

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUDDHIST STUDIES (MBuddhStud)

(See also General Regulations)

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to The University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

Admission requirements

MBS 1. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the Master of Buddhist Studies, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
- (b) shall hold
 - (i) a Bachelor's degree with honours of this University; or
 - (ii) another qualification of equivalent standard from this University or from another University or comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
- (c) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MBS 2. Candidates who do not hold a Bachelor's degree with honours of this University or another qualification of equivalent standard may in exceptional circumstances be permitted to register if they demonstrate adequate preparation for studies at this level and satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination.

Qualifying examination

MBS 3.

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test a candidate's formal academic ability or the candidate's ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent, and may include a project report or dissertation
 - (b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.
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Award of degree

MBS 4. To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Buddhist Studies, candidates shall

- (a) comply with the General Regulations; and
 - (b) complete the curriculum and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations as set out below.
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Length of curriculum

MBS 5. The curriculum shall extend over not less than one academic year of full-time study, or not less than two academic years of part-time study, with a minimum of 300 hours of prescribed work, and shall include examination by means of written papers and coursework assessment.

Completion of curriculum

- MBS 6. To complete the curriculum, candidates
- (a) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work; and
 - (b) where so provided in the syllabuses, shall complete and present a satisfactory dissertation in lieu of two courses on a subject within their approved fields of study, and;
 - (c) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of examination.
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Title of dissertation

MBS 7. Subject to the provisions of Regulation MBS 6(b), the title of dissertation shall be submitted for approval by not later than March 31 of the final academic year in which the teaching programme ends and the dissertation shall be presented by a date prescribed in the syllabuses; candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation represents their own work (or in the case of joint work, a statement countersigned by their co-worker(s), which shows the degree of their work) undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

Examinations

- MBS 8.
- (a) Where so prescribed in the syllabuses, coursework or a dissertation shall constitute part or whole of the examination for one or more courses.
 - (b) An assessment of candidates' coursework during their studies may be taken into account in determining their result in each written examination paper; or, where so prescribed in the syllabuses, may constitute part or whole of the examination of one or more courses.

MBS 9. Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners at their first attempt in not more than half of the number of courses to be examined, whether by means of written examination papers or coursework assessment, during any of the academic year of study, may be permitted

- (a) to present themselves for re-examination in the course or courses of failure, with or without repeating any part of the curriculum; or
- (b) to repeat a year of the curriculum and present themselves for examination in the courses prescribed for the repeated year.

MBS 10. Subject to the provisions of Regulation MBS 6(b), candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory dissertation may be permitted to submit a new or revised dissertation within a specified period.

MBS 11. Candidates who are unable because of illness to be present for one or more papers in any written examination may apply for permission to present themselves at a supplementary examination to be held before the beginning of the following academic year. Any such application shall be made on a form prescribed within two weeks of the first day of the candidates' absence from the examination.

- MBS 12. Candidates who
- (a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-examination in any written paper or any course examined by means of coursework assessment in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners under the provisions of Regulation MBS 9; or
 - (b) have failed to satisfy the examiners in any written paper or any course examined by means of coursework assessment at a second attempt; or

- (c) are not permitted to submit a new or revised dissertation under the provisions of Regulation MBS 10; or
- (d) have failed to submit a satisfactory new or revised dissertation under the provisions of Regulation MBS 10

may be required to discontinue their studies.

Examination results

MBS 13. A list of candidates who have successfully completed all the degree requirements and are to be awarded the Master of Buddhist Studies shall be published. Candidates who have shown exceptional merit at the whole examination may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates' degree diplomas.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUDDHIST STUDIES

1. PURPOSE

This programme provides students with a basic and sound understanding of Buddhist teachings and their practical usage in modern societies, for example, contemporary Buddhism, Buddhism as applied to counselling, palliative care and psychotherapy, with particular reference to the present state of scholarly research. Students will also have a chance to study and critically review Buddhism in Hong Kong, Mainland China and the region.

2. PROGRAMME DURATION

The curriculum shall extend over not less than one academic year of full-time study, or not less than two academic years of part-time study, with a minimum of 300 hours of prescribed work.

3. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

All courses are offered on a semester basis. Candidates must complete eight courses by selecting two compulsory foundation courses plus six elective courses, and may, subject to the provisions of Regulation MBS 6(b), select to offer a dissertation in lieu of two elective courses.

