RELG 221—BUDDHIST MEDITATION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

MIND, MATTER, AND MEDITATION:
BUDDHIST CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

Professor Daniel M. Stuart

Class Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday, 10:05–11:20am, Gambrell 302
Office: Close-Hipp 378
Office Hours: TBD

Course Description

What is the mind? What is the body? What is freedom? This course will explore the ways in which Buddhist contemplative traditions in South, Southeast and East Asia have confronted these questions. Emphasis will be on the historical evolution, doctrinal foundations, and monastic and lay regimens associated with Buddhist meditation practices. We will also explore a number of modern meditation traditions, and the question of how traditional models of practice are transformed in a modern context. We will make use of a wide variety of primary and secondary readings as well as visual materials (including films) to attempt to place the historical practices in their cultural, institutional and soteriological contexts.

Grading Breakdown:
Attendance and Participation (40%)
2 Short Papers (20%)
2 Quizzes (20%)
Final Exam (20%)

Required Course Materials:
Gethin, Rupert. The Foundations of Buddhism.
Additional pdf readings will be uploaded to Blackboard

Films:
I ♥ Huckabees (2004)
Fearless (1993)
Stay (2005)
Never Let Me Go (2010)
Crazy Wisdom: The Life and Times of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche (2011)
Birth (2004)

Important Dates: TBD
Schedule of Weekly Readings and Assignments

Introduction and General Discussion: India, Meditation Practice, Philosophical Discourse

Week 1: The Foundations of Buddhism

The Buddha
Gethin, pp. 1-34
R. Gimello Handout: “The Date of the Historical Buddha”

Scripture, Language, and Philosophy
Gethin, pp. 35-84

Week 2: The Foundations of Buddhism cont.

Cosmos and Community
Gethin, pp. 85-132
Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 677-691.

Film Viewing: I ♥ Huckabeees (2004)
Gethin, pp. 133-201

Week 3: Early Buddhist Contemplative Practice

Philosophical and Soteriological Developments; Early Contemplative Practices
Gethin, pp. 224-252
Shaw 2006, pp. 1-38; 76-85

Early Contemplative Practices cont.
Mindfulness Outline

Week 4: Early Buddhist Contemplative Practice cont.

Abhidharma and Meditation
Buswell 2005, pp. 1-7
Anuruddha 2000 (AS), pp. 329-366
Quiz #1

Meditation and Death
Film Viewing: Fearless (1993)
Week 5: Developments in Indian Buddhist Contemplative Practices

Developments in Indian Buddhism
Shaw 2009, pp. 140-158
Paper #1 due

The Mahāyāna

Week 6: Living Buddhist Masters

An Extraordinary Life: The Biography of Ajahn Mun (1870-1949)
Mahā Boowa 2004, pp. 3-54

A Long Story
Mahā Boowa 2004, pp. 139-179; pp. 288-316

Week 7: Culture and Practice;
Buddhist Contemplative Practices in China: Tian-tai and Chan

Mind, Identity and Identification
Obeyesekere in Kleinman and Good 1985, pp. 134-152
Film Viewing: Stay (2005)

Tiantai Zhiyi's Stopping and Seeing
Luk 1964, pp. 111-160

Week 8: Dhyāna in China

Chan Masters in China
Swanson “Ch’an and Chi-kuan”; Stevenson, pp. 45-85 in Gregory 1986

‘Chan’ Tradition
Yampolsky 1967, pp. 125-183

Week 9: Dhyāna in China cont.

Chan and the Gong-an
Quiz #2
Teacher, Pupil and Submission to the Dharma
Buswell 2004, pp. 820-826; Lhalungpa 1992, pp. 1-70
Film Viewing: Never Let Me Go (2010)

Week 10: Buddhist Contemplative Practices in Tibet: The Tantrika’s Path

Initiation and the Guru
Paper # 2 due
Lhalungpa 1992, pp. 71-145

Storied Meditations
Lhalungpa 1992, pp. 146-200

Week 11: Westward Transmission

The Bodhisattva Path and the Myth of Freedom: Westward Transmission
Film Viewing: Crazy Wisdom: The Life and Times of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche (2011)

Buddhist Contemplative Practice in America
Baer 2003, pp. 125-143; Austin pp. 373-407 in Bruya 2010

Week 12: Cowboys and Kasinas

Cowboy Dharma
Ingram 2008, pp. iv-xi; pp. 1-14; pp. 87-131
Film Viewing: Birth (2004)

Cowboy Dharma cont.
Ingram 2008, pp. 132-216

Week 13: A Convergence?

Cowboy Dharma cont.
Ingram 2008, pp. 261-338

Psychology, Therapy and Cognitive Science
Kabat-Zinn 2011, pp. 281-306; Maex 2011, pp. 165-175

Week 14: Review and Final

Review Session

Final Exam
Bibliography


