

PHL 760: Seminar in Buddhist Philosophy:
Suffering and its Cessation

Basics:

Meeting Times: Mondays from 3:30 – 6 pm

Location: Sakamaki Hall C-302

Instructor: Sean M. Smith

Email: sean.smith@hawaii.edu

NOTE: Except when necessary, e-mails should concern procedural questions about the course only. Philosophical questions will be addressed in class and during office hours.

Instructor Office Hours: Mondays from 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm in Sakamaki B-313. Students should not hesitate to make an appointment if they are unable to come to office hours. We *will* find time to meet and discuss any issues.

Course Description:

The course will be about suffering and its cessation in Indian Buddhist philosophy. We will look at the various ways that different Buddhist philosophers have conceptualized the problem of suffering (*dukkha*), for they have said different things about it. We will then consider how those variegated conceptions of suffering exercise a conditioning influence over how our philosophers articulate its solution. Again, Buddhist philosophers do not speak with one voice about the path of practice, nor about the final goal of this practice.

We will focus on continuity as much as disparity among the various schools. The evolving identity of Buddhist philosophy is a negotiation between the extremes of identity and difference. We begin by spending a solid three weeks working on the Pāli sutta literature before moving on to Abhidharmic and Mahāyana philosophical systems. The sutta literature itself provides us with a rich and layered account of the problem of *dukkha*. We will note the ways that Yogācāra and Madhyamaka critiques of the Abhidharma reflect differing emphases on parts of the problem of suffering articulated in the suttas. The Yogācārins focus on the deep subliminal suffering of karmic seeds (*bija*) in the storehouse consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*). By contrast the Madhyamikas stress the importance of *prapañca* or conceptual proliferation in their analysis of *dukkha*. We conclude with a brief look at Dharmakīrti whose accounts of *vasana* and *apoha* will provide us with an opportunity to think about how subliminal affective biases connect with conceptual proliferation to create a cognitive economy of *dukkha*.

The aims of this course are twofold. First, it will give you a wide scope lens for thinking about how this basic existential predicament of suffering (*dukkha*), so central to Buddhist soteriology, has evolved *and* stayed the same across several schools of Buddhist thought. Second, the course will give you some depth by forcing you to look at several strata of literature and how they connect (more on this below). The readings for this course will be voluminous and difficult. Each meeting will have readings that have different functional roles. All classes will have some amount of *primary* literature from one of our schools of Indian Buddhist philosophy. Many classes will also ask you to look at canonical *commentary* on the *primary* literature. Third, we will have the opportunity to consider *contemporary* secondary literature that pertains to the *primary* and *commentarial* work. All of the readings will be

in English, though knowledge of Pāli or Sanskrit will certainly be an advantage. For each class, make sure you read the *note*, which will give instructions on what to focus on and how to get through readings that seem prohibitively long or difficult.

Texts: These are all available at the UH bookstore

Mandatory:

MV and MVb - D'Amato, M. (trans. and ed.) (2012) *Maitreya's Distinguishing the Middle from the Extremes (Madhyāntavibhāga) Along with Vasubandhu's Commentary (Madhyāntavibhāga-bhāṣya): A Study and Annotated Translation*. Columbia UP.

PGW - Gold, J. (2014) *Paving the Great Way: Vasubandhu's Unifying Buddhist Philosophy*. Columbia UP.

MMK - *Nāgārjuna's Middle Way* (eds.) by Mark Siderits and Shoryu Katsura, Wisdom Publications.

WBU - Waldron, W. (2003) *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Ālaya-Vijñāna in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought*. Routledge.

Recommended:

Vim – Vasubandhu's *Vimśikā* – Silk, J. (2016) *Materials Toward the Study of Vasubandhu's Vimśikā*. Cambridge: Harvard Oriental Series.

Other readings will be available as pdf's on Laulima. If a reading has (pdf) after it, find it there.