1. Foundation courses:

- BSTC6001. Theravada Buddhism
- BSTC6002. Mahayana Buddhism

2. Elective courses:

2.1 Languages and Texts

- BSTC6020. Basic Pali #
- BSTC6021. Basic Sanskrit
- BSTC6022. Basic Tibetan
- BSTC6060. Advanced Study of Pali (Reading Pali Suttas)
- BSTC6042. Advanced Tibetan
- BSTC6045. Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit texts (Elementary) #
- BSTC6059. Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit texts (Advanced) #
- BSTC6018. Chinese Buddhist texts: textual study and translation
- BSTC6052. Study of important Buddhist meditation texts

2.2 History and Doctrine

- BSTC6032. History of Indian Buddhism
- BSTC6044. History of Chinese Buddhism
- BSTC6013. Tibetan Buddhism: history and doctrines
- BSTC6007. Chinese Buddhist thought: a historical perspective
- BSTC6017. The nature and function of Vinaya – its historical evolution and controversies
- BSTC6049. Store-consciousness – the Yogācāra doctrine of the ālayavijñāna
- BSTC6053. The Three-nature (tri-svabhāva) doctrine of the Yogācāra
- BSTC6039. Abhidharma doctrines and controversies
- BSTC6047. Buddhist epistemology and logic
- BSTC6041. The Theravada Abhidhamma
- BSTC6046. The philosophy of the middle way (Mādhyamika) Buddhism
- BSTC6033. The philosophy of the Mere-consciousness school
- BSTC6051. The path to enlightenment in the Tibetan tradition – a study of Tsonghapa’s Lam Rim Chen Mo
- BSTC6054. The teaching of Tathagatagarbha from Nyingmapa
- BSTC6038. The foundation, path and result of enlightenment - Fourfold Dependent Origination and profound prajna paramita
- BSTC6012. Japanese Buddhism: history and doctrines
- BSTC6016. Buddhist monasticism
- BSTC6040. Appearance and reality – the Yogācāra perspective: A study of the Dharmadharmatā-vibhāga

2.3 Interdisciplinary Studies

- BSTC6058. Buddhism and society
- BSTC6006. Counselling and pastoral practice
- BSTC6011. Buddhist mediation
- BSTC6029. Studying the mind: the Buddhist resources
- BSTC6034. Mindfulness, stress reduction and psychotherapy
- BSTC6050. Buddhist Iconography and art – with special reference to the Tibetan tradition
- BSTC6055. Buddhist Psychology
- BSTC6014. Buddhism in the west: literature, doctrinal interpretation and praxis
- BSTC6004. The scientific foundation of Buddhist wisdom
- BSTC6005. Buddhism, science and human welfare
- BSTC6008. Buddhism in contemporary China
- BSTC6010. Religion, rituals and myths
- BSTC6015. Impact of Buddhism on Asian cultures
- BSTC6023. Buddhist art and thought in Asian cultures
- BSTC6028. Positioning Buddhism for today’s world

2.4 Other Courses

- BSTC6025. Dissertation
- BSTC6024. Special topics in Buddhist studies (1)
- BSTC6030. Special topics in Buddhist studies (2)
- BSTC6031. Special topics in Buddhist studies (3)
- BSTC6056. Special topics in Buddhist studies (4)
- BSTC6057. Special topics in Buddhist studies (5)

This is a whole-year course which is equivalent to two single-semester courses.

Not all elective courses listed above will necessarily be offered each year.

4. SYLLABUSES

A. Foundation courses

BSTC6001. Theravada Buddhism

The Buddha's teachings recorded in the Pali literature will be the main focus on this study. Attention is drawn to the definition of Theravada Buddhism and the differences existing between Theravada Buddhism and Early Buddhism, Early Buddhism and Pali Buddhism. Candidates are expected to study the basic concepts of Theravada Buddhism in comparison with the concepts of early Indian culture. The following concepts should be studied in detail: Buddha, Bodhisatta, Arahanta, Gods, Four Noble Truths, Dependent origination, Kamma and rebirth, Five Aggregates and twelve bases, cosmology, cultivation (Bhavana) of mind and spiritual faculties.

BSTC6002. Mahayana Buddhism

This course aims at students without previous knowledge of Mahayana Buddhism. It provides an introduction to Mahayana Buddhism in the widest sense. After a brief look at the development of Buddhism in India after the death of the Buddha, this course concentrates on the historical, philosophical and religious origins of Mahayana Buddhism in India. These include the Bodhisattva ideal; Buddhological developments; the philosophical systematizations of the Madhyamaka and Yogacara schools; the reasons for the dominant position of Mahayana Buddhism in China and an investigation on the features of the newly emerged Mahayana modernism (i.e., Japanese Buddhism).

