

Course Code: MABS 01

Course Title: Buddhist Doctrines of Pali 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 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. Philosophical system of early Buddhism will form an Integral part of this course.

The course 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, discussions 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 original sources

Recommended for 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.
- Jayatilke, 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 Nirvana*, 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).
- Stcherbatsky, Th. (2005). *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- _____, (1965). *The Conception of the Buddhist Nirvana*, The Hague: Mouton and Co.
- Warder, A. K. (1980). *Indian Buddhism*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2025/26 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (Chinese Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Winternitz, M. (1936). *Problems of Buddhism*, Visva-Bharati Quarterly, Vol. II.

Course Code: MABS 21

Course Title: Buddhist Aesthetic Concepts: Analysis and Evaluation

Contents: As a religio-philosophical system embracing the multiplex dimensions of human life, Buddhism's 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*, *pramoda* 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. This study will be concluded with 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 and class discussion

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

Recommended for Reference:

- J. D. Dharmapala, *Buddhism and Beauty*, Bodhi Leaves A II, Buddhist Publication Society (Kandy, 1980)
- P. K. Agrawala, *Aesthetic Principles of Indian Art* (Varanasi, 1980)
- K. C. Aryan, *Basis of Decorative Elements in Indian Art* (New Delhi, 1981)
- H. Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization* (New York, 1946)
- A. K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art* (New York, 1934)
- M. Ridley, *The Art of World Religions, Buddhism* (New York, 1980, Indian Edition)
- Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Poems of Cloister and Jungle - A Buddhist Anthology* (London, 1941)
- E. Conze, *The Buddha's Law among the Birds* (Oxford, 1955)
- M. G. Dharmapala, *Aspects of (Buddhist) Literary Criticism as gleaned from Pali Sources* (Poona, 1975)

Course Code: MABS 22

Course Title: Buddhist Art and Architecture - I (Indian Subcontinent)

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; *stupa* and its evolution as symbol of religious worship; *stupa*-decorations as a form of mass media; the anaeiconic representations 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 Gandhara school of Buddhist art; the Greek and Iranian influences on its *sculpture* and iconography; the part it played in the diffusion of Buddhist art in Central and East Asia; Buddhist art and architecture in South India with special reference to Amaravati, Nagarjunikonda and Jaggyyapeta; the last phase of Buddhist art under the Pala and Sena dynasties; refinements of its sculpture; the heavy dependence of Tantrayana on sculpture ; the development of the *sakti* cult and its influence on Buddhist Iconography.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussion

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

Recommended for Reference:

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

Course Code: MABS 26

Course Title: Buddhist Psychotherapy

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 behavior with reference to the teaching of dependent co-origination, analysis of *citta*, *mano*, *viññāna* and the process of mental behavior, analysis of psycho-physical problems, behavioral, spiritual and herbal treatments recommended for psycho-physical problems.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussion

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

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

Recommended for Reference:

- Sumanapala Galmangoda, *Buddhist Social Philosophy and Ethics*, Singapore, 2005.
- H. S. S. Nissanka, *Buddhist Psychotherapy*, Sri Lanka, 1993.
- Padmasiri De Silva, *Buddhist and Freudian Psychology*, Lake House Investments Ltd, Colombo, 1978.
- C. G. Jung, *Psychology and East*, Princeton University Press, USA.
- D. V. J. Harischandara, *Psychiatric Aspects of Jataka Stories*. Galle, Sri Lanka, 1998.
- Manly P Hall, *Buddhism and Psychotherapy. The Healing of Heart Doctrine*. California, 1978.
- Hayao Kawai, *Buddhism and the Art of Psychotherapy*. Texas A & M University Press, USA, 1996.
- Barry Magid, *Ordinary Mind, Exploring the Common Ground of Zen and Psychotherapy*, Boston, 2002.

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 foundational 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 Mahāyāna development to the Abhidharma development, thereby gaining a deeper insight of the teachings of the former.

