosophical interpretations of Buddhist ethics presented in terms of western ethical systems such as Kantian ethics, Deontological ethics, virtue ethics, utilitarianism and consequentialism.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to understand the ethical significance of Buddhist teachings, discussions on Buddhist ethical concepts open to disagreement, and interpretations given in terms of western ethical traditions

Recommended Reference:

- Charles Goodman, (2009). *Consequences of Compassion: A References Interpretation and Defense of Buddhist Ethics*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kalupahana, D. J. (1995). *Ethics in Early Buddhism*, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Keown, Damien (1996). *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____, 1992 (2001). *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*, Hampshire: Palgrave.
- King, Winston L. (1964). *In the Hope of Nibbana: An Essay on Theravada Buddhist Ethics*, La Salle, Ill.: Open Court.
- Macintyre, Alasdair (1996). *A Short History of Ethics*, New York: Touchstone.
- McDermott, P. (2003). *Development in the Early Buddhist Concept of Kamma/Karma*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Mill, John Stuart (1986). *Utilitarianism*, Mary Warnock (ed.), Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd.
- Misra, G.S.P. (1984). *Development of Buddhist Ethics*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Prasad, Hari Sankar (2007). *The Centrality of Ethics in Buddhism: Exploratory Essays*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Premasiri, P. D. (1991). *Ethics Encyclopaedia of Buddhism Offprint* No. 1. Colombo: Department of Buddhist Affairs.
- _____, (1975). “*Moral Evaluation in Early Buddhism*,” Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities 2, pp. 63–74.
- _____, (1976). “*Interpretation of Two Principle Ethical Terms in Early Buddhism*,” Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities 2:2, pp. 63–74.
- Rorty, Amelie Oksenberg (ed.) (1980). *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics*, Berkeley, Los Angelis, London: University of California Press.
- Saddhatissa, Hammalawa 1997 (1970). *Buddhist Ethics*, Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Swanton, Christine (2003). *Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wood, Allen W. (1999). *Kant’s Ethical Thought*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Course Code: MABS 72

Course Title: Research Methodology and Extended Essay

Aim: To provide an opportunity to enhance basic knowledge and skills of research methods and academic writing

Contents: Study of Buddhist literary sources, fundamentals of a research, styles of referencing, preparing a research proposal and academic writing.

Students are required to participate in workshops organised by the Institute (PGIPBS) and prepare an essay proposal and a 5,000-word extended essay on a theme related to the course units as instructed and guided at workshops. Students are required to submit their essay proposal before the end of the 2nd term. The essay should be submitted within 30 days from the last question paper of the final year examination.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: The procedure is as follows:

Stages	Scheduled time	Themes
1st Workshop	4th week of the 2nd term	Buddhist Literary Sources and Fundamentals of Research
2nd Workshop	9th week of the 2nd term	Styles of Referencing, Preparing a Research Proposal and Academic Writing.

Submission of essay topics by the students: Before the 5th week of the 2nd Term

Collecting of approved/amended essay topics from the office: 7th week of the 2nd Term

Assessment Method: Participation in workshops (10%), Preparation of essay proposal (20%), Completion of essay (70%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to demonstrate the skills of academic writing, research methods and critical thinking

Recommended Reference:

- Cryer, Pat (1999). *The Research Student Guide to Success*, Mumbai: VIVA Books Private Ltd.
- Glough Peter, Nutbrown Cathy (2002). *A Student Guide to Methodology Justifying Enquiry*, London: SAGE Publications Company.
- Kumar, Ranjith, (2011). *Research Methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*, London, SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Nicholas, Walliman (2005). *Your Research Project*, New Delhi: Vistaar Publications.
- Potter, Stephen (2002). *Doing Postgraduate Research*, London: SAGE Publications Company London.

Course Code: **MABS 76**

Course Title: **Fundamental Principles of Buddhist Psychology in Pali Tradition**

Aim: To provide a theoretical framework on the nature of mind and its development to release from the existential human predicament

Contents: This course unit begins with an inquiry into the psychology of perception in early Buddhism as an attempt to analyze the origin of existential human predicament. Then it moves to examine the nature of the psychophysical individual into mind-and-matter (*nāma-rūpa*), five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*), six gateways (*saḷāyatana*), twelve gateways (*dvādasāyatana*), and eighteen elements (*aṭṭhārasadhātu*). Further, the focus will also be made to the analysis of mind referred to as citta, mana, and viññāna, unwholesome state of mind (*akusala-citta*), wholesome state of mind (*kusala-citta*), mental factors (*cetasika*), universal mental factors (*sabba-citta-sādhāraṇā-cetasika*), unwholesome mental factors (*akusala-cetasika*), wholesome mental factors (*kusala-cetasika*), Abhidhamma notion of cognitive processes (*citta-vīthi*) as a continuation of perception in early Buddhism, and relationship between mind and behavior. Finally, attention will be paid to the relevance of mental culture (*bhāvanā*) to release from the existential human predicament. Discussions relating to this course unit will be undertaken mainly on the basis of the material contained in the Buddhist texts, both canonical and post-canonical, preserved in the Pali language. However, students are not required to be conversant in Pali although some acquaintance with important doctrinal terms will be an advantage.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures, discussion and assignments

Assessment Method: In-class Participation (10%), Short Essay (30%) and Long Essay (60%)

Expected Learning Outcome: Ability to: (i) explain the origin of existential human predicament; nature of the psychophysical individual; nature of mind, perception of sense objects, and also (ii) explain the requirement of mental culture to release from the existential human predicament

Recommended Reference:

- *Abhidharmakośabhaṣyam of Vasubandhu*, Vol. I. (1988-1990). Translated into French by Louis de La Vallée Poussin and from the French into English by Leo M. Pruden. Berkeley, Calif.: Asian Humanities Press.
- Bhikkhu Bodhi (ed.) (2000). *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma (Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha)*, Onalaska: BPS Pariyatti Editions.
- Bhikkhu Nāṇananda (1997). *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Dhammadajoti, K. L. (2018). *Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception*, Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.
- Fromm, Erich (1961). *Psychoanalysis of Religion*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- _____ (2008). *The Sane Society*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Karunadasa, Y. (2010). *The Theravāda Abhidhamma: Its Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2026 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (English Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Maslow, Abraham H. (1954). *Motivation and Personality*, London: Harper and Row Publishers.
- Sarachchandra, E. R. (2009). *Buddhist Psychology of Perception*, Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre.
- Silva, Padmasiri de (1977). *An Introduction to Buddhist Psychology*, London: McMillan.
