Institute of Buddhist Studies
Graduate Theological Union

Course Description and Syllabus

Course: HR 3040 Zen Buddhism: Introduction to Meditation
Instructor: Rev. Daijaku Judith Kinst Ph.D.
            Ph. (415) 395-8301 Email: Daijaku@shin-ibs.edu
Semester: Spring 2012
Units: 3

Description of Course Content
This is an introductory course aimed at developing a good basic understanding of and experience in Zen Buddhist meditation practices. We will explore teachings on the Soto Zen practice of shikantaza “just sitting” as well as koan practice in both the Soto and Rinzai traditions. Participation in meditation practice as well as discussion of traditional and contemporary literature on Zen meditation practice are essential aspects of the class. We will also read and discuss writings that focus on Zen meditation practice as it occurs in ritual, bowing, and ordinary activities such as cooking. Consideration of Zen meditation practices as they relate to fundamental Buddhist teachings and an interfaith context will also be included. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Summary of Educational Purpose and Learning Activities
1. Provide a sound introduction to the philosophy and practice of Zen Buddhist meditation including shikantaza and koan practice.
2. Develop experience in and an understanding of Zen Buddhist meditation practices through instruction and meditation practice in class.
3. Develop an understanding of principles central to understanding Zen Buddhist meditation practice through reading and discussion of central texts.
4. Explore the relevance of Zen Buddhist meditation practices for the student’s spiritual and religious life through dialogue, personal reflection, and meditation practice.
5. Consider Zen meditation practices in relation to the wider Buddhist world and an interfaith context.

Assignments
1. Participation in class meditation sessions and discussion of teachings and texts.
2. Each week a one page paper focused on week’s topic/reading. Papers will be presented in class as a part of class discussion. Questions, critiques and opposing positions are welcome.
3. Visit to a Zen temple or practice center for zazen instruction, participation in a scheduled period of meditation and one other activity such as a lecture, ritual, or teaching. A two page paper relating your experience to specific class readings. A list of local centers will be given.
4. Commitment to a daily practice of meditation and a personal reflection journal. Journal entries are for your personal use.
5. Final 10 – 12 page paper developing a theme or specific aspect of class material. A class presentation and 5 page paper may be done instead of final paper.
Criteria for Evaluation

1. The nature and depth of any course is dependent upon class participation, none more than a class such as this. Regular class attendance and participation are essential criteria for evaluation.

2. Participation in mediation sessions and discussion of key topics in class.

3. Weekly written response paper, brought to class on the day material is discussed.

4. Visit to Zen practice center and two page paper relating your visit to material covered in the class. Paper due 5/3/12

5. Final 10 – 12 page paper or presentation with write up.

Grading

Pass/Fail or Letter Grade.

Required Reading


3. Course Reader

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics/Reading</th>
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| 1.   | 2/2  | Introduction/Course Overview  
How to take this course; Review of syllabus and reader; General principles. |
| 2.   | 2/9  | How to Practice Zazen – the basics.  
Fundamentals of Zen meditation - physical, mental, and emotional posture.  
Texts: Loori, AJS pp. 95 – 100.  
Loori, SWK pp. XI – XIII, 1 - 15  
Course Reader:  
Okamura, S. (Ed.). “*How to do Zazen*” & “*Manners in the Zendo*” In *Shikantaza: An Introduction to Zazen*. pp. 22-34  
Ayayama, “*The ABC of Meditation*” In *Walking on Lotus Flowers*.  
(M.Batchelor Ed.) pp. 48 – 52. |
| 3.   | 2/16 | Historical context : Chan & Zen  
Loori, SWK pp. 17 – 74. |
| 4.   | 2/23 | Roots of Zen Practice & the Korean Perspective  
Texts: Loori, AJS pp. 11 –19, 117 – 126  
Loori, SWK pp. 75 – 115, 231 - 236  
5. 3/1 Fukanzazengi, Zazenshin, Shikantaza and the Nature of Koan Practice
Loori SWK pp. 117 – 148
Course Reader:
Hagan, S. “Practice” In Buddhism Plain and Simple. pp. 95 – 109

6. 3/8 Kooan Traditions and Dialogues
Texts: Loori, SWK 151 – 183, 241 – 251
Course Reader:
Osaka, K. “On Enlightenment, Koans, and Shikantaza” In On Zen Practice.
Yasutani, H. Kooan Practice and Shikantaza” In On Zen Practice. pp. 97 – 100.

7. 3/15 Thinking, Non Thinking: Meditation and the Discursive Mind
Texts: Loori AJS pp. 25 – 53, 127 – 144
Course Reader:
Cook, F. D. “Introduction” In How to Raise and Ox. pp. 1 – 18.
Kim, H.J. “What is Non-Thinking” In Dogen on Meditation pp. 87 – 91
Katagiri, D. “Burning the Flame of Life” & “Nonthinking” & “Mindfulness as the Middle Way” In Returning to Silence. pp. 27 – 30.

8. 3/22 Genjo Koan
Texts: Loori AJS 67 – 70, 105 - 116
Course Reader:
Genjo Koan
Yasutani, H “What is Shobogenzo? What is Genjo Koan” In Flowers Fall.
pp. 1 - 12
Cook, F. H. “The Importance of Faith” In How to Raise and Ox. pp. 19 – 32.
pp. 61-64, 161 – 163, 120 - 137.

3/29  Reading week

9. 4/5 Keizan and Hakuin and the Modern Kooan Tradition
Texts: Loori SWK pp. 162 — 228
Course Reader:

10. 4/12 Zazen Off the Cushion: Principles, Rituals and Precepts
Texts: Loori, AJS pp. 55 – 66, 101 – 104
Course Reader:
Cook, F. H. “Giving Life to Our Lives” In How to Raise an Ox. pp. 73 – 83.
Suzuki, S. “Bowing” In Zen Mind Beginner’s Mind pp. 43 – 47.
Wright, D. “Introduction: Rethinking Ritual Practice in Zen Buddhism” In Zen Ritual. (S. Heine & D. Wright Eds.) pp. 3-15

11. 4/19 Diversity of Practice: Study and Expression
Course Reader:

12. 4/26 Diversity of Practice: Women’s Traditions
Course Reader:
Kahawai Koan Collection Published Kahawai pp. 16 – 22.

13. 5/3 Temple visit paper due
A Banquet of Koans and Stories
Text: Loori, SWK pp. 231 – 285
Course Reader;
Murphy, S. Nyogen Senzaki, Sekei-an, Soen Nakagawa In One Bird One Stone pp. 8-13, 24-25, 78 – 81.
Suzuki, S. Selections from To Shine One Corner of the World.

14. 5/10 Expressing Realization: Contemporary Teaching Voices
Texts: Loori AJS pp. 145 - 173
Loori SWK pp. 273 – 339
Course Reader:
Magid, B. “Your Ordinary Mind” In Psychoanalysis and Buddhism. pp. 251 – 286

15. 5/17 Final Class