CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Department of Religious Studies

BUDDHISM RS 390OL (14535) Fall 2016 REVISED syllabus: 8/19/2016

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Office hours: online Mondays 9-10 and Skype/talk by appointment. In person, SN418 Fri 6:30 - 7:30 AM, 2 - 3 PM. X6875

**Description:** This course examines the evolution of the concepts of Buddhism as it travels throughout Asia over the centuries. This will be achieved by close examination of classic primary texts of various Buddhist traditions, locating key concepts and acquiring vocabulary.

**Key Goals:** Students will familiarize themselves with a few primary texts of Buddhism, allowing them to critically interpret and categorize key concepts. They will develop a working lexicon of Buddhism basics for the first half of the course and then develop an outline of what does and does not change in Buddhism as it moves through time and to new places. Once familiar with three primary forms of Buddhism—Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana—students will compare and contrast the concepts in each text in an attempt to decide what is "essential" to the practice of Buddhism. (Arguments could range from seeing a "core" of universal beliefs to the idea that Buddhism itself denies anything is permanent.) Students will recognize that human practice is not always the same as human beliefs, something that is an essential critique of all religious philosophies.

**Key Skills:** Students will learn how to analyze primary texts, interpret and compare key concepts. These analytical skills outline a methodology of inquiry and application that can be utilized in any field (G.E. F.2 or S.5)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**:

**CLASS WORK:** reading and rereading with the goal of interpreting are important parts of your grade, making content and thought key elements of your writing. Because this is a 300 level class there is a certain amount of writing required (see Writing Intensive SLOs). You will be working on 2 initial posts to "discussion" questions for 6 weeks (15 points each) and 1 response to a fellow student each week as well (5 points each). This will be worth 120 points or (40%) of your grade (minimum 2400 words produced). There will also be ONE 3-page final essay (minimum 750 words), worth 80 points. There will be a final vocabulary quiz worth 100 points.

POINT breakdown:

B+ 269 - 261 C+ 239 - 231 D+ 209 - 201

A 300 - 280 B 260 - 250 C 230 - 220 D 200 - 190

A- 279 - 270 B- 249 - 240 C- 219 - 210 D- 189 - 180

**All assignments will have instructions and a checklist. POINTS or NO POINTS grading will be in effect!!! If you fail to follow any of the instructions from the 3rd week until the end of the semester, I will not grade the work and you will receive 0 pts for not being conscientious about your work.** This is not some random rule, this is the direct result of the increase in sloppy, late, or obviously last-minute work being turned in (Individuals cause consequences for all of us, that is why we should always consider our actions within the whole of society).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

John S. Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism: Sources and Interpretations*, Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 3rd ed.

ADDITIONAL reading will be found online on Moodle under “Online Readings.” The other main text is Robinson/Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, Wadsworth Publishing Co, 1997, 4th ed. is online as a PDF, which is why we are using the older edition so you don't have to buy the book. Other excerpted readings will be in the folder. The only other sources you may use for your own edification is the *Encyclopedia of Religion* is available in both electronic source or book if you happen to be in the Oviatt library or the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, though use our texts first for definitions, link [http://plato.stanford.edu/search/searcher.py?query=Buddhism](http://plato.stanford.edu/search/searcher.py?query=Buddhism%20). Otherwise NO OUTSIDE SOURCES ALLOWED! 50% loss of points if assignment uses sources other than what is assigned. 0 points with no possibility of make up if this is also uncited (plagiarized). NO EXCUSES.

**DISCUSSION BOARD INSTRUCTIONS**

*Discussions* due for each week are posted on the Discussion Board. You will put up an INITIAL POST to each of the 2 questions no later than 11:55 p.m. on Friday night. Your posts should be at least 150 words or 1 paragraph. They can be longer but NOT shorter, and evidence has shown that those who just worry about the minimum word count instead of content are not doing A or B work.