Assignments:

Grade % Due:

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|-------------------------------|-----|----------|
| Short Paper (1500-2500 words) | 20% | Feb. 25 |
| Long Paper Proposal (2-3 pp) | 10% | March 25 |
| Long Paper (5000-9000 words) | 50% | April 29 |
| Presentation and Commentary | 10% | Ongoing |
| Attendance and Participation | 10% | N/A |

Schedule and Reading:

Do all or as much of the readings as you can before class and come prepared to discuss them.

PART I: Pāli Sutta Literature on the Problem of *Dukkha* and its Cessation

Week 1 – Jan. 7 – Many Kinds of Suffering and their Underlying Tendencies

Primary: The Discourse on the Setting in Motion the Wheel of Dhamma, The Not-Self Discourse, The Fire Discourse, The Greater Discourse to Mālunkyāputta, The Shorter Series of Questions and Answers, (all short pdfs)

Commentary: *Visuddhimagga* Ch. XVI (pdf)

Contemporary: *WBU* Introduction and Chapter 1

Note: Make sure you look at the *primary* readings carefully. For the contemporary readings, the *WBU* chapters are vital, make certain you read them. We will read the entirety of this book throughout the course. The *Visuddhimagga* is least important here, so don't stress about it. However, take a glance at it and read as much as can manage.

Week 2 – Jan. 14 – Proliferation

Primary: The Honeyball (pdf)

Commentary/Contemporary: Bhikkhu Kaṭukurunde Ñāṇananda *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought* (pdf)

Note: The Honeyball discourse is quite short. Read it carefully and as much of *Concept and Reality* as you can manage.

Week 3 – Jan. 21 – NO CLASS because of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Week 4 – Jan. 28 – Meditation as Skillful Philosophical Perception

Primary: Discourse on the Arousing of Mindfulness and Discourse on In and Out Breathing (pdfs)

Commentary: Commentary on the Discourse on the Arousing of Mindfulness (pdf)

Contemporary: Eviatar Shuluman “Mindfulness or How Philosophy Becomes Perception”, ch. 3 of *Rethinking the Buddha* (pdf) and Anālayo’s *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization* (pdf)

Note: Make sure you read the *primary* readings carefully. They are short but dense. Skim the *commentary* for relevance, but don't get bogged down. Make sure you read the Shuluman. The Anālayo book is just for reference. It's an exceptionally well-done piece that everyone should have. Read his translation of the Discourse on the Arousing of Mindfulness at the beginning of the book in comparison with the version in commentary text.

PART II: Abhidharma Controversies: *Dharma*-s between Metaphysics and Phenomenology

Week 5 – Feb. 4 – Deep Bias and the Question of Temporal Framing

Primary: Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* Ch. V – Latent Defilements (*Anuśaya*)

Commentary/Contemporary: *WBU* Ch. 2 and *PGW* Ch. 2

Note: Read *WBU* first for a good framing of the ‘Abhidharma problematic’. For the primary reading do your best but don't stress about it. It's a very long chapter, and I don't expect you to read all of it. However, do make sure to read verses 1-2a and 25-27 very carefully. For a better translation of verses 25-27, see *PGW* Appendix A.

Week 6 – Feb. 11 - Buddhaghosa as Anti-Metaphysician?

Primary: Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga* Ch. XVIII

Contemporary: Heim and Ram-Prasad “In a Double Way: *Nāma-rūpa* in Buddhaghosa’s Phenomenology” (pdf) and “Disentangling the Tangle: Abhidhamma as Phenomenological Analysis”, ch. 4 of Maria Heim’s *Voice of the Buddha: Buddhaghosa on the Immeasurable Words* (pdf)

Note: The Buddhaghosa chapter is pretty short. So, make sure you read both pieces of contemporary literature, focusing on the co-authored piece from Ram-Prasad and Heim. The single-authored Heim chapter is a more extended argument that deals with materials outside of the primary reading.