B. Elective courses

BSTC6004. The scientific foundation of Buddhist wisdom

This course examines how some ideas in Buddhist thoughts can be analyzed scientifically. Students will learn about how Buddhist ideas can be translated into testable research hypotheses, and how methods in the social sciences could throw new light on these ideas. Emphases will be placed on how social science research could inform (a) discussions of the phenomenal world described in Buddhist writings and (b) the application of Buddhist wisdom in daily life. Methodological themes will be illustrated with concrete social science research examples in the following areas:

Why do we suffer? The role of subjective constructions
 Development of expertise and wisdom
 Language use and cognitive representation of the reality
 Mental rigidity and creativity
 Transformational constructionism and self-regulation

The course will end by visioning how the Buddhist religious traditions may add a new dimension to the science of the human psyche.

BSTC6005. Buddhism, science and human welfare

Over the last twenty years, a fruitful and increasingly powerful dialogue has developed between Eastern and Western psychologies. This course offers an overview of these developments; explores the extent to which Western science-based understandings of human nature can be developed to provide practical

elucidation of the transformation of human experience, which Buddhism promises; and discusses the implications for the promotion of peace and harmony in the world. Topics include neuroscientific, evolutionary and ecological approaches to the human being; psychological and cognitive science approaches to the nature of mind; psychosocial approaches to the nature of self: evolution and development of the 'self system'; and scientific and psychotherapeutic approaches to 'suffering'.

BSTC6006. Counselling and pastoral practice

This course aims at providing students with basic knowledge and understanding of the application of Buddhist theory and practices to counselling and personal transformation. It covers from the Buddhist perspective the psychology of perception, emotions and thoughts; basic skills and concepts in counselling; recent development and research in psychotherapy, and insights into caring for the dying and their carers. The course comprises lectures, seminars, exercises and Buddhist practices. Students should be prepared to participate in the practices and exercises in class in order to acquire an experiential as well as intellectual understanding of the subject.

BSTC6007. Chinese Buddhist thought: a historical perspective

The course examines the introduction, development and transformation of Buddhist thought in China, with special emphasis on the basic teachings and characteristics of the major Chinese Buddhist schools. Class will be conducted in Cantonese and Chinese will be used in examination.

BSTC6008. Buddhism in contemporary China

This course is designed to show the impact of the socio-economical and political conditions on Buddhism in China. It will focus on the rise and decline of Buddhism in modern China (18th – 20th century). This includes the revival in the 19th century, problems faced by the Buddhists since 1949, the remarkable changes in Buddhism after the Cultural Revolution, the place of Buddhism in current Chinese system, humanitarian Buddhism (Engaged Buddhism) and its social implications in present China, as well as Buddhism in 21st century.

BSTC6010. Religion, rituals and myths

This course will consider the central role of religion in the transition from traditional to industrial society and the problematic status of religion in the modern world. It will examine the contributions of classical social theorists, Marx, Weber and Durkheim, and also the more recent work on such issues as secularization, new religious movements, and alternatives to religion. It will ask: is religion in decline in the modern world?

BSTC6011. Buddhist mediation

By integrating the techniques of Solution-focused brief therapy and the mediation process with Buddhist theories and practices, the course will teach a model of conflict resolution which reflects the Mahayana ideal of the practice of the Way of Bodhichitta of benefiting oneself and others in being able to resolve conflicts for oneself and for others and learn about the process of change and transformation through applications of the model. Students will acquire basic knowledge of theories and practices of Buddhism and mediation in an integral approach and apply the appropriate skills to be their own mediator and to mediate other people's dispute in their peer group or community. The model of teaching will be by lecture, demonstration by videotapes or role-plays, role-play exercises in small groups and self-reflective learning.

BSTC6012. Japanese Buddhism: history and doctrines

Introduction of Buddhism to Japan in the sixth century. The Heian Period: Tendai School, Kukai's Shingon School, Honen and the Pure Land School. The Kamakura Period; Nichiren and his teachings; Zen Buddhism. The Ashikagara and Edo Periods. Japanese Buddhism since Meiji.

BSTC6013. Tibetan Buddhism: history and doctrines

This course aims at providing historical, doctrinal and sociological dimensions of Tibetan Buddhism. It mainly consists of the following topics: the historical context and events of the transmission of Buddhism to Tibet; the various Buddhist traditions of Tibet; their history, doctrinal differences and manifold socio-political spheres of influence; the history and institution of the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lama; Tibetan sacred art and symbolism and the mysticism and religious experience.

BSTC6014. Buddhism in the west: literature, doctrinal interpretation and praxis

This course discusses the introduction of Buddhism to the West; and the subsequent evolution of the major schools (including Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese Buddhism). It also examines the literary output by western scholars, their doctrinal interpretations and Buddhist praxis among the westerners.

