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**PHIL390xPYSC391 (Spring 2022)**

## **Buddhist Philosophy & Psychology**



**Instructor:** Dr. Chris Goto-Jones (he/him/his) ([chrisgotojones@uvic.ca](mailto:chrisgotojones@uvic.ca))

**Teaching Assistant:** Alyssa Zacharias (she/her/hers)

**Office Hours:** Mondays 12:30-13:20 and Thursdays 12.30-13.20 (booking link is on brightspace)

**Class Information:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 12.30-13.20 (on Zoom)

**Course Website:** Through Brightspace. <http://bright.uvic.ca>

*Readings available through the course website – all available electronically when on campus network.  
Links to academic support and other services available through course site.*

*If you notice any accessibility issues with respect to this class, please let me know. If they are within my power, I will do my best to solve them. In general, though, I would also encourage any students who might benefit from their services to register with the Centre for Accessible Learning ([www.uvic.ca/services/cal/](http://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/)), where accommodations and other support can be sought.*

## Course Description

This course is an introduction to the philosophy and psychology of Buddhism. It is not a course in religious studies, and hence it aims to explore some of the ways in which the various Buddhist traditions have sought to understand the nature of being, being human, thought, mind, suffering, and death. Hence, the course travels between the concerns of epistemology, metaphysics, and applied psychology. Concepts such as the meaning and nature of 'self' will be a central thread throughout the course. Given this disciplinary framework, ethical questions of epistemic violence and injustice (such as the appropriation or colonization of Buddhism by the clinical sciences today) will be live issues throughout. In particular, we will consider some of the issues that arise when Buddhism is treated a form of therapeutic modality, including in the form of 'Mindfulness.'

Alongside conventional lectures and classes, this course will also introduce students to a more traditionally 'Buddhist' format for learning and teaching.

By the end of this course, you can expect to:

- Understand the foundational concepts of Buddhist philosophy and psychology;
- Understand how those foundational concepts are deployed and represented in the contemporary field;
- Recognise how various different traditions of Buddhism (from Asia) differ in their approaches to a number of concepts and practices;
- Be able to differentiate between questions of Buddhist faith and reason in the context of philosophy and psychology;
- Understand the significance of argument, text, experience, and practice as resources in the philosophy and psychology of Buddhism;
- Demonstrate sensitivity and awareness of the ethical issues that arise from intercultural encounters, such as in the encounter between Buddhism and 'Western' psychology.

## Course materials

This course is structured around two central books, both of which are available electronically through UVic library – you should be able to access them both, in full, for the duration of this course. Alternatively, if you'd prefer hard copies, you are welcome to buy them – they're both excellent but rather expensive.

- Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013
- Nauriyal, Drummond, & Lal (eds), *Buddhist Thought and Applied Psychological Research: Transcending the Boundaries*. Routledge, 2006

Additional materials, including text excerpts and alternative readings will be provided through Brightspace. Each week will include two sessions dedicated to the specified reading; the third session will be in a more traditional 'Buddhist' format, exploring an extract from a sutta or other

Buddhist primary text as a way to access some of the concepts and practices in a way more recognizable to those traditions.

## Course Logistics

This will be a hybrid *a/synchronous* online course. This means that the classes will be held in real-time online via **Zoom**. You can expect the first session in each week (on Tuesdays) to be (more-or-less) in lecture format, and you can expect the second session in each week (on Wednesdays) to be more discussion-drive, with the content based on the previous session. For convenience and ease of access, the sessions on tuesdays will be recorded and made available for the class to review on **Brightspace**. These recordings will remain available throughout the course so that you can refer to them as needed. Hence, if you are unable to attend the Tuesday class on time due to illness, you can still access the material. *Real-time attendance on Tuesdays is recommended*. In some weeks we may have guest teachers from other universities, in which case I hope you will all attend the Tuesday sessions out of respect for their freely-given time. Wednesday classes will not be recorded or repeated. *Real-time participation on Wednesdays is strongly encouraged and will be recognized in your participation grade for this course* – if you are sick or have other good reason to miss the class, please let me know *in advance of the class* (or as soon as possible thereafter), and this may count as an excused absence.

You can expect sessions on Fridays to take a more traditionally ‘Buddhist’ format. Rather than further analyzing the set-text for that week, the talk on Fridays will usually be based on exploring an extract from a Buddhist primacy source, such as a sutta. The idea of this session is to encourage participation in another mode of learning and inquiry. Friday sessions will usually be recorded and posted to brightspace, but attendance will be beneficial.