Week 7 – Feb. 18 – NO CLASS (President’s Day)

Week 8 – Feb. 25 - Buddhaghosa’s Contemplative and Embodied Phenomenology

Primary: Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga* Chs. VI, VIII, XIV

Commentary/Contemporary: “The Body in Contemplation: Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga*” ch. 3 of Ram-Prasad’s *Human Being Bodily, Being: Phenomenology from Classical India* (pdf)

Note: Read Ram-Prasad’s article first and use it’s references as a guide for moving through the relevant parts of the chapters from Buddhaghosa. There is no need to read all of the Buddhaghosa chapters straight through, this is especially so with XIV, which is a long and dizzying read. Just use the Ram-Prasad as a road map and you’ll be okay.

PART III: Yogācāra on Deep and Subtle Suffering and its Non-Dual Solution

Week 9 – Mar. 4 – Introducing Yogācāra and the Storehouse Consciousness

Primary: *WBU* Appendix III and Asaṅga’s *Mahāyana-saṃgraha* Ch. 1 (pdf)

Commentary: Vasubandhu’s Commentary on Asaṅga’s *Mahāyana-saṃgraha* Ch. 1

Contemporary: *WBU* Chs. 3-5

Note: This week has a lot of reading. Focus on Asaṅga’s *Mahāyana-saṃgraha* Ch. 1 and Vasubandhu’s commentary on the same. No need to worry about *WBU* Ch. 5 if it’s too much, but make sure you take a pass Chs. 3-4 of *WBU* as they are commentaries on the two primary readings. In particular, ch. 3 of *WBU* is about the material covered in *WBU* Appendix III and *WBU* ch. 4 is about Ch.1 of Asaṅga’s *Mahāyana-saṃgraha* Ch. 1. Further, make sure to take a look at Vasubandhu’s commentary.

Week 10 – Mar. 11 –Vasubandhu’s Yogācāra Works

Primary: Vasubandhu’s 30 verses and 20 verses (*Vim*) (pdfs)

Commentary: Auto-commentary on the 20 verses (included with text)

Contemporary: Amber Carpenter’s “The Third Turning: Yogācāra”, ch. 7 of *Indian Buddhist Philosophy* (pdf)

Note: The 30-verses is closely connected with the readings from week 9. We will start here. Besides the Silk edition of the *Vim*, also consult Anacker’s translation, which integrates both the root text and the auto-commentary into one readable flow. I’ve also included Kochumuttom’s edition as well. The contemporary piece from Carpenter is excellent and synoptic. It gives an overview of both the 20 and 30 verses as well as the *Treatise on Three Natures*. The last of these we’ll tackle the following week.

Week 11 – Mar. 18 – NO CLASS (Spring Recess)

Week 12 – Mar. 25 – Vasubandhu’s Yogācāra Works II

Primary: Vasubandhu’s *Treatise on Three Natures*: see both *PGW* Appendix F and Jay Garfield’s translation and commentary (pdf)

Commentary/Contemporary: *PGW* Ch. 5

Note: Gold’s translation of the treatise on the three natures from *PGW* is what you should focus on. However, Garfield’s commentary is superb and should be closely studied also. It will help you make sense of what’s going on in the treatise in conjunction with Gold’s chapter.

Week 13 – Apr. 1 – Non-Dualism and the Progressive Path to Liberation

Primary: The *Madhyāntavibhāga* of Maitreya (*MV*)

Commentary: Vasubandhu’s *bhāṣya* (*MVb*)

Contemporary: Mario D’Amato’s study in this volume

Note: Only consult D’Amato if you need. Focus on Vasubandhu’s commentary.