BSTC6015. Impact of Buddhism on Asian cultures

This course attempts to discuss certain aspects of the Buddhist culture, its historical evolution, and the changes which are going on now due to the influence of other cultures. It deals, in particular, with the following topics: the main features of Mahayana Buddhism, the influence of Zen Buddhism on Japanese culture, the South Asian Buddhist culture, and Bodhisattva cult in China and the Far East. Special attention will be given to the interaction, assimilation and integration between Buddhist philosophy and the Chinese culture. This will include: the influence of Buddhist philosophy on Chinese poetry, calligraphy, painting, sculpture, architecture, gardening, fencing and dancing; the vast Chinese Buddhist literature in defence of Buddhism against Confucianism and Taoism; and study of the Chinese Buddhist apocrypha.

BSTC6016. Buddhist monasticism

This course examines the transformation of various monastic communities in different traditions in the history of Buddhism. A very important part of this course will be the study of the origin and development of Buddhist institutions from historical, political, economical, phenomenological, sociological and cultural perspective. This will be considered particularly in the Chinese context. Special attention will be given to the democratic features of the Sangha institution, monastic economy, monastic education, the role of the Sangha in society, as well as the relationship between the Sangha and the state.

BSTC6017. The nature and function of Vinaya – its historical evolution and controversies

The conflict between dismissive and dogmatic attitudes toward the practical applications of the Vinaya has existed throughout Buddhist history. It appears that both these attitudes are still being held fast, creating plenty of controversies on understanding the nature of the Vinaya and its practice. The aim of this course is to establish and clarify the true nature and function of the Vinaya. This will be done through tracing and evaluating the historically evolved transformation of the monastic codes governing

the conduct of individual monks, Buddhist institution (Samgha), monastic economy, management and education at different stages in the different traditions in response to cultural, political, geographical and social diversities. Among other things, this course intends to demonstrate that so long as the true spirit of the Vinaya is not violated, adaptation and changes of the Vinaya were and remain crucial for the survival of Buddhism in modern times.

BSTC6018. Chinese Buddhist texts: textual study and translation

This course is designed to help students to read Chinese Buddhist texts in classical Chinese. It will provide guidance for students who are interested in the translating selections from Chinese Buddhist canon. Translation of texts in the Buddhist Canon requires both language skills and an expert understanding of the Buddhist Literature. Through seminars and discussion tutorials students will consider in depth a selection of Buddhist texts of their choice. It will train them in the capacity for the original research.

BSTC6020. Basic Pali

This is an introductory course meant for those who have no knowledge of the language of Pali. The purpose of this course is to make the students more and more familiar with Pali idiom. It enables them to understand the Buddhist Sutras compiled in Pali. Duration of this course is one academic year which is divided into two semesters. In the first semester, basic grammar is taught along with Pali exercises. The course contents include the following: Pali phonetics, parts of speech, different nouns and their declension, different verbs and their conjugation, participles and their function, absolutives, sandhi, syntax and classification of sentences. The second semester is mainly devoted to the understanding and translating of selected Pali Sutras and to build up sufficient vocabularies for the students.

BSTC6021. Basic Sanskrit

The course aims at introducing students to the basics of Sanskrit grammar as a foundation for reading Sanskrit texts. It involves the completion of weekly Sanskrit/English and English/Sanskrit exercises and the preparation of short passages for reading.

BSTC6022. Basic Tibetan

The purpose of this course is to provide a working knowledge of Tibetan grammar and an ability to read the standard Tibetan texts. The major emphasis will be on the study of Buddhist texts preserved in the Tibetan Tripitaka. The course will begin with grammatical exercises and guidance for students to read simple Tibetan texts.

BSTC6023. Buddhist art and thought in Asian cultures

This course offers an examination of the spread of Buddhist traditions through India and South East (Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia) and Central Asia (Silk Road), concentrating on their character and historical impact on indigenous cultures and religions. Covering the length and breadth of Asia, the phenomenally diverse artistic traditions are considered both from the iconography and contextual approaches, as well as the standard stylistic and developmental approaches.

BSTC6024. Special topics in Buddhist studies (1)

This course is offered from time to time. Students should consult the Centre of Buddhist Studies on the content of the course on offer.

BSTC6025. Dissertation

The dissertation shall be a critical study within the field of Buddhist Studies and shall be 20,000-24,000 words in length. The title of dissertation shall be submitted for approval by not later than March 31 of the final academic year in which the teaching programme ends and the dissertation shall be presented by July 31 of the same year. Candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation represents their own work (or in the case of joint work, a statement countersigned by their co-worker(s), which shows the degree of their work) undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree. The examiners may also prescribe an oral examination on the subject of the dissertation.