## Academic Integrity

Everything you will be evaluated on in this course will be fully open book and untimed. You are welcome to talk about the course material as much as you like with anyone you like, but all answers to assignments have to be your own written work. This means that you are not allowed to provide answers for someone else, or *vice versa* or even *versa vice*. If you are ever unsure about what constitutes a violation of academic integrity, more information is provided on the University Calendar:

<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>

## Communication and Office Hours

Email is my preferred method of communication, as opposed to *Brightspace* messages or forum posts, especially for any official requests. If you ask me a question over email, you can expect a reply within about 1 working day. If you don’t hear back from me within that time frame, feel free to try again in case your message went astray. When you do address me (over email or otherwise), please do so as Chris, because that’s my name. If you feel more comfortable with titles, then please use either Professor (Prof.) Goto-Jones or Dr. Goto-Jones. No ‘sir’ or ‘mr,’ for various

reasons, thanks! If you are ever nervous about sending me an email, or asking a question, feel free to include a funny anecdote, cartoon, or a picture of your pet with your request. This will not affect whether or not I will be able to help you with your request, but it will be much more fun for us all.

Finally, my pronouns are he/him. If you think I am unlikely to know the name you would prefer to be called, or the pronouns I ought to use for you (through the entry that I will see for you through your Brightspace/UVic registration), please don't hesitate to make me aware.

My default platform for office hours will be Zoom, Mondays and Thursdays 12:30-13:20 am, but if that does not work for you, please feel free to email me in advance to suggest an alternative time and/or platform. Office hours will require pre-booking via Calendly (see brightspace for link). If you don't make an appointment, you are welcome to sit in the Zoom waiting room until I become free, but please keep in mind that all the slots might already be booked. All relevant links will be posted on Brightspace.

## Evaluation

*You are expected to maintain high standards of respect and academic integrity throughout this course. Discussion is essential to learning in this course, and it relies upon an atmosphere of trust. Everyone present should feel safe to express their views, which also means that everyone present is responsible for ensuring that they exercise academic freedom (rather than merely freedom of speech), treating each other respectfully and supportively.*

- Continuous Assessment/Participation: 20%

*In this course, your participation will be evidenced by attending class (especially on Wednesdays) and by submitting weekly 'reflections.' These 'reflections' will be short (approx. 100-200 word) responses to excerpts of text drawn from the weekly reading (or from a text adjacent to the reading). The prompt will be provided during or after class on Wednesday and will be due by 11.59pm on the following Tuesday. The purpose is to demonstrate thoughtfulness and reflection rather than to test your mastery of the material.*

*Everyone will begin the course with a participation grade of zero. For each successful 'reflection' (marked pass/fail) you will receive 1 point. For each recorded attendance in class (on Wednesdays) you will receive 1 point. If you complete all reflections and attend all Wednesdays, you will have accumulated enough points for the full 20% participation grade. Excused absences and extenuating circumstances may be taken into account.*

- **Midterm assignment: 30% -- deadline: Sunday 20 February, 23:59**

*The midterm assignment will be open-book format. You will receive a list of questions in week 3. From that list, you will answer two questions with 500-750 words each (ie. you will write a total of 1000-1500 words for the midterm). The questions will pertain to the first 6 weeks of material.*

*Your work will be assessed on: its relevance to the themes and materials of the course; its accurate use of sources; its coherence, sophistication and persuasiveness; the convincingness and effectiveness of your argument and writing. Personal reflection and engagement is encouraged.*

**• Final assignment: 50% -- deadline: Tuesday 12 April, 23:59**

*The final assignment will be open-book format. You will receive a list of potential topics in week 8. From that list, you can select one question, which you will address in a more extended and sophisticated manner than in the midterm. I will expect 1500-2000 words. The questions will pertain to material covered during the whole course. If there is a specific topic on which you'd like to write that isn't included amongst the suggested questions, please speak with me (Chris) to get approval for your topic before starting work on it.*

*Your work will be assessed on: its relevance to the themes and materials of the course; its accurate use of sources; its coherence, sophistication and persuasiveness; the convincingness and effectiveness of your argument and writing. Personal reflection and engagement is encouraged.*

## **Grades**

*Grades will be given as percentile marks.*

*Per UVic grading rubric, the percentile mark for the course will be converted to a letter grade in the following manner:*

*A+ = 90 - 100, A = 85 - 89, A- = 80 - 84, B+ = 77 - 79, B = 73 - 76, B- = 70 - 72, C+ = 65 - 69, C = 60 - 64, D = 50 - 59, F = 0 - 49.*

- *The A range means exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance.*
- *A grade in the B range means a very good, good and solid performance.*
- *A grade in the C+ or C range means satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory, performance.*
- *A grade of D or D- indicates merely passable or marginal performance.*
- *An F indicates unsatisfactory performance.*