PART IV: Madhyamaka on Self and Proliferation

Week 14 – Apr. 8 – Nāgārjuna and an Introduction to Madhyamaka

Primary: *MMK* Introduction, Dedicatory Verse, Chs. 1 and 15

Commentary: Candrakīrti’s *Prasannapadā* Ch. III (commentary on *MMK* Ch. 1)

Contemporary: Gomez “Proto-Madhyamika in the Pāli Canon” (pdf)

Note: Focus on the primary reading, especially *MMK* Ch.1 and Candrakīrti’s commentary. The Gomez article focuses on the Pāli canon but is important for issues of continuity.

Week 15 – Apr. 15 - Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti on Self

Primary: Ch. 18 of *MMK* and Ch. 6 Candrakīrti’s *Madhyamakavatara* (pdf)

Commentary: Candrakīrti’s *Prasannapadā* Ch. XIV Self and the Way Things Really Are (commentary on *MMK* Ch. 18) (pdf)

Contemporary: Jonardon Ganeri’s “Self as Performance”, Ch. 7 of *The Concealed Art of the Soul*

Note: Try to read everything but focus on the Ganeri chapter as a lens for your reading of the primary and commentarial materials. The Ganeri chapter exquisitely well-written and argued.

Week 16 – Apr. 22 – Śāntideva on Suffering, Self, and Other

Primary: Ch 8 of Śāntideva’s *Bodhicharyāvatāra* (pdf)

Commentary: Prajñākaramati’s *Commentary on VIII 90-103 of BCV* (pdf)

Contemporary: Garfield, Jenkins, and Priest “The Śāntideva Passage VIII 90-103 (pdf)

Note: Focus mostly on the primary source material, especially verses 90-103 of *BCV*. If you’ve never read the *BCV* before, then try and read the whole thing. It’s easy to read and exquisite. That being

said, we are going to try and focus on a deep reading of a relatively circumscribed chunk of text for this week, so make sure you devote the majority of your attention and time to get acquainted with all three of the readings assigned for this week rather than ranging too widely in other parts of the *BCA*.

PART V: Dharmakīrti on Conceptuality, Suffering, and its Cessation

Week 17 – Apr. 29 – From *Vāsanā* to *Apoha*

Primary: Selections from Dharmakīrti’s *Pramāṇavārttika* (pdf)

Commentary: *Manorathanandin’s* *Vṛtti* (pdf)

Contemporary: John Dunne’s “Dharmakīrti’s Apoha-theory of Concept Formation: Some Key Features” (pdf) and Cristina Pecchia’s “Dharmakīrti on the *nirodhasatya*”, ch. 2 of *Dharmakīrti on the Cessation of Suffering*

Note: Start with the contemporary literature. They will help you make sense of the primary and commentarial literature.

Paper Submission Guidelines: See below for late penalty and extension policies.

- Submit all papers to me in class. Email is fine when necessary.
- Do *not* include a title page. Title pages are evil.
- In the top right-hand corner of the first page include the following information single-spaced:

Your Name
Student Number
Course Code
Due Date
Word Count

- Make sure you *title* your papers in a way that reflects the content of what you’ve written.
- Double space your work and use a 12-pt. font.
- Include page numbers in the footer of your pages. Look at this document and mimic it. Be sure to include your name in the footer as well.

Writing Assignment 1: Short Paper (1500-2500 words) 20%:

The length of this assignment is about the length of papers that are requested by the American Philosophical Association (APA) for their 3 annual meetings (Central, Eastern, and Pacific). As a graduate student, you should apply to every APA that you can. This paper will give you such an opportunity. Pick an argument from some of the material we’ve looked at and write a short critical paper about it. Make it argumentative and to the point. *Please consult with me in office hours about your topic and thesis.*

Writing Assignment 2: Long Paper Proposal (2-3 pp) 10%:

You should be thinking about the final paper from the first class. The purpose of this second assignment is to make sure you are doing so by providing me with some indication of what you want to work on. Part of this assignment will involve you coming to see me in office hours to talk about what you're wanting to do with the final paper. *Do not write a final paper without clearing your topic and thesis with me first.* For the proposal assignment itself, you're going to want to write no more than a page or so introducing the general shape of the paper, including your thesis and explaining how you will argue for your thesis. Then provide me with another page(-ish) of detailed outline about how the paper will be structured. If you would like to expand on your short paper for your long paper, that is fine. Lastly, you'll need to include a final page (more is fine as well) of references you plan to consult. This will likely involve you reading outside of the syllabus. Plan accordingly and come talk to me in office hours if you have *any* questions.

