

**Institute of Buddhist Studies**  
Graduate Theological Union

**Course Description and Syllabus**

**Course:** HRPS 3016  
Psychological Aspects of Buddhism II: Dialogues with Contemporary Western Psychology  
**Instructor:** Daijaku Judith Kinst MFT, Ph.D.  
Ph. (415) 477-0198 Email: [Daijaku@shin-ibs.edu](mailto:Daijaku@shin-ibs.edu)  
**Semester:** Fall 2012  
**Units:** 3

**NOTE: There are no prerequisites for this class.**

**Description of Course Content**

This is an introductory course aimed at developing an understanding of the relationship of Buddhist Psychology and contemporary Western Psychology. An overview of fundamental elements of Buddhist Psychology including an introduction to key relevant teachings from Abhidharma, Yogacara and Madyamika perspectives. Western psychological theories and concepts developed from Kohut, Winnicott and Stolorow and others will be brought into dialogue with these teachings. Critiques and connections by contemporary psychotherapists will form an important part of the class material.

**Summary of Educational Purpose and Learning Activities**

1. Develop an understanding of central teachings of Buddhist psychology and contemporary Western psychological theory, as well as points of commonality, convergence and difference.
2. Develop an understanding of principles central to an effective dialogue between Buddhist psychology and contemporary Western psychology.
3. Explore the relevance of this dialogue for student's professional and personal life through dialogue, writing and personal reflection.
5. Consider this dialogue in relation to the practice of psychotherapy, pastoral counseling, chaplaincy, ministry and pastoral care as well as the practice of Buddhism.

**Assignments**

1. Each week a one page paper is due at the beginning of class focused on the week's topic/reading. Papers are presented in class as a part of class discussion. Questions critiques and opposing positions are welcome. Material from clinical/pastoral practice that illustrates or challenges class material is possible for those engaged in clinical work.  
Please note: We will discuss confidentiality and parameters for any clinical/pastoral information shared at the start of class.
2. Each student will arrange for two 45 minute meetings with another student outside of class time. During this meeting one partner will be designated listener and one speaker. At the second session the roles will be reversed. As speaker you are free to discuss anything you choose for 30 minutes, but please remember that the topic should allow the listener to explore how Buddhist Psychology can aid in illuminating their understanding of our human experience. As listener you will attend to your own experience of listening, bringing to bear the elements of Buddhist Psychology covered in the class as well as the content of what is being said and the expression of the speaker.

The last 15 minutes of the meeting are at time for reflection and discussion. Following the session the listener will write a paper (no more than 3 pages) discussing how Buddhist psychology influenced, informed, or deepened your understanding of the practice of listening. Note – the topic of this paper is the experience of listening and the use of the principles of Buddhist psychology to reflect upon and understand that experience. The paper is due November 29<sup>th</sup>, but can be turned in as early as Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>.

3. Final 10-15 page paper developing a theme or specific aspect of class material or analyzing and discussing a clinical/pastoral session using class material. We will discuss topics for the final paper in class.
4. Commitment to weekly personal reflection on class material. This can be done in formal journal entries or as a reflective exercise without written content. *Note: This process is for your personal use, it is not required or expected that you share this in class.*

### Criteria for Evaluation

1. Class participation and discussion is essential for the development of an understanding of this material. Class attendance and participation are, therefore, central elements in the criteria for evaluation.
2. Weekly written response paper brought to class the day the material is discussed.
3. Participation in, and 3 page paper on, the listening exercise done with a partner outside of class.
4. Final 10- 15 page paper.

### Required Reading

- 1) Aronson, H. (2004) *Buddhist Practice on western Ground: Reconciling Eastern Ideals and Western Psychology*. Boston: Shambhala
- 2) Selections from Kinst, J. (2003) *Trust, Emptiness, and the Self in the Practice of Soto Zen Buddhism* Unpublished manuscript. (Will be available in class.)
- 3) Reader

### Course Schedule and Assignments

Week Date Topics/Reading

*Readings are listed for the week they are due and to be discussed*

- 1) 9/6/12 Introduction and overview: Buddhism(s) and Psychology(s). How to take this class. The topic of paper 1 (due Week 2) will be a reflection on your understanding of the following: What is self? How do we know and experience it? What is suffering? How is it alleviated?
- 2) 9/13/12 Considering Self, Suffering, Healing, and Liberation  
Aronson pp. xiv-xvii, 1- 9  
Reader:  
Batchelor pp.3 -11, 51 – 68 Parallel Mythologies and other readings  
Cohen pp. 3-8, 24 – 29 The Problem & At Hell's Gate  
Fortunato pp. 24 – 30 The Enthronement of the Ego and the Myth  
T. Unno pp. xviii – xxvii Prologue  
Tsering pp. xii – xvi  
Magid pp. 69 – 72 Body and Mind