THEN you will respond to ONE of your peer's initial posts with another 100 words by the Sunday after your initial Friday post. Your response will be a QUALITY comment about the writer's observation AND must add additional facts and/or can be a comparison to your own comments. DO NOT simply like/agree/disagree with what the person said NOR are you to critique their writing (that's my job), instead you need to say WHY you did or didn't understand their conclusion(s) and offer an example or additional analysis of your own as proof.

All discussion board comments should :

* be written in complete sentences and in Standard Written English.
* not include vulgar, rude, or insulting language. BE AWARE that this is an ACADEMIC exercise that has nothing to do with your personal faith. You read everything as text from the point of view of the faith we are studying. ANY comments referring to other beliefs as wrong, untrue, or in judgmental fashion is insulting. Be aware of your personal "filters" and try to read even things you think you know with a fresh eye and open mind.
* represent academic discourse (though it is often insightful to include “personal” examples, stories, etc.) nevertheless your conclusions must be academic.

Your discussion board participation will be evaluated according to the following:

1. If you produce a sufficient quantity of prose on a weekly basis in the manner requested, it will be hard for you to get fewer than **70-79%** (total for all the discussions for the s emester).
2. If, in addition to (1) above, you are engaged, you struggle, you open up, and you deal with the difficult, it will be hard for you to get fewer than **80-85%**.
3. If, in addition to (1) and (2) above, you demonstrate significant improvement from the beginning of the semester to its end, it will be hard for you to get fewer than **86-89% points**.
4. If, in addition to (1), (2), and (3) above, you demonstrate intellectual imagination, it will be difficult for you to get fewer than **90-93%**.

If you want to get more than **93%**, you need to do all of the above in the extreme.

**GENERAL ESSAY WRITING instructions:**

Your papers are short, rigorously argued essays which require that you summarize arguments, organize evidence, compare texts/claims, state a thesis, support a thesis, and develop a critical perspective on an issue or text in a very condensed format. DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE TIME, PROOFREADING, AND THOUGHT REQUIRED for an excellent college essay. MAKING EVERY WORD COUNT requires finesse, forethought, and effort.

Each essay must:

* be submitted by 11:55 p.m. on the Sunday evening they are due. Late papers will not be accepted unless previously confirmed with the professor in writing via email.)
* be typed, with single-spaced paragraphs, double-spaced between paragraphs.
* be no LESS than 750 words (equivalent of 3 double-spaced typed pages but you can go over).
* follow the directions given in the prompt.

**Essay Evaluation:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 90-100%. | * Controlled by a clear, concise, well-defined thesis, sophisticated in statement and insight. * Ideas are well developed, clearly explained, and presented in a thoughtful, sophisticated manner. Clear evidence of sophisticated, independent intellectual pursuit. * Shows a mastery of the assigned texts, offering insights and interpretations that go well-beyond ideas presented in class * Use of evidence, quotations, and textual references seems particularly apt. |
| 80-89% | * Controlled by a clear, well-defined thesis. * Ideas are well developed, clearly explained, and presented in a thoughtful manner. Clear evidence of thoughtful engagement with the material. * Clear evidence of having thoroughly read the assigned text, offering insights and interpretations that go beyond ideas presented in class * Use of evidence, quotations, and textual references is effective. |
| 70-79%  70-79% continued | * Has a general thesis or controlling idea. * Ideas are presented in an organized manner. Clear evidence of engagement with the material. * Clear evidence of having read the assigned text. * Use of evidence, quotations, and textual references is appropriate. |
| 60-69% | * No thesis, or one that is extremely vague. * Tends to ramble. Does not get to the point. Contains extraneous information. * Demonstrates a familiarity with the assigned text(s). * Claims not supported with appropriate textual evidence. |
| 59 % or less | * Seems to have been done in haste. * Suggests a superficial understanding of the text(s) and assignment. * Intellectually weak. * Poorly written |

**Top 10 Errors on Microthemes (short essays)** From **Andrew Evans, Indiana University** (with additional notes added by me)**.**

**1. The essay does not answer the question.** Many students in this course, especially in the beginning of the semester, tend to write essays that do not address or answer the question. Your essay should include an introductory paragraph that answers the question in one or two sentences. This will provide your essay with a thesis. Avoid essays that simply summarize events or plot - these papers do not answer the question and usually receive zero points.

