

RS 227 BUDDHISM IN NORTH AMERICA

Winter 2016 Renison University College

Classes: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-11:20am in Renison classroom 1918

Office hours: Tues 11:30am, Wednesdays 1:30pm, and by appointment in Renison 1412

Professor Jeff Wilson: jeff.wilson@uwaterloo.ca, 519-884-4404 x28625

A helpful link to consult before sending email to your professors:

<http://www.wellesley.edu/socialcomputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html>

UW Religious Studies Society: www.facebook.com/UWRSSociety

Description:

In this course we will explore prominent traditions and key themes in the development of Buddhism in North America, including both Canada and the United States. Issues covered will include gender, race, discrimination, sex and power scandals, pop culture, and more. By the end of the term students will be able to explain how different varieties of Buddhism have manifested in different times and places in North America, from the 19th century to the present day.

Objectives:

- 1) Students will learn about Buddhist beliefs and practices.
- 2) Students will become familiar with how religions change as they cross cultural boundaries.
- 3) Students will consider the place of Buddhism in North America's growing religious diversity, including how it impacts non-Buddhist religions and other elements of culture.

Required texts:

We will read four books for this course. They will be made available on reserve in the Renison library, and you are encouraged to purchase them for yourself

Memoirs of a Buddhist Woman Missionary in Hawaii, by Shigeo Kikuchi

Saffron Days in L.A., by Bhante Walpola Piyananda

In Buddha's Kitchen, by Kimberly Snow

Dreaming Me, by Jan Willis

Marking:

Course marking for RS 227 is distributed into four areas. First, class attendance counts for 10%. Second, participation counts for 15%. Third, students will write four short papers in response to the assigned books. Details about those writing assignments will be provided. These papers are collectively worth 40% of the overall grade. Lastly, students will do a research project and present their findings to the class; the paper and presentation will count for 35% of the grade. Details about this assignment will be provided.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend every scheduled class, and attendance will be taken.

Failure to attend without an acceptable excuse will result in a lower grade. Each missed

class that is counted against the student will result in a loss of 1% off their final mark for the course; every late arrival to class will result in a loss of .5% off the final mark. There are two types of excusable absences. Anticipated excused absences include the following: 1) The student is away from campus representing an official university function, (e.g., participating on an athletic team). A note from a University faculty or staff member (e.g. your coach) must be provided PRIOR to the absence. 2) Required court attendance. A note certified by the Clerk of Court must be provided. 3) Religious observances. The student must notify the professor and obtain permission PRIOR to the holiday. 4) Required military duty. A note from the student's commanding officer is required.

Emergency absences include the following: 1) Serious illness or injury. A note must be provided by an attending physician. 2) Death or serious illnesses in the family when documented appropriately. An attempt to verify deaths or serious illness may be made by the instructor. In all cases the reason for the unexpected absence must be reported to the instructor within one week of the student's return to class.

Etiquette:

If you register for the course after lectures have already begun, you are responsible for finding out what you missed. There is no make-up work allowed in this course.

Laptops and all other electronic devices are to be turned off and stowed away during class time. You may use paper to take notes if you wish. Studies conclusively demonstrate that laptops and smartphones cause distraction for students and their classmates, and that handwritten notes result in better comprehension and retention than electronic ones. Students who violate the electronics policy will be asked to turn off their devices, and will have their final mark decreased. NOTE: students who need access to electronic devices for approved accessibility issues or one-time family emergency situations may ask for possible relaxation of this policy.

Students may eat and drink during class so long as it does not distract anyone else in the classroom. Therefore you should avoid smelly foods or noisy packaging. Note, however, that university policy does not allow eating during tests, and only beverages in clear, unlabeled containers are allowed during tests.

Class begins at 10am and ends at 11:20am. Students who are not seated by 10am will be marked late; students who leave before the end of class will be docked in their attendance mark. If you are unable to be in class by 10am or unable to stay until the end of class you should register for a different course instead.

Late assignments are not accepted.

Please read this syllabus very carefully. Nearly any question you may have about student responsibilities is covered here. While this course outline is not a contract, it is the guideline that we will use to manage our course, and changes will only be made in necessary circumstances and in consultation with the class.

SCHEDULE

January 5: Introduction

January 7: Early Buddhist history in North America

January 12: Jodo Shinshu

January 14: *Memoirs of a Buddhist Woman Missionary in Hawaii*
Paper due on *Memoirs of a Buddhist Woman Missionary in Hawaii*

January 19: East Asian Mahayana

January 21: Theravada

January 26: *Blue Collar and Buddha*

January 28: *Saffron Days in L.A.*
Paper due on *Saffron Days in L.A.*

February 2: Zen

February 4: Ritual Adaptations in North American Zen

February 9: *Watching the Rock Grow*

February 11: Same-Sex Marriage in North American Buddhism

February 16: Reading week

February 18: Reading week

February 23: Tibetan Buddhism

February 25: *Tulku*

March 1: *In Buddha's Kitchen*
Paper due on *In Buddha's Kitchen*

March 3: Two Buddhisms

March 8: Regionalism

March 10: Mindfulness

March 15: NO CLASS

March 17: Mindfulness

March 22: Pop Culture

March 24: *Dreaming Me*

Paper due on *Dreaming Me*

March 29: Student presentations

March 31: Student presentations

Research papers due

FURTHER INFORMATION

Accommodation for Illness or Unforeseen Circumstances:

The instructor follows the practices of the University of Waterloo in accommodating students who have documented reasons for missing quizzes or exams. See

http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/students/accom_illness.html

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>. In addition, consult <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes> for the Faculty of Arts’ grievance processes.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72>.

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course.

Cross-listed course:

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a RS/EASIA cross-list will count in a Religious Studies major average, even if the course was taken under the East Asian Studies rubric.

A respectful living and learning environment for all

1. It is expected that everyone living, learning or working on the premises of Renison University College will contribute to an environment of tolerance and respect by treating others with sensitivity and civility.
2. Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of jokes, insults, gestures, gossip, or other behaviours that are meant to intimidate. Some instances of harassment are against the law in addition to Renison University College policy.
3. Discrimination is treating people differently because of their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, colour, age, creed, marital status, or other personal characteristics. The Ontario Human Rights Code considers actions and behaviours rather than intentions.
4. If you experience or witness either harassment or discrimination, you may contact the Renison University College Harassment and Discrimination Officer at c7mcmillan@uwaterloo.ca (519-884-4404, ext. 28723).