

HR 2850 : Traditions of Buddhism in the West

Spring 2015: Thursdays, 2:10 - 5:00 pm

JSC Classroom 130

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2 - 4 p.m. (or by appointment)

Course description:

This course surveys the history of Buddhist traditions in the West. Beginning with 19th century colonial contact and Asian immigration through 21st century global exchanges, we will explore the various ways that Buddhists, Buddhist communities, and Buddhist ideas have come to and developed in Western contexts.

This course fulfills the “Buddhism in the West” or “Buddhism in America” requirement for the Buddhist Chaplaincy program.

GTU doctoral students are encouraged to enroll.

Previous Buddhist studies courses helpful but not required.

Format: discussion, lecture.

Evaluation: class participation, student presentation, final research paper.

Student learning objectives:

- Students will learn of the various ways that Buddhism came to Western cultural contexts via colonial contacts and globalization
- Students will be able to distinguish different Buddhist communities, their unique histories, and challenges facing them in the contemporary world
- Students will employ different methodological approaches and lenses in the study of Buddhism in Western contexts, including, among others, cultural historical, postcolonial studies, and modernity
- Students will be challenged to relate Buddhist traditions in Western contexts to their own personal career goals either in ministry, chaplaincy, or the academy
- Students will have an opportunity to develop research and critical thinking skills valuable for future research projects

Evaluations and Assignments:

Evaluations for this course will be based on:

1. Class participation (25%)
2. Student presentation (25%)
3. Final research paper (50%)

Required texts:

A course reader provided to students via Moodle.

Schedule overview:

1. February 5: Introduction to course
2. February 12: Colonialism, Nationalism, Modernity I: Introduction
3. February 19: Colonialism, Nationalism, Modernity II: Sri Lanka
4. February 26: No class: IBS Symposium at BCA National Council, San Diego
5. March 5: Colonialism, Nationalism, Modernity III: Japan
6. March 12: Colonialism, Nationalism, Modernity IV: the US
7. March 19: The Japanese-American Experience
8. April 2: Race and Racism in Theory and Practice
9. April 9: Student presentations I
10. April 16: Ethics and Engaged Buddhism I: Overview
11. April 23: Feminist and Queer Theories
12. April 30: Ethics and Engaged Buddhism II: Sex and the City
13. May 7: Consumerism, Capitalism, and Mindfulness
14. May 14: Student presentations II
15. May 21: Final papers due — No class.