**2. No structure.** Your essay should have a logical structure that includes an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. If your microtheme is one large paragraph, then your paper has no framework to guide the reader. Each paragraph in your paper should make a separate point. Write an outline before you begin writing in order to give your paper a structure.

**3. A thesis that argues nothing.** Another common error is a thesis that seems to address that question, but actually says nothing. For example, in answer to the question, "In the Bhagavad Gita how does Krishna get Arjuna to understand that life is impermanent? Student’s who DO NOT have any argument in mind often write:

BAD "In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna gets Arjuna to understand that life is impermanent in important ways." (THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT NOT TO WRITE!) What are those ways? This sentence simply restates the question without answering it. A thesis should be specific and meaningful.

GOOD “In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna convinces Arjuna that all physical life is impermanent and the spirit is eternal, so killing the body is not an end.”

**4. Unexplained quotes.** DO NOT assume that passages quoted from sources will explain themselves. Quotes must be preceded or followed by at least a sentence or two that explains what it tells us and where it fits in your argument.

**5. Confusion about voices.** Many students confuse the voice and opinions of the author they are writing about with their own voices and opinions. When answering a question about Jean Jacques Rousseau's view of women in Emile, for example, be careful not to present his opinions as if they were your own. If, in your paper, you write:

"Women should be educated to be subservient and obedient."

then the reader will think this is your own opinion. If, on the other hand, you write:

"According to Rousseau, women should be educated to be subservient and obedient."

Then it is clear to the reader that you are discussing Rousseau's views, not your own.

**6. Tense shift.** A common stylistic error is switching between past and present tense over the course of an essay. You should use the same tense consistently throughout your paper. Here is an example:

"Elizabeth and Mary were disrespectful towards there sister. They look down on Anne and treat her like dirt."

The first sentence uses the past tense while the second uses the present tense. This mistake is easy to catch by checking your work carefully. And did you spot the egregious typo???

**7. Unnecessary words.** Effective and clear writing avoids unnecessary words. The following sentence is wordy and confusing:

"Basically, in the book *Germinal*, Catherine was expected to do lots of different stuff around the house, and she was supposed to work in the mines all the time too."

By omitting needless words and combining phrases, this sentence becomes clearer and more effective:

"In *Germinal*, Catherine was expected to work not only around the house but in the mines too."

**8. No page references or citation.** When using a quote or an idea from any source, you should ALWAYS provide an in-text reference, e.g. (Smith, 98). FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS CLASS, I am more concerned with what you think and understand than you regurgitating someone else’s ideas. YOU CANNOT USE ANY OUTSIDE OR ONLINE SOURCE other than what was required for this class for quotes, and you MUST CITE YOUR SOURCE FOR ANY NON- COMMON KNOWLEDGE INFORMATION, otherwise it is plagiarized. My determination that something is plagiarized results in 0 points for the assignment. There are no magical coincidences that you happened to write or mirror another source with your writing. Mathematical probability is decidedly against this happening, requiring infinite time and attempts, therefore impossible in reality. (additional information from Dr. Wilkerson)

**9. Some common grammatical mistakes.** Simple grammatical errors often detract from otherwise excellent papers. The following words are often used incorrectly:

* **it's and its** "It's" is the contraction for "it is," as in "It's raining today." (See also 10 below.) "Its" without an apostrophe is a possessive, as in "The flag in all its glory…"
* **there, their, they're** "There" is spatial, "over there." "Their" is possessive, " Their home's are in the same neighborhood." "They're" is a contraction of "they are."
* **effect and affect** "Effect" is a noun, as in "The effect of the stock market collapse was a panic among investors." "Affect" is the verb, as in "The collapse of the stock market affected millions of people."
* **For more help: http://www.grammar-monster.com/**

**10. Use of contractions.** Contractions, like "can't" and "isn't," should NOT be used in formal writing. One should also AVOID the personal pronouns I, you, he, and she.

