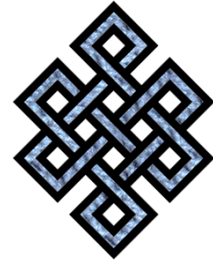




RLST203: BUDDHIST TRADITIONS
Holly Grether, Ph.D.
hollygrether@gmail.com
Office Hours: TR 11-12 or by appt.; Wilson 2-159



Course Description:

This course is designed to provide an historical and conceptual introduction to Buddhism across various geographical regions. Buddhism encompasses a wide range of beliefs and practices spanning over two millennia. Thus, although this course will explore the history, ideas, social contexts, and major figures of Buddhism, it will primarily be a survey course that just scratches the surface of an incredibly complex and diverse religion.

Required texts:

1. *Introducing Buddhism* (Damien Keown and Charles Prebish). Routledge, 2010
2. *Siddhartha* (Hermann Hesse). Bantam Classics, 1981.
3. *Freedom in Exile: The Autobiography of the Dalai Lama* (Dalai Lama). Harper, 1991.
4. *Heart of Understanding* (Thich Nhat Hanh). Parallax Press, 2009.
5. *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones* (Paul Reys and Nyogen Senzaki). Tuttle Publishing, 1998.

Grade breakdown:

- Midterm exam (25%)
- Two short papers (30%)
- Online Discussions (15%)
- In-Class Writing/Pop Quizzes/Participation (10%)
- Final (20%)

Description of Course Assignments:

Midterm Exam:

The Midterm Exam will be multiple-choice questions based on lectures and the readings. It will require that you learn major Sanskrit terms essential to an understanding of Buddhism (see study guide posted on D2L). You should take careful notes during class and plan to study hard for this exam.

Two Short Papers:

There will be two papers based on the books *Siddhartha* and *Freedom in Exile*. You will be given a particular prompt that will open on D2L dropbox the day before we start the book and close at the time indicated. Be sure to keep up on your readings, as there will likely be pop-quizzes on the books as well.

Online Discussions:

There will be three online discussions based on the readings. The class will randomly be sorted into 10 groups make discussion plausible. For each discussion, you will be given a specific prompt. Respond carefully to the prompt. Then, write a response to *at least two* of your classmates' posts. Responses should be substantive and go beyond saying "good job" or "I agree" (min. 75 words). Discussion posts will be due the day *before* the reading so you have time to respond to your classmates before we meet in class to discuss. Pay attention to due dates as no late discussion posts will be accepted (feel free to post early).

In-Class Quizzes/Assignments:

Periodically, you will be given a quiz or asked to complete an in-class assignment based on the readings and/or discussion. These quizzes/ assignments will be given during lecture and no make ups will be allowed. It is your responsibility to attend class regularly and keep up on the readings.

Final Exam:

Your final exam will ask you to answer three short essays. It will be cumulative and given during the designated finals time. Be sure to bring a bluebook.