Writing Assignment 3: Long Paper (5000-9000 words) 50%

This will be the major assignment for the course, a proper research paper. Please consult with me on what you intend to write about. The word-length represents the average length of articles that appear in professional philosophy journals. By completing this assignment, you will have one such article that you can work on to bring it up to a publishable level of quality. The sooner you can start publishing your work, the better off you'll be in terms of being competitive on the job market. You may write on any topic you like so long as it concerns the material we've covered in the course. My suggestion is that you use the feedback I give you on the short paper to turn it into the long paper. Though, you may write on different topics for the short and long paper if you'd like.

Presentation and Commentary: 10%

Presentation: 25-30 minutes

Commentary: 5-10 minutes

Response: 3-5 minutes

Everyone will do a short conference-style presentation of approximately 25-30 minutes based on the material for that week's reading. The presentation should be accompanied by a concise handout that you will distribute to the class. You do not need to treat of everything we will read for that day. In fact, that would be counter-productive. Instead, you'll want to say something critical and focused about some relevant subsection of the readings that you found interesting. Spend a few minutes reconstructing the argument and then level an objection, raise a concern, or make a proposal. This kind of presentation is standard for academic philosophical conferences. Getting practice at it will be helpful to you in the long-run. Students will also sign up to do a commentary of 5-10 minutes on one of the longer presentations. Presenters will then have 3-5 minutes to respond to the commentator before we open it up for class-wide discussion. The commentaries should provide encouraging but critical feedback to the presenter on their work. Pulling all of this off will involve you having to discuss what you plan to present with your commentator in advance of your presentation. When you have decided on a) when and on what you wish to present and b) on which presentation you wish to give comments, let me know and I'll make a note of it. People can start doing these as early or late as they please. But don't leave it too late in the term, we need to make sure everyone has a chance to participate.

Attendance and Participation: 10%

Students are expected to attend all classes. If you can't make it to class, please let me know in advance. If you expect to miss more than two classes, you should provide medical documentation such you're your participation grade does not suffer. It is expected that everyone will participate in the discussion throughout the duration of any given class. My expectation is that for *all* classes that *every student* will have *at least one* question, concern, or objection based on their reading of the text. You should be prepared, if called upon, to share that question, concern, or objection with the class. This could be as simple as a disambiguation question ('What does this passage mean?'), to an objection to a given argument. If any student feels they will have difficulty in participating in class discussion, please come and talk to me and we will find a way to work through these difficulties.

COURSE POLICIES (Read Carefully):

A. Late Assignments: Assignments will be reduced 1/3 a letter grade for each day that they are late, including weekends. Extensions may be granted if there is need. Students should contact their TA to request extensions before the due date and be prepared to provide any necessary medical documentation.

B. Contact Policy: The Professor and TA's will be available to answer questions at weekly office hours and by appointment. The course website will be used to post announcements and readings; students are expected to check it, and their university email accounts, regularly. Students may email the Professor or TA's with any procedural questions. Keep in-depth philosophical questions for class and office hours.

C. Accessibility: If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, feel free to contact KOKUA at any time. The course instructor is happy to provide any accommodations needed to ensure that all materials and activities are accessible to all students. It is the responsibility of students, however, to communicate their needs to the instructor and accessibility services so that accommodations can be organised in a timely and efficient manner.