**PLAIGIARISM:** ZERO TOLERANCE.

**plagiarize**   /'pledrz/ ( also **plagiarise** ) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mwbw9KF-ACY> → ***verb***  [with obj.] take (the work or an idea of someone else) and pass it off as one's own.

• take the work or an idea of (someone) and pass it off as one's own.

- DERIVATIVES **plagiarizer** ***noun*** .

(From: "plagiarize verb"  *The Oxford Dictionary of English* (revised edition). Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford University Press, 2005. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press.

CSUN Academic Dishonesty: http://www.csun.edu/bus302/Course/Materials/AcademicHonesty/academic.dishonesty.pdf

2 of the most common forms of plagiarism are:

1. Paraphrase: Prompt acknowledgment is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in your own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “to paraphrase Locke’s comment . . .’’ and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. ANYTIME you copy the order, phrasing, argument of someone else and simply change a few words, you are plagiarizing if you don't cite it. MAKE it a habit of, as you write, adding in-text citations (Strong 36). This will save you time and point loss later.

3. Borrowed Facts or Information: Information obtained in one’s reading or research which is not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. Examples of common knowledge might include the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc. YOU ARE REQUIRED to find CSUN’s Academic Dishonesty policy and copy and paste the first 2 lines (just type “academic honesty” in the Search CSUN box and then pick the PDF titled “ACADEMIC DISHONESTY” student version.) in the body of your email no later than Jan 31st. Please read this as I will hold you responsible for understanding it. WHEN IN DOUBT, use a citation…especially since you must use one for EVERY comment that is not common knowledge.

**AND NOW FOR SOMETHING PEDAGOGICAL...**

**VARIOUS STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME DESCRIPTIONS:** These are meant to help the student understand the pedagogical intention or how the academy defines the purpose of college work.

**COURSE SLOs:**

1. Identify and define the major Buddhist schools and their philosophies.

2. Ability to analyze Buddhist texts and describe in detail the central teachings and practices of Buddhism.

3. Demonstrate an understanding of the variations of Buddhism in the context of diverse Asian cultures.

4. Describe the growth of Buddhism in the West, especially in the United States.

**GE SLOs:** Goal: Students will understand the diversity and multiplicity of cultural forces that shape the world through the study of cultures, gender, sexuality, race, religion, class, ethnicities and languages with special focus on the contributions, differences, and global perspectives of diverse cultures and societies.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Describe and compare different cultures;
2. Explain how various cultures contribute to the development of our multicultural world;
3. Describe and explain how race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion , sexuality and other markers of social identity impact life experiences and social relations;
4. Analyze and explain the deleterious impact and the privileges sustained by racism, sexism, ethnocentrism, classism, homophobia, religious intolerance or stereotyping on all sectors of society;
5. Demonstrate linguistic and cultural proficiency in a language other than English.

**Religious studies SLOs:** 1. Ability to interpret religious texts and other cultural phenomena (such as rituals, myths, architecture) that have religious presuppositions or implications.

2. Think empathetically and critically about conflicting religious claims.

3. Ability to use cross-0cultural methods of religious inquiry and analysis.

**Writing Intensive (GE Designation WI)**

Goal: Students will develop their abilities to express themselves and the knowledge they have obtained through practicing various forms of writing within different disciplinarry contexts. Writing intensive courses will build upon the skills gained in the Analytical Reading and Expository Writing section of Basic Skills. In each WI course students will be required to compete writing assignments totaling a minimum of 2500 words.

WI SLOs:

1. Develop and clearly define their ideas through writing.

2. ethically integrate sources of various kinds into their writing;

3. Compose texts through drafting, revising and completing a finished product;

4. Express themselves through their writing by posing questions, making original claims, and coherently structuring complex ideas.

5. Revise their writing for greater cogency and clarity;

6. Utilize adopted communication modes and documentation styles of specific disciplines (MLA, APA, Chicago, CBE, etc.) where appropriate.

**GENERAL GRADING RUBRIC:**

Qualities of A writing:

1) Contains a well-developed, clearly stated thesis or statement sentence.

