

RELS 8: Buddhism Syllabus

RELS 8 Buddhism Syllabus - Fall 2020

"Long is the night to the one who is awake. Long is the road to the one who is tired. Long is life to the foolish who do not know the true law.." ----Dhammapada, verse 60



Section: 1113

Class begins: 8/18/2020

Class ends: 12/11/2020

Zoom Class time: 12:00 am-1:00 pm
Tuesdays

Final: TBA



INSTRUCTOR

Sarah Whyly

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Classroom: Zoom Interwebs

Office: My home...with
chihuahuas...and cats...and my vidya
games...and my awkward children....

Office Hours: Tuesdays – 11 am-12
pm

Teaching Assistant: Jesse Hayes



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Text:

Course Description

A historical introduction to the origins of Buddhism, the principal doctrines and teachings of the Buddha, and major themes in the development of Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana lineages through South and Southeast Asia, China, Tibet, Korea, and Japan.

Student Learning Outcomes & Objectives:

Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Explain at least four of the historical Buddha's major teachings.
2. Explain three features (each) of Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana Buddhism which illustrate the major differences in their respective doctrines and forms of practice.

Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to

1. Articulate key events in the life of the historical Buddha.
2. Express several tenets of early Buddhist philosophy as taught in the Pali Suttas.
3. Articulate several differences between Theravada & Mahayana doctrine.
4. Delineate some of the major teachings in the Mahayana sutras.
5. Explain unique features of Vajrayana Buddhism, especially its expression in Tibetan Buddhism.
6. Describe several difficulties associated with labeling Buddhism as a religion.
7. Explain aspects of Chan/Zen doctrine in contrast to other Mahayana lineages.

Course Components:

****This course is going to contain components of a multiplayer role-playing game. I will explain to all of you what this means on the first day of class but essentially we will be including elements of role-playing. If you don't know what this is, please don't let that scare you, I am very patient and I guarantee we will have a lot of fun together.****

Course Site: This is a Canvas course. Make sure you understand how to access the site for this course. We will go over some of the details of Canvas in class. I will post any announcements for class on Canvas, and it should be checked at least twice a week.

Guild Name: You will choose a name for your guild that you will use for discussion, guild-work, and projects.

XP – Experience points or, in other classes, points.

Guilds – Groups

RPG – Role-playing game

****Points for the course will be translated into XP or experience points.****

Grading Explanation:

The student will, by doing the assigned work for the course, accumulate points which will determine the final grade.

Your grade will be based on XP you earn divided by the total number of XP points from required assignments for the course.

As this is a three unit, UC transferrable course, the student is expected to do 6 hours of homework every week (2 hours outside class for every one hour inside class is the legal definition of a unit in a lecture class)

Learning Assessment:

Attendance and Participation: You are expected to attend class regularly and attendance is monitored via completion of in-class assignments. In the online format of this course, this specifically means showing up to scheduled Zoom meetings and participating in discussions and all class activities. These cannot be made up, regardless of whether an absence is excused or unexcused. Participation and presence for class discussion, lectures, and group work is a significant portion of your grade for this class. You are also expected to treat all of your classmates with respect during class discussions. I encourage frank and honest discussion but I expect it to be in the context of an academic and respectful exchange.

Reading: Most of the comprehension of the learning you will do in this course will come from careful reading of assigned texts and class discussion. You will encounter a variety of writing styles in this class: religious texts, philosophical essays, literature, poetry, plays, and historical documents. You will also be synthesizing materials written about culture with cultural products themselves. You should learn to look for the author's thesis, arguments, and key terms. If you encounter a term you do not recognize you should attempt to look it up and then ask about it in class. You should come to class and to activities with ideas about what point the author is trying to convey and how this point relates to other materials we have covered in the course.

A reading schedule will be posted each week to the Canvas site and all students should ensure they keep up with the schedule by reading the material listed as due for that day of the week.

Discussion board assignments: You will complete discussion board assignments related to the readings for the course. Every two weeks you will have a discussion board assignment that will be done with your guild. Each person will be assessed individually for a grade for these assignments but you will work with your guild-mates to complete them. Guilds are preset by me. **+25 XP each**

Paper Assignments: There will be three of these and the prompt will be provided in Canvas. **+100 XP each**

Quizzes and Tests: Some of these will be taken in Canvas as a traditional quiz and some have a more creative format. The format of these and the expectations will be outlined in Canvas before we take one. **+50 each**

Extra Credit Opportunities: These will be random and at my discretion.

Basic Expectations for Paper Assignments:

These should be typed in a word processing program such as Word or Google Docs. I cannot open .pages files so please do not submit these; they will not be graded. PDF files are also not accepted.