BSTC6028. Positioning Buddhism for today's world

Buddhism has come a long way since Buddha first turned the wheel of Dharma in Varanasi, India. This course will first examine how Buddhism has historically adapted itself to suit the needs, customs and mentality of different people in different lands. The class will then explore together the relevancy of Buddhism in our time and how to promote it in light of today's social, educational, and political environment. Methods and techniques of presentation of the new syllabus for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination of Buddhist Studies to high school students will also be discussed. Classes will be conducted in Cantonese and Chinese can be used in coursework assessment.

BSTC6029. Studying the mind: the Buddhist resources

With the development of mind-science in the last couple of decades, Buddhism has become an important source for the contemporary study of mind. This course intends to explore some foundational issues regarding the study of the mind in a Buddhist context. They include (but are not limited to): mind-body correlation, perception, memory, recognition, emotion, consciousness, time-consciousness, self-awareness, mental training and transformation, etc. Readings include basic works of Abhidharma, Madhyamaka, Yogacara and Pramanavada. Conducted in a seminar style. Enrollment limited.

BSTC6030. Special topics in Buddhist studies (2)

This course is offered from time to time. Students should consult the Centre of Buddhist Studies on the content of the course on offer.

BSTC6031. Special topics in Buddhist studies (3)

This course is offered from time to time. Students should consult the Centre of Buddhist Studies on the content of the course on offer.

BSTC6032. History of Indian Buddhism

The course aims at providing students with a general, but not superficial, knowledge in a wide background, of the history of Indian Buddhism, in order to help them to understand more the various aspects of Buddhist culture and belief. It covers the period from the time of Sakyamuni, the

development of every stage, until its declining and the final disappearance in India in the 13th century. The focus will be on the origin of Buddhism, the nikaya Buddhism, the rising of Mahayana, and its significance to the forming and development of Chinese Buddhism. It is hoped that some Sino-Indian cultural analyses and discussion can be included at some points in teaching or lectures.

BSTC6033. The philosophy of the Mere-consciousness school

It is through examining the historical background, establishment, development, achievement and influence of the Mere-consciousness school that the course aims at providing students a clear and full picture of the fundamental thought of the mere-consciousness (Vijñaptimātrata) system of the Mahāyāna Buddhism through which students may comprehensively understand what Buddhism is and what Buddhists should do to achieve their objective of lives. It deals mainly with the following basic concepts: the phenomena of life of an individual sentient with special emphasis on the existence and operation of the store-consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna), the sixth and seventh consciousnesses together with the six kinds of mental associates (caittas); the phenomena and reality of the Universe; the process of transmigration (samsāra); the paths towards liberation and enlightenment; the nature, the subtle body and the pure land of Buddha (Mahā-bodhi and Mahā-nirvāna) with special emphasis on the transformation of defiled consciousnesses of ordinary sentient beings into pure wisdom of Buddhas; the methodology, the characteristics and the evaluation of the philosophy of the Mere-consciousness School. Classes will be conducted in Cantonese and Chinese will be used in examination.

BSTC6034. Mindfulness, stress reduction and psychotherapy

This course aims at providing students with basic knowledge and understanding of the application of Buddhist mindfulness training in stress reduction and psychotherapy. It will cover the latest research and theories of the last two decades on mindfulness training in the health sector. This is a practical as well as theoretical course. Students will take part in the eight-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Programme. They will participate in the practices and exercises during class, in order to acquire an experiential as well as intellectual understanding of the subject.

BSTC6038. The foundation, path and result of enlightenment - Fourfold Dependent Origination and profound prajna paramita

This course covers the foundation, path and result of enlightenment based on the Mahamadhyamaka teachings of the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism but with main reference from Mahayana Scriptures. The overview on profound prajna paramita is expounded in the Heart Sutra based on commentaries by ancient Indian masters following the five paths of casual vehicles and the Mantric Path. Nagarjuna's philosophy on Emptiness is explained with the Fourfold Dependent Origination from the Nyingma School as the foundation of Buddhist practice. The eight negations in the Middle Stanzas are discussed with reference to the Seventy Stanzas of Emptiness. The path of practice is Meitreyā Yogacara with focus on characteristics of phenomena. The teaching of the Three Own- natures and Three Non-natures by Vasubandhu is used as reference to Inner Transformation. The result of practice falls with the explanation of the Tathagata-garbha, with reference to Meitreyā's Uttaratantra, Nagarjuna's In Praise of Dharmadhatu and the nine metaphors of Tathagata-garbha.