<https://www.hawaii.edu/kokua/>

D. Academic Integrity: Don't plagiarise. Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Hawai'i is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, to satisfy an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without identifying that individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation a documented idea that has not been assimilated into the student's language and style; paraphrasing a passage so closely that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved. Another common, though often unreported consequence of representing someone's ideas as your own, is spontaneous combustion, something to be avoided at all costs. The University's Code of Behaviour on plagiarism and academic honesty can be found here:

<https://www.hawaii.edu/eli/useful-information-for-students/academic-honesty/>

E. Health Services: University Health Services Mānoa (UHSM) is staffed by physicians, nurse clinicians, nurses, and other support staff, and offers a wide range of medical services and programs to UH Mānoa students, with many of the services also available to UH Mānoa faculty and staff and students

from other UH campuses. Services include general medical care on a walk-in basis; women's health, sports medicine, psychiatry, and dermatology clinics by appointment; pharmacy and clinical laboratory; and student training, employment and volunteer opportunities.

1710 East West Road Honolulu, Hawaii 96822 Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956- 8965
www.hawaii.edu/shs/

F. Mental Health: Academic work is difficult and psychologically demanding. It's important to work hard and push yourself to do your best, but it is even more important to take care of and be kind to yourself. The instructor is available to discuss such matters if there is need. The University also has a number of resources available. Please do not hesitate to make use of these if difficulties arise:

<https://manoa.hawaii.edu/campus-life/health/>
<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/counseling/>

G. Title IX: The University of Hawaii is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these, the University has staff and resources on your campus to support and assist you. Staff can also direct you to resources that are in the community.

If you wish to remain **ANONYMOUS**, speak with someone **CONFIDENTIALLY**, or would like to receive information and support in a **CONFIDENTIAL** setting, contact the confidential resources available here:

<http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/titleix/resources.html#confidential>

If you wish to **REPORT** an incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking as well as receive information and support, contact:

Contact: Dee Uwono - Director and Title IX Coordinator
Hawai'i Hall 124 2500 Campus Road
Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956-2299
t9uhm@hawaii.edu

Important Note: As a member of the University faculty, I am **required to immediately report** any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator. Although the Title IX Coordinator and I cannot guarantee confidentiality, you will still have options about how your case will be handled. My goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources and support you need. For more information regarding sex discrimination and gender-based violence, the University's Title IX resources and the University's Policy, Interim EP 1.204, go to:

<http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/titleix/>

H. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Student Services: UH Mānoa strives to maintain a safe and inclusive campus environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. The office provides direct services to students of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to confidentially discuss or seek advocacy and support for mistreatment due to their actual or perceived sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Contact: Camaron Miyamoto
Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services 211 2600 Campus Road
Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956-9250
email: lgbtq@hawaii.edu
<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/lgbt/>

I. Office of Gender Equity: This office offers direct services to victims and survivors of sexual harassment and sexual assaults. Brief descriptions of services offered are available here.

Contact: Jenna Friedman
Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services 210 2600 Campus Road
Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956-9499
email: geneq@hawaii.edu
www.manoa.hawaii.edu/genderequity

J. Prevention, Awareness, and Understanding (PAU) Violence Program: This program exists to inspire, educate, and empower students and campus communities to build safe living-learning environments, end interpersonal violence, and encourage holistic well-being in ways that are supportive, collaborative, student-centered, and strengths-based. PAU Violence Program staff provides direct services to all University of Hawai'i at Mānoa students including crisis response, safety planning, academic support, and referrals to campus and community resources.

Contacts: Jennifer Barnett and Leslie Cabingabang
Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services 211 2600 Campus Road
Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956-8059
uhmpau@hawaii.edu

K. Student Parents At Mānoa (SPAM): This group seeks to increase the visibility of and resources for student parents at UH Mānoa as they pursue education while parenting. SPAM staff provide advocacy, support, and referrals for pregnant and parenting students to help them succeed in their educational goals.

Contact: Teresa Bill
2600 Campus Road
Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services 211 Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956-8059
gotkids@hawaii.edu
<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/studentparents/>