- 3) 9/20/12 Terms of the Dialogue  
 Aronson pp. 19 - 40  
 Reader:  
     Tsering pp. 10 - 20  
     Safran pp. 6-34 Psychoanalysis and Buddhism as Cultural Institutions
  
- 4) 9/27/12 Fundamental Buddhist Teachings  
 Reader:  
     Harvey pp. 47 – 61 Early Buddhist Teachings.  
     Goldstein & Kornfield pp. 138 – 149 The Three Basic Characteristics  
     Cheetham pp. 154 – 158 -, 159 – 163 Senses and Skandas  
     Schematics: Robinson  
     Sircar pp. 28 – 29, 30 – 37, 42 – 45, 121  
     Tsering pp. 21 – 28, 30 – 37 (read last)
  
- 5) 10/4/12 Buddhist Practice: Dynamic Interface  
**Daijaku at Conference: Class discussion of material**  
 Aronson pp. 41 – 63  
 (Secondary material, review for later discussion) Kinst pp. 65 – 87 Practice (Soto Zen)  
 Reader:  
     Magid pp. 1 – 14, 110 – 114 Our Secret Practice & If It IS Broke...Fix It  
     Explore these:  
     Goldstein and Kornfield pp. 25 – 30 Meditation Instructions  
     Nhat Hanh pp. 112- 135 (Walking Meditation Instructions) With the Feet of the Buddha  
     Unno pp. 6 – 9 The Color of Gold  
     Shigaraki pp. 58 – 67 The Shin Buddhist Path
  
- 6) 10/11/12 Mahayana Teachings  
 Kinst pp. 22 – 65, 93 – 103  
 Reader:  
     Magid pp. 22 – 27, 43 – 52 What is the Self & Ordinary Life
  
- 7) 10/18/12 Western Psychological Basics  
 Kinst pp. 108 – 175 Fundamental Principles: A Psycholanalytic Perspective
  
- 8) 10/25/12 READING WEEK
  
- 9) 11/1/12 Models of Self  
 Aronson pp. 64 – 90 Ego On the Wall  
 Reader:  
     Shun'ei pp. 8 – 43 Living Yogacara
  
- 10) 11/8/12 Transformation and Emotions  
 Aronson pp. 91 – 127 Anger and Negative Emotions  
 Reader  
     Brazier pp. 53 – 62, 76 – 93, Object Related Identity & Conditioned View  
     Tsering pp. pp. 65– 80 Dealing with Negative Emotions (Also chart from p. 48)

11) 11/15/12 Attachment, Trust and Transformation

Aronson pp. 127 – 183 Embodied Love & Attachments East and West

Kinst pp. 176 – 195 Trust and Transformation of Self Experience

12) 11/22/12 11 – **Thanksgiving Holiday** Our day of Gratitude

Readings for this week come from a variety of perspectives and are intended to promote reflection and questions about how this discussion relates our ordinary lives.

Reader:

Kornfield pp. 40 – 55 Necessary Healing

Chodron pp. 1 - 11, 60 – 64 Intimacy with Fear & When Things Fall Apart

Batchelor 11 - 28, 170 - 179 This Need Not Have Happened, Mara & Hearing the Cries

Manuel pp. 39 - 42 Bearing Up in the Wild Winds

Steinbach pp. 89 – 93 The Stories I Live With

Zubizarreta pp. 201-205 How Can I Be Buddhist If I Don't Like to Sit

13) 11/29/12 Transformation in Buddhist Practice: Psychotherapeutic Contributions

**Listening Paper Due (Can be turned in as early as Week 12)**

Kinst pp. 195 -226

Reader:

Bobrow pp. 109-144 Coming to Life

14) 12/6/12 Buddhist Practice and Psychotherapy: Effective Dialogue.

Aronson pp. 183 – 211

Kinst pp.226 – 276

15) 12/13/12 Final Class: Review, Questions, Discussion, Critiques and Further Avenues.

For the final class bring in 1 – 3 pertinent questions that remain at the end of this study.

## References

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