BSTC6039. Abhidharma doctrines and controversies

The early part of the course will outline the historical and doctrinal background necessary for understanding the controversial doctrines to be examined in details subsequently. The bulk of the course that follows will focus on selected controversial doctrines of importance, which include:

- (i) Tri-temporal existence of all dharmas (*sarvāstitva*);
- (ii) Thought (*citta*) and thought-concomittants (*caitta*) - their ontological status, etc;
- (iii) Theories of perception;
- (iv) Karma theories of the Sarvāstivāda and the Sautrāntika;
- (v) *Arhats* and the Buddha : The difference in their Wisdom (*prajñā*);
- (vi) Theories of causes (*hetu*) and conditions (*pratyaya*);
- (vii) The Path of Spiritual Progress

The discussion on the controversies will primarily be based on the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya*, supplemented with commentarial material from the *Abhidharma-mahā-vibhāṣā*, the **Nyāyanūsārā* of Saṃghabhadra, the *Abhidharmadīpa with Vibhāṣā-prabhāvṛtti*, and the *Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośa-vyākhyā* of Yaśomitra.

BSTC6040. Appearance and reality – the Yogācāra perspective: A study of the Dharmadharmatā-vibhāga

This course is a study of the Yogācāra doctrines of Appearance and Reality, or Phenomena and Numena, as expounded in the *Dharmadharmatā-vibhāga* (*vibhaṅga*). This work is one of the fundamental texts of the Yogācāra school. Traditionally ascribed to Maitreya, it is believed to be most probably authored by Asanga, the systematizer of the school. Its purported analysis of *dharma* versus *dharmatā* is explicitly explained at the outset as that of *Samśāra* and *Nirvāṇa*. *Dharma*-s or phenomena, though in reality non-existent, are manifested on account of our mental discrimination (*vikalpa*). *Dharmatā* or Reality (*tathatā*) is the absence of the falsely superimposed duality of the perceiver and the perceived. Having first established the anitheses of *Samśāra* and *Nirvāṇa*, the text proceeds to explain how the Real is to be revealed through a process of transforming the unreal born of discrimination. This process, known as '*āśraya-parāvṛtti*', is further explained in terms of foreign defilements and *tathatā* – and in this respect, the text aligns itself with the doctrinal stance of the intrinsically pure nature of the mind.

In consideration of the fact that the majority of students here are familiar with the Chinese language, the study will primarily be based on the Chinese version of Venerable Fa Zun (辨法法性論), in consultation with the Tibetan original and Vasubandhu's commentary. However, the whole course will be conducted in English, and the students are not expected to have any knowledge of the Tibetan or Chinese language; although knowledge of Chinese will be an advantage.

BSTC6041. The Theravada Abhidhamma

The course will begin with a review of the antecedent factors that led to the emergence of Abhidhamma as a technical systematization of the Buddhist teachings contained in the Pali Suttas. This will be followed up with a discussion of the following themes: dhamma realism as the Abhidhamma view of reality and its connection with the early Buddhist analysis of the world of experience into khandha, ayatana, and dhatu; the role of analysis (*bheda*) and synthesis (*sangaha*) in the Abhidhamma methodology; levels of reality and degrees of truth (*sammuti* and *paramattha*); the category of the conceptual and the theory of expression (*pannatti*); analysis of mind into consciousness (*citta*) and its invariable concomitants (*cetasika*); analysis of matter into primary (*mahabhūta*) and secondary (*upada*) elements; theory of material clusters (*rupakalapa*); theory of moments as the Abhidhamma version of the early Buddhist doctrine of impermanence; *bhavaṅga* and the Abhidhamma theory of perception. The course will take into consideration parallel data in the Sarvastivada Abhidharma as well as the Sautrāntika critique of Abhidharmic interpretations. The course will be concluded with an examination of how the Abhidhamma integrates philosophy, psychology and ethics into a framework of a programme for liberation.

BSTC6042. Advanced Tibetan

This course aims at students with basic knowledge of Tibetan language. It teaches the fundamentals of Tibetan grammar and syntax, in addition to expanding vocabulary, particularly Buddhist terms. It introduces more complex sentences and more technical vocabulary. It is mainly devoted to the understanding and translating of selected Tantric literature, Tibetan autograph, poet and history, etc...

BSTC6044. History of Chinese Buddhism

This course examines the Chinese development and interpretation of Buddhist thought in a historical perspective, with a special emphasis on the teachings and practices. The major figures and their contributions to the formation and development of schools, important and influential sutras and the cults of important divinities will also be examined.