Please ensure that all submitted files meeting the following parameters:

- 1 inch margins on all sides
- 12 size font; either Times New Roman or Cambria. If another font is chosen, it will need to use the same spacing of letters proportional to each other that is used in Times New Roman or Cambria. If I copy and paste your document into Word and find that the proportions or spacing differ significantly and if this causes the writing to be shorter than the required length, your score will be penalized.
- MLA, APA, or Chicago Manual of Style may be used for citations and references.
- No use of a header; please include a title page.
- Double-spaced, including between paragraphs. Do not use quadruple spacing between paragraphs.
- Quotes should ideally be no longer than 2-3 lines. For longer quotations, use [ellipses to indicated portions of the quote](http://writingcommons.org/open-text/research-methods-methodologies/integrate-evidence/incorporate-evidence/613-omitting-words-from-a-direct-quotation-mla) [_ \(http://writingcommons.org/open-text/research-methods-methodologies/integrate-evidence/incorporate-evidence/613-omitting-words-from-a-direct-quotation-mla\)](http://writingcommons.org/open-text/research-methods-methodologies/integrate-evidence/incorporate-evidence/613-omitting-words-from-a-direct-quotation-mla) you wish to call attention to. (Please use the link if you aren't sure how to do this.)
- Please use spell/grammar check and ensure that you have spelled names, titles, etc. correctly and used proper capitalization and punctuation for proper names.

Grading:

Papers: 3 x 100 = 300 XP

Discussion Boards: 14 x 25 = 350 XP

Quizzes: 6 x 50 - 100 = 300 - 600 XP

Letter Grade = Rank

Level	Letter Grade
Master Dragon Slayer	A
Apprentice Dragon Slayer	B
Dragon Stable Cleaner	C
Squirrel Tamer	D
Town Cryer	F

All assignments will be graded on a standard numerical scale available on our Canvas Course Site in the General Course Resources Folder

Class Materials:

All of your assigned readings will come from material available online, although many of these are available in material print as well, and a single textbook. Please make sure to purchase the textbook edition I stipulate so you don't have problems following the weekly reading requirements and so you don't have to sell organs on the black market in order to afford the textbook. The e-materials, can be read on any device or computer:

The following are required for this course:

- [Scribd.com Membership \(\\$8.99 per month, with two months free when you use this link\)](https://www.scribd.com/g/5yuqn)
(<https://www.scribd.com/g/5yuqn>)

[_ \(https://www.scribd.com/g/5yuqn\)](https://www.scribd.com/g/5yuqn) I have constructed a [bookshelf](https://www.scribd.com/lists/23785354/RELS8)
(<https://www.scribd.com/lists/23785354/RELS8>) for us that you will be able to access once you have used the link above to sign-up for Scribd. The textbook and the majority of the readings for the class will come from this resource.

Additional Materials (not required, but suggested):

- According to our IT webpage, [Microsoft's Office 365 \(https://it.santarosa.edu/o365-students\)](https://it.santarosa.edu/o365-students) software is now available to all currently enrolled SRJC students." It is my understanding that this is free. The instructions for how to get access to this on your devices and/or computers is available via the link above.
- In order to get access to MS Office 365 you will likely need an SRJC Bearcubs email address. There is a link from the above-linked IT page but to make life easy, you can go right to the [email address request form \(https://portal.santarosa.edu/smail/EmailAccount.aspx\)](https://portal.santarosa.edu/smail/EmailAccount.aspx).

Course Policies and Procedures:

ACADEMIC FREEDOM & INTEGRITY

Teaching religion and culture is a very tricky business. I, or a student, may call something a "myth" that someone in the class believes is factually true. Or we may disagree about the philosophical principles underlying the production and maintenance of culture. We may even disagree about what culture is. Some people's religious beliefs may be offended or even directly refuted during this class. Below are some principles that are intended to govern the discussion. These are important given we are in a diverse, pluralistic and secular institution (and society, according to the Constitution) and given that probably more people have been tortured and killed over religious beliefs than any other reason in the history of the world.

Academic Freedom. No opinion is taboo. No one in my class will ever be silenced on the basis of the content of an opinion they express. Grades will never be based on the content of one's opinion. Academic freedom is a core value; education (as opposed to indoctrination) cannot really happen without it. This applies equally to instructor and student.

Respect for Diversity. While one may express any opinion in terms of its content; that freedom does not absolutely apply to the WAY something is said. As well, I will not protect anyone from the consequences of expressing an offensive opinion. Indeed, one cannot simultaneously protect freedom of speech and freedom from offence. However, I do insist that opinions are expressed with respect for persons. You may argue against someone's ideas in class, but you may not ridicule them or put them down as a person or judge them based on their membership in a particular group or classification, real or imagined.

Academic rigor. The basis of the class is that we engage in critical analysis of cultural ideas and ideals. This is not an "appreciation" class, even though it is a survey. Because of the analytical nature of the class, cherished beliefs might feel threatened regardless of the respectful intentions of the speaker. While no one will be silenced, or graded down because they express a particular opinion, everyone will be held accountable to give real evidence and valid arguments for their views. By argument I mean a series of reasons given to support a particular conclusion (belief). I use the philosophical definition of argumentation. An argument is invalid if the reasons don't actually support the conclusion. I'll say more about this in class. By critical I mean the position that a claim, a belief, to

be worthy of being accepted, must be constructed of sound reasons and are subject to be judged as true/false, better/worse on the basis of the quality of the reasons given.