2) Stays focused on topic and completely answers prompt (when applicable).

3) Uses evidence from assigned texts, with quotes and explanations of those quotes.

4) Is logically organized and information is accurate.

5) Is written at a college level, paying attention to style, word choice, flow, transitions, paragraph cohesion, and is PROOFREAD. Also follows all instructions given by instructor.

6) Shows independent and critical thought.

Qualities of B writing:

1) Clear statement, but underdeveloped.

2) Generally addresses topic.

3) Evidence is not always relevant or forgotten.

4) Some organizational problems.

5) Not proofread, weak transitions, other marks of rushed or inadequately considered work.

Qualities of C writing:

1) Some attempt to answer the question/issue but no real thesis or statement.

2) Disorganized, stream of consciousness writing, no transitions, irrelevant or wrong evidence.

3) Lack of originality, simply parrots texts or over-generalizes.

4) Too short/long, doesn’t follow instructions, misuse of language or terminology, not proofread.

Qualities of D writing:

1) Late or untyped work.

2) No statement, little if any evidence, off topic.

3) Sloppy writing, grammatical errors, frequent misspellings, ignored previous corrections.

Qualities of F writing:

1) Not turned in or very late.

2) Extemporizing, pejorative or offensive statements, ignored previous corrections.

Advice for saving yourself time and completing this class successfully:  
Take thorough notes as you read, keeping the instructions spelled out in the syllabus in mind as you read so you know what you want to write down. IMPORTANT!!! Putting page numbers next to your comments and jotting down the first few words of a quote WITH the page number will save you HUGE amounts of time and frustration when you write. You will have to REREAD sections, as most of you will be unfamiliar with these texts. Don't overestimate your memory (unless it is eidetic) or underestimate the level of reading expected from an advanced class.