*The full UVic grading rubric is provided in the Appendix to this syllabus. In the instance that it differs from this text, the UVic rubric takes precedence.*

## SCHEDULE

- Week 1: Tues 11 January – *Buddhism as Philosophy and Psychology Today*  
Rev. Joan Halifax, ‘Compassion and the True Meaning of Empathy.’ TEDWomen, 2010  
([https://www.ted.com/talks/joan\\_halifax\\_compassion\\_and\\_the\\_true\\_meaning\\_of\\_empathy](https://www.ted.com/talks/joan_halifax_compassion_and_the_true_meaning_of_empathy))  
Joanna Macy, ‘Climate Crisis as a Spiritual Path,’ 2021  
(<https://vimeo.com/588455489>)

### PART ONE: CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

- Week 2: Tuesday 18 January – *Introducing Dukkha and the Non-Self*  
Peter Harvey, ‘Dukkha, Non-Self, and the Teachings on the Four “Noble Truths”.’ In Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013 (chapter 2)
- Week 3: Tuesday 25 January – *Introducing Dependent-Origination*  
Peter Harvey, ‘The Conditioned Co-Arising of Mental and Bodily Processes within Life and Between Lives.’ In Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013 (chapter 3)

### ***Midterm assignment questions issued***

### PART TWO: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

- Week 4: Tuesday 1 February – *Introducing the Buddhist Mind*  
Richard Hayes, ‘Philosophy of Mind in Buddhism.’ In Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013 (chapter 25)
- Week 5: Tuesday 8 February – *The Problem of Free Will*  
Joerg Tuske, ‘The Non-Self Theory and Problems in the Philosophy of Mind.’ In Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013 (chapter 27)  
OR:  
Andrew Olendzki, ‘The Transformative Impact of Non-Self.’ In Nauriyal, Drummond, & Lal (eds), *Buddhist Thought and Applied Psychological Research: Transcending the Boundaries*. Routledge, 2006 (chapter 12)

### PART THREE: ACTION AND ETHICS

- Week 6: Tuesday 15 February – *The Problem of Doing Good*

Sarah Shaw, 'Character, Disposition, and the Qualities of the *Arahats* as a Means of Communicating Buddhist Philosophy in the *Suttas*.' In Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013 (chapter 29)

**Midterm assignment due, Sunday 20 February, 23:59**

Week 7: Tuesday 22 February – READNG WEEK

Week 8: Tuesday 1 March – *The Problem of Discriminating and Discrimination*  
Rev. Angel Kyodo Williams, 'Your Liberation is on the Line.' *Buddhadharma*, Spring 2019  
AND  
Gesshin Greenwood, 'Enlightenment is a Male Fantasy.' *Buddhadharma*, Winter 2018

OPTIONAL:

Rita Gross, 'Buddhist Perspectives on Gender Issues.' In Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013 (chapter 43)  
Chris Goto-Jones, 'Doing No Harm: Mindfulness, (Western) Buddhism, Appropriation and Racism.' *International Institute for Asian Studies*, forthcoming, 2022.

**Final assignment questions issued**

PART THREE: MEDITATION, MINDFULNESS, and THERAPY

Week 9: Tuesday 8 March – *What is (Buddhist) Meditation?*  
Sarah Shaw, 'What is Meditation?' Shaw, *Buddhist Meditation: An Anthology of Texts from the Pāli Canon*. Routledge, 2006 (chapter 1)

OPTIONAL:

Martine Batchelor, 'Meditation: Practice and Experience.' West (ed), *The Psychology of Meditation: Research & Practice*. Oxford University Press, 2016 (chapter 2)  
Loriliai Biernacki, 'Psychology of Meditation: Philosophical Perspectives.' West (ed), *The Psychology of Meditation: Research & Practice*. Oxford University Press, 2016 (chapter 5)  
Charles Goodman, 'Buddhist Meditation: Theory and Practice.' In Emmanuel (ed), *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013 (chapter 36)

Week 10: Tuesday 15 March – What is Mindfulness?  
Ven. Anālayo, 'Mindfulness in the Pāli Nikāyas.' In Nauriyal, Drummond, & Lal (eds), *Buddhist Thought and Applied Psychological Research: Transcending the Boundaries*. Routledge, 2006 (chapter 11)

- Week 11: Tuesday 22 March – Mindfulness and Therapy  
Anne Harrington, 'When Mindfulness is Therapy: Ethical Qualms, Historical Perspectives.' *American Psychologist*, Vol 70(7), 2015, pp. 621-631
- Week 12: Tuesday 29 March – *Buddhism and Death*  
Hyun Gong Moon, 'Educational Applications of Buddhist Meditations on Death.' *Religions*. 20:11 (2020), 269 (12 pages)  
OR:  
Kaori Wada, 'Integrating Buddhist Psychology into Grief Counselling.' *Death Studies*. 33 (2009), pp. 657–683.
- Week 13: Tuesday 5 April – *Review of Themes and Ideas*  
  
Last class Wednesday 6 April

***Final assignment due, Tuesday 12 April, 23:59***

**Please note** that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to Brightspace are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the *Policy on Academic Integrity*(<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcl.html>).