This course has as its scope the Abhidharma development in the northern tradition. It focuses primarily on the doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣikas and the Dārṣṭāntika-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 will outline the historical and doctrinal background necessary for understanding the controversial doctrines to be examined in detail subsequently. The bulk of the course that follows will focus on selected controversial doctrines of importance, such as the tri-temporal existence of all dharma-s (*sarvāstīva*), simultaneous causality, the ontological status of the *cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra*-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-prabhāvrtti*, and the *Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośa-Vyākhyā* of Yaśomitra. By studying these controversies, the students will gain a deeper insight 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.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussion

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

Learning Outcome:

At the end of this course, 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 for Reference

- Cox, Collet, (1995). *Disputed Dharmas: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence*, Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2025/26 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (Chinese Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Dhammajoti, K.L. (2009) (4th end). *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*, Colombo: Centre for Buddhist Studies.
- _____, (2008) (2nd ed). *Entrance into the Supreme Doctrine, Skandhila's Abhidharmāvatāra*, Colombo: PGIPBS
- _____, (2007) (3rd end). *Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception*, Hong Kong: 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*.
- _____, (1959). *Abhidharmaadipa with Vibhasa-prabhavrtti*, 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.
- La Vallee Poussin, Louis de & Lodro Sangpo. (2012). *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya 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

Content: This course introduces the students to the doctrinal development of Indian Yogācāra up to the period of Dharmapāla. The survey begins with a brief survey of the doctrinal contribution from 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 bhūmiḥ*) of the *Yogācāra-bhūmi*, which on the whole constitutes the earliest stratum of the textual sources of the Yogācāra as a Mahāyāna 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 Vasubandhu, 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 *āśraya-parāvṛtti*. The course will end with a discussion on the developed doctrines in Xuanzang's **Vijñaptimātra-siddhi* (成唯識論).

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussion

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

Learning Outcomes

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

1. demonstrate 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 for Reference

- Chatterjee, K.N. (1980). *Vasubandhu's Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi. With Sthiramati's Commentary* (Text with English Translation).
- De La Vallée Poussin. (1928-1948). *Vijñaptimātrasiddhi*. La Siddhi de Hiuan-tsang.
- Deleanu, F. (2006). *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvaka-bhūmi*. 2 vols.
- Dhammajoti, K.L. (2009). *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*, Colombo: Centre for Buddhist Studies.
- _____, (2007). *Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception*, Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong.
- Powers, John. (1995). *Wisdom of the Buddha: The Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*. Tibetan Translation Series 16.
- Sakuma, Hidenori S. (2011). "The Historical Development of the Āśrayaparivṛtti Theory". In *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism (Sambhāṣā)* 29: 39-59.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2025/26 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (Chinese Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- Schmithausen, Lambert. (2014). *The Genesis of Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda. Responses and Reflections*, International Institute for Buddhist Studies.
- Schmithausen, Lambert. (2000a). "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.
- Schmithausen, Lambert. (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

Content: This course 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.

It is expected that, at the end of the course, students will have acquired sufficient familiarity with the basic historical events, major Buddhist schools of thoughts and important personages together with their contribution to the development of Chinese Buddhism.

Methods of Teaching and Learning: Lectures and class discussion

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

Learning Outcome

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

1. demonstrate the ability to 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 to Chinese culture

Recommended for Reference

- Chang, Garma Chen-chi. (1971). *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hwa-yen Buddhism*, Penn State University Press.
- 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 Indra*, Penn State University Press.
- De Bary, Theodore et Bloom, Irene, with the collaboration of CHAN, Wing-tsit (eds.). 1999. *Sources of Chinese tradition, Vol. 1 & 2*.
- 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*, University of Hawaii Press.
- Gregory, Peter N. (Ed.). (1987). *Sudden and Gradual. Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, China: Shanghai ancient books publishing house.
- *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*. Cheng, Chung-Ying (Editor.). Published by the University of Hawaii.

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Limited
2025/26 Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (Chinese Medium) Programme - Course Syllabus

- 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 introduction to the death of I-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) (first published in 1959). *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*. 2 vols. (Chinese translation: 2003)

Course Code: MABS 72

Course Title: Research Methodology and Extended Essay

Aim: Providing 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 organized by the Institute and prepare an essay proposal and a 5000 word extended essay on a theme related to the courses as instructed and guided at workshops. Students are required to submit their essay proposal before the end of the second term. The essay should be submitted within 30 days from the last question paper of the final year examination of the course.

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.

- Submit 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%)

Learning Outcome: Students demonstrate the skills of academic writing, research methods and critical thinking

Recommended for 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.
 - Nicholas, Walliman, (2005). *Your Research Project*, New Delhi: Vistaar Publications
 - Potter, Stephen (Eds.). (2002). *Doing Postgraduate Research*, London: SAGE Publications Company
- London