BSTC6045. Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit texts (Elementary)

This course is based on the reasonable assumption that the most interesting and rewarding way to learn Classical Sanskrit as a beginner is to actually read some simple Sanskrit texts that interests him, under the guidance of a teacher. Classical Buddhist Sanskrit texts have their own styles, idiomatic expressions and technical terminologies with which the student must first be familiarized. As the student reads, he is being gradually introduced to both Buddhist textual material on the one hand, and elementary grammar on the other.

In this course, the student will first be introduced to short passages selected on the basis of (i) simplicity in terms of grammatical structure and doctrinal meaning, and (ii) the existence of corresponding Chinese versions (particularly those translated by Xuan Zang and Kumarajiva). Hybrid Sanskrit passages will be excluded. As he reads the graded passages, all the grammars involved will be analyzed and doctrines explained to him. After a gradual build up, long passages from the Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra deemed appropriate for the student's level will be taken up for analysis.

Advantage will be taken from the fact that most students here can understand basic Classical Chinese, and some can even memorize most of the passages from Kumarajiva's version of the Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra. It will also be an advantage if the student already has some familiarity with the elementary Sanskrit grammar. However, neither familiarity with Buddhist scriptures and Classical Chinese nor knowledge of Sanskrit is an absolute prerequisite of this course.

BSTC6046. The philosophy of the middle way (Mādhyamika) Buddhism

The Mādhyamika Buddhism is the most important foundation in the studies of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought. The course aims at giving students a clear and full picture of the basic thought of the Mādhyamika system established by Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva. The lectures of the course will deal with the approach of studies, the historical background of the Mādhyamika Buddhism, the examination of svabhāva, śūnyata, ātman, the material world, the mental world, the relations, the time, the space, the ultimate reality and the way to nirvāna. The Methodology of the Mādhyamika Buddhism will be discussed. Besides lectures and discussion, students will be guided to read certain important chapters of the mūlamadhyamakārikā, the Dvādaśamukha-śāstra and the Sata-śāstra. Classes will be conducted in Cantonese and Chinese will be used in coursework assignment.

BSTC6047. Buddhist epistemology and logic

This course will guide students to read some basic works of the Buddhist Epistemology and Logic. Known as the School of Hetuvidya 因明, this traditional Indian Buddhist school provides us with some difficult but highly valuable texts. It has been one of the most active fields of Buddhist Studies in the last couple of decades. Attention will be given to its relevance to the contemporary studies of epistemology and logic in the West.

BSTC6049. Store-consciousness — the Yogācāra doctrine of the ālayavijñāna

The doctrine of the ālaya-vijñāna is one of the most important and distinguishing doctrines of the Yogācāra. This course focuses on the early Indian development of the doctrine. Its main content includes: 1. The historical evolution of the doctrine from Abhidharma Buddhism, particularly the contribution from the Sautrāntika. 2. The nature and functions of the ālaya-vijñāna as expounded in the fundamental texts of the school, and the importance of the doctrine for the school's central thesis of vijñapti-mātratā. 3. The doctrine of the transformation of the ālaya-vijñāna and its active cognitive evolutes (the pravṛtti-vijñāna) expounded as āśraya-parāvṛtti.

BSTC6050. Buddhist Iconography and art – with special reference to the Tibetan tradition

This course aims at presenting students the vast scope of Buddhist iconographic and national art traditions in the main realms of Dharma spread, starting from the first images of the Buddha. Main emphasis is laid on the later Mahayana and Vajrayana developments in India and Tibet, where thousands of icons with complicated symbolism were coined. The students will come to know how the images are created, consecrated and used within the tradition, how to identify and read hundreds of iconographic elements such as mūdra, āsana, etc. and how to relate the meaning of symbolism and art with the Buddhist doctrinal points.

BSTC6051. The path to enlightenment in the Tibetan tradition – a study of Tsongkhapa's Lam Rim Chen Mo (菩提道次第廣論)

In all Tibetan Buddhist schools – Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya and Gelug – practices are basically classified into Sutra and Mantra paths. All four schools have instructive literature to both Sutra and Mantra. The present course will survey the most elaborate Guide on Sutra: Lam rim Chen mo (“A Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path”) produced by the founder of the Gelug School, Tsongkhapa Lobsan Drakpa (1357-1419), with references to the corresponding literature of other schools. This text covers practices for 3 scopes of persons (lesser, middling and great) in 3 parts, and separately treats shamatha and vipashyana.