Academic Integrity for Instructors. It is my responsibility to distinguish personal conviction from professionally accepted views in the discipline and present data and information fairly and objectively. The student is urged to keep in mind from the get-go that “Professionally accepted views in the discipline” are not the same as “what I learned on the internet.” In fact, those two things are usually very different. It will be my job to help you learn how to tell academic sources from bad ones and also how to use them.

Academic Integrity for Students. It is your responsibility to do your own, honest, research, study and writing, to back up what you claim with evidence and always cite--AND VERIFY when possible--your source. I provide an open door to students to get help from me and I will go out of my way to ensure that each student gets help should they need and ask for it. Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated. Copying another student's work or committing plagiarism will result in automatic zero for the assignment (first offense). Please see the Overview section below if you are not familiar with the SRJC Academic Integrity Policy or if you are unsure what academic integrity refers to.

Thank you to my colleague Eric Thompson for his hard work in developing these guidelines.

The final requirement for this course....have fun! This course should inspire learning, make you think critically, spark creativity in whatever your chosen path happens to be, open up the pages of history for your use, and provide greater enjoyment of history!

An Overview of the SRJC Academic Integrity Policy:

Types of Academic Dishonesty

Acts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Cheating:** Any act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of dishonest, deceptive or fraudulent means.
- **Plagiarism:** Any act of submitting the work of another, in whole or in part, as one's own without properly referencing the source. This includes use of direct quotations, paraphrases, ideas and facts which are not common knowledge, whether the sources are published or unpublished. This can even happen with one's work previous work.
- **Collusion:** Any act where a student knowingly or intentionally helps or is helped by another student(s) to commit an act of academic dishonesty.
- **Other Academic Misconduct:** Any act such as stealing, altering grades, forging, sabotaging the work of others, lying or any other acts of academic dishonesty as deemed by instructor.

Actions

1. **Exoneration.** If, after meeting with the student, the instructor determines the allegations are false, the student will be exonerated, and no Academic Dishonesty Incident Report form will be filed. In the case of team/collaborative projects, if an offending team member is determined to have acted alone, the other members will be exonerated.
2. Sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty may be academic and/or administrative. Team/collaborative projects where a single student may have committed an act of dishonesty can lead to sanctions against the entire team unless the offending student admits to committing the act independent of others.

Academic Sanction: If an instructor determines that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred, he or she shall apply the appropriate sanction. A failing grade for the entire course is not an allowable academic sanction. However, an assignment for which a grade of zero is given could lead to unsuccessful course completion depending on the weight of the assignment in the course grading system if it drops the student's grade below a passing average.

1. If, following the meeting with the instructor, the student admits to the incident of academic dishonesty, the instructor will determine the appropriate sanction. This can include, but is not limited to, requiring that the assignment be resubmitted, deducting grade points, and/or awarding a grade of zero on the assignment in question.
2. If the instructor considers that the incident warrants greater sanction, he/she must review the incident with the Department Chair/Program Director or Supervising Administrator and may issue a Reprimand or Removal from Class by Instructor (not to exceed two (2) class meetings) and/or indicate the need for immediate administrative review on the Academic Dishonesty Incident Report. A copy of the incident report will be placed in the student's confidential discipline file.
3. If, following the meeting with the instructor, the student disputes the instructor's findings or questions the fairness of the sanction, the instructor, Department Chair/Program Director, or Supervising Administrator or Vice President of Student Services or designee will inform the student of his or her right to file a complaint regarding this decision under the [Student Grievances/Complaints procedure](https://rightsresponsibilities.santarosa.edu/complaints-grievances) (<https://rightsresponsibilities.santarosa.edu/complaints-grievances>).

Attendance Policy:

You are permitted 3 unexcused absences during the 17 week course. Excused absences require documentation with clear evidence supporting the reason for the absence. Daily work completed in class cannot be made up regardless of the type of absence, however, if an excused absence is planned and discussed ahead of time, quizzes may be made up. Each student is eligible for one only of these make-up quizzes per semester and only in conjunction with the conditions laid out above. It is at the instructor's discretion to approve this. This is to ensure that students remain in contact with me throughout the semester so that I can assist if there are going to be absences and missed work.

Missed quizzes will be assigned a make-up date and time. It is the student's responsibility to make themselves available for the make-up quiz date and time should they need to take one. The content of make-up quizzes will not be the same as the content of the regularly scheduled quiz.

Late Submission Policy:

I do not accept late submitted assignments such as papers or discussions boards.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should register with and provide documentation to the [Disability Resources Department](https://drd.santarosa.edu/drd-home) (<https://drd.santarosa.edu/drd-home>) (**DRD**). Please bring all verification and accommodation information to class. I highly encourage any students who believe they may have a disability to visit our DRD staff to chat. They are a wonderful resource and they will be able to offer us practical ways to ensure that you are able to access all available materials and get the most out of the course.