



Course Syllabus:
HR 3300: Terms, Texts, Translations



Fall 2021

version of 15 August 2021; subject to revision

Instructor

Richard Payne <rkpayne1@mac.com>

class meetings (optional): Wednesday mornings, via Zoom, 11:10 to 12:00

Office Hours: Thursday mornings, by appointment, via Zoom

Course Description

This course is a study of the philological approach to Buddhist studies across the tradition, the ways in which texts originate, are formed, change over time, are translated, and studied in the present day. These issues have all been central for the understanding of Buddhism as it has moved from one society to another, and are particularly central to the interpretation of Buddhism in the present.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

At the end of this course students will be able to:

Outcome	Assessment
1. students will explain the historical nature of Buddhist texts as found in English translation	1. required book readings summaries
2. students will understand and use the concepts of the field appropriately, including: <i>geyi</i> , stratigraphy, stemma, back translation, canon, etc.	2. weekly reading summaries and (optional) in class presentations
3. students will complete a project reflecting an understanding of translation, textual history, and demonstrate a command of resources for secondary literature	3. book reading summaries: critical summaries, not personal response

Course Requirements

1) required texts: read at your own pace two of the three required texts, and prepare 1,500 +/- word critical summaries of each, due at end of term, complement reading with additional research into other secondary sources related to the two texts, follow proper style (Turabian) for notes and bibliography; consider for example published reviews of translations (available online through GTU Library—see IBS Registrar if you need assistance with accessing GTU Library, and GTU Librarians for online resources, best is JSTOR <<https://www.jstor.org/>> which you can access via your GTU id)

2) summaries of weekly readings: approx. 200 to 300 word summaries of each week's reading, submitted by Friday of each week following class meeting on Wednesday; each week during class Zoom meeting, one student will make an oral presentation on the reading for approx 20 minutes, while balance of time will be open for questions and discussion,

Required Readings

read two of the following three books at your own pace over the course of the semester:

Richard S. Cohen, *The Splendid Vision: Reading a Buddhist Sutra* (Columbia)

Roger R. Jackson, *Tantric Treasures: Three Collections of Mystical Verse from Buddhist India* (Oxford)

Wendi Adamek, *The Teachings of Master Wuzhu: Zen and Religion of No-Religion* (Columbia)

1,500 word summaries of both will be due at the end of term

weekly readings will be available on the course Moodle page

Weekly Schedule:

COURSE CALENDAR READINGS TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO CLASS MEETINGS NOTED
HANDOUTS ARE FOR STUDENTS USE ONLY: DO NOT DISTRIBUTE OR POST ON WEB

- 1) 8 Sept introduction to course
reading: Schopen, "Protestant Presuppositions"
- 2) 15 Sept development of philology and modern Buddhist studies
reading: McGovern, "The Contemporary Study of Buddhism"
- 3) 22 Sept oral transmission
reading: Veidlinger, "Monks and Memory"
- 4) 29 Sept oral to written
reading: Drewes, "Oral Texts in Indian Mahayana"
- 5) 6 Oct "language" of the texts
reading: Nattier, "Church Language and Vernacular Language"
- 6) 13 Oct canon and canonization
reading: Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pāli Canon"
- 7) 20 Oct apocrypha
reading: Kapstein, Purificatory Gem
- 8) 27 Oct: *Reading week/no class*
- 9) 3 Nov textual authority, scriptural authenticity
reading: Skilling, "Scriptural Authenticity and the Śrāvaka Schools"
- 10) 10 Nov translation and back-translation
reading: Nattier, Heart Sutra
- 11) 17 Nov Textual Studies
reading: Van Schaik, "Oral Teachings and Written Texts"
- 12) 24 Nov Thanksgiving break: no class mtg.
- 13) 1 Dec Materiality & Ritual

reading: Copp, “Manuscript Culture as Ritual Culture”

14) 8 Dec. Buddhism in Modern Media

reading: Mitchell, “The Tranquil Meditator”

15) 15 Dec. Hermeneutics: interpretation; assignments due

reading: Thurman, “Buddhist Hermeneutics”

Assessment

Final Course Grade

- Weekly Reading Summaries = 50% (although optional in order to accommodate asynchronous students, participation in online class discussions strongly encouraged)
- Required Reading Summaries = 50%

Assignment Rubrics

Rubric 1

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Progressing	Not There Yet
weekly readings summaries: verbal presentations and written summaries	clear summary of essay content, organization and context	clear summary of essay content, and organization	clear summary of essay content	lacks clarity, fails to demonstrate understanding of topics raised by the reading
required texts reading summaries	clear summary of book’s content, organization and context; uses additional secondary material, notes and bibliography according to proper form	clear summary of book’s content, and organization; notes and bibliography according to proper form	clear summary of book’s content; notes and bibliography according to proper form	lacks clarity, fails to demonstrate understanding of topics raised by the reading

Final Paper Rubric

Final research papers will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (A)	Meets Expectations (A-/B)	Below Expectations (C)	Problematic (D)
Thesis/argument	Excellent. This is an ambitious, perceptive project that grapples with complex ideas. The thesis is clearly stated and contextualized in the introduction. The essay presents more than a summary of existing ideas, and is not simply repeating what the student has read or learned in class.	The project reaches high and achieves its aim. The thesis is stated clearly but perhaps with less contextualization. The author does more than summarize existing ideas, but some areas may require more depth or the essay includes stray, irrelevant ideas.	The project has conceptual problems. The thesis may be unclear or poorly stated. The essay lacks an argument but is merely a summary of existing ideas or a personal reaction to the topic (i.e., mere opinion).	The project is incoherent or is extremely problematic in any of the areas mentioned.
Organization	The essay is clearly and explicitly organized. The introduction lays out the structure of the essay, and essay sections include transitions and summaries of ideas. The conclusion both summarizes the essay's argument and points toward potential research vistas.	The essay is well organized, the introduction states the essays structure and intent. Some connections may still need to be made, especially in regards to transitions between sections. The conclusion summarizes the essay's argument.	The essay is poorly organized; the introduction does not state what the author is going to do; there are no transitions or summaries of ideas.	The essay is not organized in any logical fashion.
Evidence	The author employs appropriate and relevant primary and critical secondary sources. Evidence is both contextualized and related explicitly to the thesis or argument.	The author employs appropriate and relevant primary and critical secondary sources. Evidence is contextualized; however, there may not be enough evidence or it is not thoroughly engaged.	Evidence provided is irrelevant or culled from inappropriate or unreliable sources. What (good) evidence is supplied is not engaged, contextualized, explained or related to the thesis/argument.	Evidence is either not presented or is wholly irrelevant and unreliable.
Writing/style	Language is clean, precise, elegant, and jargon-free. Ideas and terms are introduced and explained appropriately. The author uses the correct citation format, and typos and other errors are at a minimum (or nonexistent).	Language is adequate and clear, and the author has used the correct citation format. Vernacular language is avoided, and typos and grammatical errors are minimal.	Language and word choice is unclear; sentences are awkward, illogical, or contradictory; punctuation, grammar, etc., are problematic. There is an over-reliance on vernacular language. Correct citation format is not used.*	The essay contains an overabundance of grammatical and stylistic errors, or inappropriate language.

** Note: non-native English speakers are strongly encouraged to seek help from peers when writing papers to check for errors. Please see me if you have concerns.*