

CENTRE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES

BSTC0001. Making sense of Ch'an (Zen) (6 credits)

To many people, Ch'an (禪) has an aura of unspeakable romanticism. This course will examine the position of Ch'an within the more comprehensible framework of orthodox Buddhist Teachings, its development in Chinese history, the patriarchs (祖師) and the influences of Ch'an on Chinese thought and culture. The beauty and function of Ko'an (公案) and Ch'an poetry (禪詩) will also be studied so that students will get a feeling of the unspeakable romanticism. In addition, the practical usage of Ch'an in daily life will be explored: Ch'an and mind development, Ch'an and self-awareness and how to make Ch'an more accessible to modern society. Assessment: 100% coursework.

BSTC0002. Life and Buddhism (6 credits)

Our goal in life, whether it is for personal excellence, financial success or national glory, is in essence a search for happiness, for ourselves and for others. Misguided notions of happiness lead to dire consequences, resulting in suffering and unhappiness for the individual and the community. This course examines how the ancient wisdom of Buddhism teaches us the art of happiness in daily life from the following three aspects: (1) Personal cultivation (topics including the cause for suffering life and happy life, the Buddhist way of living well and dying well, the reality of life, moral causation, Threefold training, and morality in both Mahayana and Theravada traditions), (2) Improvement of human relationship (topics including the four immeasurables, social implication of the five precepts and six perfections) and (3) Improvement of social environment (topics including Buddhist perspective of wealth, Buddhist attitude towards war and peace and Buddhist ideal society). Assessment: 100% coursework.