**RS 390OL Buddhism SCHEDULE (Subject to change as needed)**

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| --- | --- |
| **Week/Date**  **READ THIS SYLLABUS!** | **Assignments are due the week assigned unless otherwise noted. This is an online class and completing assignments early is up to you HOWEVER, I teach at 2 colleges with 30-49 students per class so I will keep up with the grading as I have scheduled during the semester and not customized to individuals. We all have hectic lives so if you are going through a rough patch then email me BEFORE you get too behind. Finish things in order listed.** |
| **INTRODUCTION: The Historical Buddha in India** | |
| **Week 1:**  **Aug 29 -Sep 4** | **VIEW ONLINE:** 3 Introductory PowerPoints. NOTE: you will need to watch it in "Slide Show" view so that the voice-over starts automatically. If you can't figure that out, email me or simply click on the little speaker on the page to hear the comments.  **ONLINE READING:** Robinson Ch 1 and 2 online reading (total: 44 pp)  While you are reading, jot down questions you have about the reading and don't forget to put the page number as well. Also if you found the answer/explanation later (again, don't forget the page number!) as this will be good for the discussions and essays. QUESTIONS to consider while reading: Who was the historical Buddha, what changed his view of life? What does his response tell you about Siddhartha? |
| **Legends about the Buddha and early followers** | |
| **Week 2: Sep 6 - 11** | **Read**: Strong Ch. 1 pages 1-36, thru section 1.7.4; Robinson pages 51-58, thru section 3.2.1 (total: 44 pp)  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: What does the historical Buddha advocate one must do to escape suffering? Consider the Robinson with these readings, is the Buddhist world view simply pessimistic? Why is it important to understand the language of Buddhism in its earliest historical context? (Think about the difference in the meaning of Nirvana--extinguish vs unbind.) What other ideas caught your attention? What does Buddhism mean by "suffering?"  **ASSIGNMENT:** DISCUSSION #1 Read and respond to the "discussion" questions. Initial answers to the questions by 11:55 pm Friday the 9th and response to another class member by 11:55 pm Sunday the 11th. |
| **Week 3:**  **Sep 12 - 18** | **Read:** Strong Ch 1 pages 36-55, 1.8 thru end of chapter: Robinson 62-67, 3.3 (total: 25 pp)  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: How does the hierarchy of being help define the Buddhist world view? Simply put, what is Karma? How do the 4 Noble truths get the neophyte Buddhist started on the 8 fold path?  What do the dispute over relics and the inclusion of images tell us about worshipers and their "needs?" |
| **The Sangha** | |
| **Week 4:**  **Sep 19 - 25** | **Read**: Strong 56 - 68, beginning chapter 2 thru 2.1.4; 74-75 section 2.2.1; 77-78 section 2.2.3; 86-96 sections 2.4.1 thru end of chapter 2. (total: 29 pp)  CLARIFICATION: While some of your reading is referring only to monks and nuns, be aware that for this class we consider the sangha to be both laity and monastics. Also, pay attention to who you are reading about. Many rules and stories are about only monks and nuns, so do not assume laity must also comply.  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: Why tell stories about conversion (it is an important aspect in many religions)? What would be the reason for the "Buddha's" sexism (or as your text suggests the male monks who refined the oral traditions into writing) in considering female ascetics? (Before you jump to Western conclusions remember that we are talking about 2500 years ago in India, where there are still gender issues of varying degrees by region. Also keep in mind the original status of the Siddhartha. Finally, be realistic about a woman's life "on the streets" even today.)Tie together the hierarchy of beings your read about before and the story of the Naga. How does the Nagasena story fit into "routinization" of Buddhist monastic life.  **ASSIGNMENT:** DISCUSSION #2 Read and respond to the "discussion" questions. initial answers to the questions by 11:55 pm Friday the 23rd and response to another class member by 11:55 pm Sunday the 25th. |
| **The Dharma and Theravada Buddhism** | |
| **Week 5:**  **Sep 26 - Oct 2** | **Read**: Strong Ch 3 pages 97-110, beginning of Ch 3 thru 3.3.1; 114-120, 3.4 thru 3.4.3 (Theravada); 138 to 143, 3.6 thru 3.6.2 (total : 24 pp).  **ONLINE:** View the reminder Powerpoint about Theravada Buddhism.  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: What is "impermanence" and how does Nagasena (the gifted monk we read about in the Sangha section) teach King Milinda to understand its complexities? Or if you'd prefer to really dabble in the abstract 3.6.2 should get you thinking. What is "the Middle Way" and how does it avoid "eternalism or annihilationism?" (The Man Who Lost His Body" is an interesting answer isn't it?) 3.6.1 is just to remind you, like so many other religions today (the monotheisms are particularly obvious in their denominations), Buddhism was not spared the worldly conflicts over doctrine. |