BSTC6052. Study of important Buddhist meditation texts

Meditation is an integral part of the study and practice of Buddhism. This course will include the study of important Buddhist texts related to the practice of meditation from various traditions so that students will be able to see their differences and similarities. Passages will be selected from texts such as: the Satipatthana Sutta (念處經), Visuddhimagga (清淨道論), Liu men jiao shou xi ding lun (六門教授習定論), Da mo er ru si xing guan (達摩二入四行觀), and the Three statements of Garab Dorje (大完滿椎擊三要訣). Students will also be introduced to the actual practice of meditation. Students taking this course are expected to have a good command of classical Chinese.

BSTC6053. The Three-nature (tri-svabhāva) doctrine of the Yogācāra

The Three-nature (tri-svabhāva) doctrine is one of the central doctrines of the Yogācāra school. These three natures — the Imagined Nature (parikalpita-svabhāva), the Other-dependent Nature (paratantra-svabhāva) and the Accomplished/Perfected Nature (pariṇiṣpanna-svabhāva) — were developed mainly as a response to the earlier, Madhyamaka, doctrine that "all are empty" (sarvam śūnyam). This Three-nature doctrine, taking the Madhyamaka doctrine to be as much an extreme as the Ābhidharmika doctrine of "all exists (sarvam asti)", therefore represents the Yogācāra interpretation of the Buddha's teaching of the Middle Way.

BSTC6054. The teaching of Tathagatagarbha from Nyingmapa

"Tathagatagarbha" is an important philosophy of Buddhism. Despite that Tathagatagarbha was taught in various sutras and sastras, it remains a controversy amongst scholars and Buddhism schools on the positioning of the Tathagatagarbha. However, this is established in the ultimate view of Buddhism in the Nyingma school. The enlightenment of the Buddha lies within the state of self inner realization wisdom. When this is a peaceful state, it is called Dharmakaya. On manifestation to reveal the power, the state of wisdom innately self-manifests as the state of consciousness. This state of wisdom is called Tathagatagarbha. This course will discuss the definition, the essence and the contemplation practice of Tathagatagarbha.

BSTC6055. Buddhist psychology

This course takes a psychological perspective to introduce Buddhism as a moral and psychologically healthy way of life. The early Buddhist way of life as practiced by the Buddha and his disciples is introduced through selected readings from English translations of the original Pali texts Majjhima Nikaya and Anguttara Nikaya. This source is chosen over other more theoretically oriented secondary sources on the belief that the early Buddhist way of life provided the experiential (and empirical) basis for Buddhist philosophy. The narrative format offers lively and concrete examples of problem solving in daily life that are easily understood by most readers and more importantly- less readily misunderstood. Theories and important concepts in Buddhism are introduced later in the course to bind together the rather loosely organized teachings of the Nikaya texts. Finally, the epistemological foundation of Buddhism is introduced through selected readings from the Yogacara tradition (in particular the Thirty Stanzas) and compared with recent developments in theoretical psychology (in particular social constructionism).

BSTC6056. Special topics in Buddhist studies (4)

This course is offered from time to time. Students should consult the Centre of Buddhist Studies on the content of the course on offer.

BSTC6057. Special topics in Buddhist studies (5)

This course is offered from time to time. Students should consult the Centre of Buddhist Studies on the content of the course on offer.

BSTC6058. Buddhism and society

This course concentrates on the various aspects of Buddhist social philosophy and its historical development. It consists of various topics, such as the twofold process of society (origin and dissolution), the Buddha and society, the Buddhist stratification of society, social implication of the five precepts, Buddhist perspectives on morality, ethics and economics, Buddhism and peace, the environment, and human rights.

BSTC6059. Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit texts (Advanced)

This is a one-year course designed as a sequel to “Basic Sanskrit” (BSTC6021) and “Readings in Buddhist Sanskrit texts (Elementary) (BSTC6045). Accordingly, the intending student must possess a pass in at least one of these two courses. It is mainly devoted to selected readings in Indian Buddhist texts particularly the Buddhacarita, Bodhicaryāvatāra, Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra, Mūla-madhyamakārikā, Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi (Viṃśikā and Triṃśikā).

BSTC6060. Advanced Study of Pali (Reading Pali Suttas)

This course is meant for those who are willing to gather more information on individual and social dimensions of early Buddhism. The course duration is one semester. Three hour question paper will be given at the end of the period. The assessment of the course content historically and culturally is expected. Literary value also is examined. Language of the suttas would not be a barrier for the candidate as the important linguistic terms of the suttas are explained in the course of reading. The following suttas are prescribed for this study: The first three suttas and the Dārucīriya sutta of the Udāna; Madhupiṇḍika sutta of the Majjhimanikāya; Sigālovāda sutta of the Dīghanikāya; Vasala sutta and Metta sutta of the Suttanipāta; Candā and Vāseṭṭhi Therīgāthā.