## APPENDIX: UVIC GRADING RUBRIC

<https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/S1AAgoGuV?bc=true&bcCurrent=14%20-%20Grading&bcItemtype=policies>

A primary purpose of evaluation and grading is to further effective teaching and learning. Any practices which assign a predetermined percentage of students a specific grade, that is, a certain percentage get A, another percentage get B and so on, without regard to individual achievement are prohibited.

The table below shows the official grading system used by instructors in arriving at final assessments of student performance. For letter grades authorized for use in the Faculty of Law, see the entry under that faculty.

Passing Grades			
Grade	Grade Value	Point Percentage*	Description
A+	9	90 - 100	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
A	8	85 - 89	
A-	7	80 - 84	
B+	6	77 - 79	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material.
B	5	73 - 76	
B-	4	70 - 72	
C+	3	65 - 69	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
C	2	60 - 64	
D	1	50 - 59	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
COM	Excluded Grade	N/A	<b>Complete</b> (pass). Used only for 0-unit courses and those credit courses designated by the Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings.
CTN	Excluded Grade	N/A	<b>Continuing</b> . Denotes the first half of a full-year course.
Failing Grades			
Grade	Grade Value	Point Percentage*	Description
E	0	0 - 49	Conditional supplemental. Supplemental examinations are not offered by all departments and the allowable percentage may vary by program (e.g. 35-49). Students will be advised whether supplemental

### Failing Grades

Grade	Grade Value	Point Percentage*	Description
			will be offered and if the percentage range varies when assessment techniques are announced at the beginning of the course.
F	0	0 - 49	F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.
N	0	0 - 49	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.
N/X	Excluded Grade	N/A	Did not complete course requirements by the end of the term; no supplemental. Used only for Co-op work terms and for courses designated by Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings. The grade is EXCLUDED from the calculation of all grade point averages.
F/X	Excluded Grade	N/A	<b>Unsatisfactory</b> performance. Completed course requirements; no supplemental. Used only for Co-op work terms and for courses designated by Senate. Such courses are identified in the course listings. The grade is EXCLUDED from the calculation of all grade point averages.

### Temporary Grades

Grade	Grade Point Value	Percentage*	Description
INC	N/A	N/A	<b>Incomplete.</b> Used only for those credit courses designated by the Senate, to be replaced with a final grade by June 1 for Winter Session courses and by October 1 for Summer Session courses. Such courses are identified in the course listings.
DEF	N/A	N/A	<b>Deferred status</b> granted. Used only when deferred status has been granted because of illness, an accident or family affliction. See <a href="#">Deferred status</a> .
INP	N/A	N/A	<b>In Progress.</b> Used only for courses designated by Senate, to be replaced with a final grade by the end of the next Winter Session except for TIED courses (identified in the Calendar). In TIED courses the INP must be replaced with a final grade by the end of the subsequent term (including Summer Session) or, where a COOP Work Term, or other activity approved by the academic unit, intervenes, within eight months. If a student fails to complete the second course of a TIED course sequence, then the final grade will be N.
CIC	N/A	N/A	<b>Co-op Interrupted Course.</b> See <a href="#">General Regulations: Undergraduate Co-op</a> .

## Grade notes

Grade note	Grade Point Value	Percentage*	Description
AEG	N/A	N/A	<b>Aegrotat.</b> Transcript notation accompanying a letter grade, assigned where documented illness or similar affliction affected the student's performance or prevented completion of all course work.
WE	N/A	N/A	<b>Withdrawal under extenuating circumstances.</b> The WE registration status will replace a course registration or grade when approved by the Dean following a request for academic concession from a student. This registration status is excluded from the calculation of all grade point averages; it will appear on the official transcript.

\* The grading scale for the evaluation of course achievement at the University of Victoria is a percentage scale that translates to a 9 point GPA/letter grade system. The 9 point GPA system is the sole basis for the calculation of grade point averages and academic standing. Standardized percentage ranges have been established as the basis for the assignment of letter grades. The percentage grades are displayed on the official and administrative transcripts in order to provide fine grained course assessment which will be useful to students particularly in their application to graduate studies and for external scholarships and funding. Comparative grading information (average grade [mean] for the class), along with the number of students in the class, is displayed for each course section for which percentage grades are assigned.