| **Mahayana Compassion** | |
| **Week 6:**  **Oct 3 - 9**  **Week 6:**  **Oct 3-9 continued** | **Read**: Strong 145 - 167, beginning of chapter 4 thru 4.3.3; 173 - 175, 4.4 thru 4.4.1; 181 - 187, 4.4.4 thru end of chapter. Robinson Chapter 4, 82-98. (total: 36 pp)  **Online**: Powerpoint on Mahayana Buddhism.  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: How is Mahayana a game changer and what role does "compassion" play? Skillful Means (upaya) as represented in "The parable of the burning house" is essential to Mahayana Buddhism, but what does it mean? Interesting how "wisdom" is usually gendered female, even in extremely patriarchal societies. In keeping with the Mainstream idea of "no-self" (Nagasena and the chariot), Mahayana "emptiness" is the even more abstract philosophical contemplation...do you find it more or less "enlightening?" Nagarjuna is probably one of the most challenging Buddhist thinkers of all your readings...so accept the challenge and take the time to really ponder his "tetralema." Before you do, make sure you understand ultimate vs conventional truth.  **ASSIGNMENT:** DISCUSSION #3 Read and respond to the "discussion" questions. Initial answers to the questions by 11:55 pm Friday the 7th and response to another class member by 11:55 pm Sunday the 9th. |
| **Buddhism in China, Daoism** | |
| **Week 7:**  **Oct 10 - 16** | **View:** Powerpoint on Chinese Buddhism and what Chinese culture added to make it uniquely "Chinese." Includes a few slides on Daoism.  **Read**: Robinson 170 - 183, 8.2 thru 8.4.2; 186 - 198, 8.5.1 thru 8.5.3; 199 - 200, 8.5.5; skip section A,B,C 206 - 206, read 8.5.5 D "Ch'an and the Arts" 206 - 207. Strong 290, chapter 8 intro; 294 - 300, 8.3 thru 8.4; (total: 34 pp).  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: Remember the Robinson is the historical introduction so you will be reading about the "Sinicization" of Indian Buddhism. Culturally contrary to Chinese culture, Buddhism eventually gained a strong following and presence in China, how did this happen? (The PowerPoint should be very helpful.) Routinization, or the codification of practices was important in China and we see this in the strong readings. What seemed to be the goal of Chinese monasteries? |
| **Week 8:**  **Oct 17 - 23** | **Read**: Strong 303 - 306, 8.5.2. ONLINE READING: De Bary 166 - 178; 207 - 225. (33 pp)  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: Practices were also considered important to enlightenment, even though the texts were primary for "right mind." The DeBary reading offers some interesting original translated texts, one of the most important is the Chan Platform Sutra. How does it branch into the distinct concepts of Vajrayana Buddhism? What might Chan be a reaction to in Chinese Buddhism?  **ASSIGNMENT:** DISCUSSION #4 Read and respond to the "discussion" questions. Initial answers to the questions by 11:55 pm Friday the 21st and response to another class member by 11:55 pm Sunday the 23rd. |
| **Vajrayana Buddhism and Buddhism in Tibet** | |
| **Week 9:**  **Oct 24 - 30** | **View:** Powerpoint on Tibetan Buddhism and what the Bon religion added to make it uniquely "Tibetan."  **Read**: Strong 256 - 277, beginning of chapter 7 thru 7.5. Robinson 123 - 134, 6.3 thru 6.3.5; (total: 32 pp).  CLARIFICATION: Last semester a student was completely disturbed by the unusual aspects of Tibetan Buddhism found in the readings. Let me remind you that what you are reading are simply excerpts and in no way represent all of any form of Buddhism we have read about. The selections offer the most unique Tibetan cultural aspects that Buddhism had to adapt to. Please note, the PowerPoint has a page on the current Dalai Lama and links to his website and bio. Please check it out for a modern representative of Tibetan Buddhism.  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: The Bon religion still exists in what was once Tibet and is a shamanistic religion that dealt with the harsh environment via a belief in demons. Padmasambhava was instrumental in subduing them when he came to the Tibetan king's court to spread Buddhism. What Mahayana"tool" for teaching the dharma and beliefs allows Buddhism to adapt to every culture it encounters? (Think fire for the tool ;-) Not unlike Chinese Chan, there was an argument about sudden vs gradual enlightenment, and what was the winning argument in the excerpt 7.2? What interesting practices were added to the practice of Buddhism in Tibet? Who is the Dalai Lama to Tibetan Buddhists? (Think of ALL of his roles.) Tantric practices originated in Hinduism, what unique aspects do you see in the Buddhist interpretation and practices? |
| **Tibet and "add women to Buddhism and stir"** | |
| **Week 10:**  **Oct 31 - Nov 6**  **Week 10: Oct 31 - Nov 6 continued** | **Read**: Strong 277 - 289, 7.6 thru end of chapter 7; 306 - 311, 8.6 thru 8.6.3; 332 - 334, 9.6 (total: 18 pp).  Questions to consider while reading: The section 7.7 on politics and the Dalai Lama should inspire questions about the direct tying of religion to politics. Are human being simply "political animals" (read power hungry) or can religion and politics work together? (The issues of theocracy is very much in the news today, not only with China/Tibet but the contest between Middle Eastern religious versus secular politics.) The rest of these brief readings are on the women "problem" that men always seem to ponder. As if female bodies aren't natural. This is because, even today, we gender the "norm" as male...ignoring the fact females are also "normal." Why do societies (BOTH men and women) continue to use only males as the "right" norm and reject the feminine even when Buddhism says women can achieve enlightenment AND the first followers were women? You will have to think about previous readings to compare to some of these readings. Is it really about pollution, as the Japanese excerpt states, if they recognize that even though feces and urine are also "impure" only a woman should stop chanting during her period? What are the Buddhist arguments against sexism?  **ASSIGNMENT:** DISCUSSION #5 Read and respond to the "discussion" questions. Initial answers to the questions by 11:55 PM Friday the 4th and response to another class member by 11:55 pm Sunday the 6th. |
| **Buddhism in Japan** | |
| **Week 11:**  **Nov 7 - 13** | **View:** Powerpoint on Japanese Buddhism and what Shinto added to make it uniquely "Japanese."  **Read:** Strong 315 - 323, beginning of chapter 9 thru 9.3; 326 - 331, 9.5 thru 9.5.2. Robinson 241 - 257, beginning of chapter 10 thru 10.5.3; 264 - 270, 10.5 thru end of chapter 10. ONLINE READING: de Bary 349 - 351, "Dedication to the Lotus" and "Condemnation of Honen" (total: 38 pp).  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: Prince Shotoku added honoring Buddhist ideas in his "constitution" for Japan in the 6th century CE. Because of the highly stratified society in Japan, Buddhism plays a much different role in each of the strata: aristocrats, samurai, and the rest of the population. Zen is the Japanese version of Chan, can you see the similarities? Pureland is an example of single-practice Buddhism in Japan tied to Mappo theory explained in the powerpoint. How does single-practice Buddhism answer the needs of the Japanese during times of stress/war? |
| **Week 12:**  **Nov 14 - 20**  **Week 12**  **Nov14 - 20**  **Continued** | **View**: Marathon Monks of Mt Hiei (Transcription on moodle)  QUESTIONS to consider while reading: How did Buddhism adapt to Japanese culture? Stratified social order, warrior culture, emotional control and personal honor are in the extremes in Japanese culture. One of the more unique aspects of Buddhism is its use as a form of emotional control and pride for the samurai warriors and how might the historical Buddha view this as one from the warrior class himself?  **ASSIGNMENT:** DISCUSSION #6 Read and respond to the "discussion" questions. Initial answers to the questions by 11:55 PM Friday the 18th and response to another class member by 11:55 pm Sunday the 20th.  **ASSIGNMENT:** Send an email letting me know what your choice is for the last essay by Nov 20th. You will watch any movie/TV show/or special report OR visit a Buddhist temple in the area, and write an essay regarding Buddhism in the West or in Western pop culture. Please see the "Choices" sheet on Moodle. If you want to do something not on the list, you must email me first with your suggestion and get my approval. Don't forget to read the complete essay prompt on Moodle. This is due Dec 11th, before 11:55 pm. |
| **Week 13**  **Nov 21- 27** | **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!** |
| **Buddhism in the West** | |
| **Week 14:**  **Nov 28 - Dec 4** | **Read**: Strong all of chapter 10. ONLINE READING: Williams/Queen 71- 84 (total: 37 pp)  Questions to consider while reading: The readings show pop culture and 19th century Western Orientalist interest in Asian religions, feminist writing, and then American adaptations of Buddhist practices. Some monotheists find Buddhism non-threatening because there is no god and so it is not a problem for them. And the "engaged Buddhists" in California applying Buddhist philosophy to social and environmental issues. The last reading is an academic secondary source analyzing Western Buddhists. What do you think of their observations?  Don't forget to turn in your final essay this week. |
| **WEEK 15 Dec 5 - 11** | **Take the final vocabulary quiz anytime before 11:55 pm May 15.**  **Make sure you have double checked all your points and work for the semester.** |
| **Finals Week Dec 12 - 18** | Make sure you continue checking your emails from me in case there is something missing or I have questions for you. I will send out a final general email telling you when I am submitting grades and that will be the last time you can clarify what your grade is before I finalize them. |