

# Syllabus for Philosophy 335: Buddhist Philosophy Fall 2011

Classroom: Daniel 218  
M/W/F 1:00-1:50

Instructor: Jeremy Henkel  
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Office: Daniel 212  
Office hours: M/W 10-11:30, T/R 2:30-3:30  
(and by appointment)

## Required Texts:

Walpola Rahula: *What the Buddha Taught* (Grove Press)  
Mark Siderits: *Buddhism as Philosophy* (Hackett)  
John J. Holder, ed.: *Early Buddhist Discourses* (Hackett)  
Jan Westerhoff: *Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka* (Oxford)  
(Additional readings will be made available either in class or electronically)

## **Course Description:**

This course is meant to serve simultaneously as an introduction to the basic ideas of Buddhism and as an opportunity to engage critically with those ideas as they were developed by Buddhist philosophers in Classical and Medieval India and Tibet. This course is not a study of Buddhism as a religion: we will examine the arguments provided by Buddhist thinkers rather than, for instance, Buddhist mythology or ritual practices. In the first half of the course we will focus on the doctrines and arguments that characterize Indian Buddhist philosophy. The second half of the course will be dedicated to an extended examination of the Buddhist philosopher *Nāgārjuna*, father of the *Madhyamaka* school of Buddhism that rose to prominence in Tibet.

## **Evaluation:**

Your grade in this course will be based on the following considerations:

- **Participation (15%):** Philosophy is a conversation. You are expected to come to class every day ready to participate in that conversation. This includes having done the reading and having thought about the reading enough to come to class with questions and/or comments about the reading. Your Participation grade will reflect your demonstrated ability consistently to speak enough so that your classmates can learn from your insights, while listening enough so that you can learn from theirs.  
**(Attendance Note:** you are allowed up to 3 absences in this class; absences beyond that will result in a deduction in your Participation grade. If participation in official college events requires you to miss 3 or more classes, then you are allowed 1 additional personal absence before experiencing a grade penalty)
- **Weekly Reflections (10%):** For those weeks that you do not have another writing assignment, you are expected to submit a one-page reflection on the week's readings and discussions. Reflections can be emailed to me (inline text please: be like a Buddhist and abandon all attachments) before the start of class on the day they're due, or turned in as a hard copy in class. Your Reflections will be returned, with comments, at the following class session. Grading for Reflections is on a credit/no-credit basis. You are also given one no-questions-asked Reflection Exemption, which you can use at any time during the semester (that is, you only have to turn in 10 of the 11 Reflection assignments to receive full credit).

- **Short Essay** (10%): You will be expected to write a short (3-page) essay during week four, on the basic doctrines of Buddhism. The specific assignment will be distributed in class.
- **Mid-Term** (25%): Your mid-term essay (4-6 pages) is due the day of our final class meeting before the mid-semester break. I will return your essays with comments and a grade after the break. If you are not satisfied with your grade you will have the option to re-write your essay in response to the comments and re-submit for a chance at an improved grade. Re-writes must be turned in within one week of comments being distributed. The specific assignment for the mid-term essay will be distributed in class.
- **Final Essay** (40%): Your final essay (8-10 pages) is due by 5:00 on the scheduled day of the final according to the exam schedule. Your final essay will be on a topic of your choosing, subject to the caveat that it must be clearly and directly relevant to the Westerhoff book, which we will be reading during the second half of the course. A 1-page paper proposal is due the day of the final class meeting before Thanksgiving Break.

**Please note:** The short essay, mid-term, and final should be submitted via email as an attachment (Word document or .rtf file). The short essay and mid-term must be in my inbox by midnight on the due date. (Note that this is already an 11-hour extension over being due at the beginning of class, so please don't try to extend it any further. At 12:01 the next day your assignments will be considered late.) The final essay is due by 5:00 pm. Except in legitimately extenuating circumstances, late essays will incur a grade penalty of one grade-fraction (A becomes A-) for every two days late. Finally, the short essay, the mid-term, and the final essay must **all** be turned in to receive a passing grade for this class.

**Please also note:** I consider cell phone use during class to be unacceptable. Please make it a policy of not bringing your cell phone to class at all. If that is impossible, then turn your cell phone off (do not simply leave it on vibrate) before class begins. Anyone whose cell phone rings or vibrates during class will incur a deduction in their participation grade and will be required, as penance, to bring snacks for the whole class to our next class meeting. (Please discuss with me in advance if you ever have an emergency that you feel warrants an exemption from this cell phone policy.)

### **Statement on Academic Honesty:**

All Wofford students are bound by the Wofford Honor Code, as described in pages 27-31 of the Wofford Student Handbook, available online here:

<http://www.wofford.edu/uploadedFiles/studentLife/Student%20Handbook.pdf>

Any suspected incidents of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Dean of the College.

## Schedule of Topics

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment(s)	Writing Assignment
9/5	Introduction		
9/7	Buddhism as Philosophy	Siderits, Chapter 1 Rahula, Chapter 1 Holder, Chapter 2	
9/9	Overview of Indian Philosophy	Kalupahana (handout)	Weekly Reflection
9/12	The 4 Noble Truths	Rahula, Chapters 2-5	
9/14	The 4 Noble Truths and Dependent Arising	Siderits, Chapter 2 Holder, Chapter 5	
9/16	Review and Discussion		Weekly Reflection
9/19	The Self: East and West	<i>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</i> Descartes, Meditations 1&2	
9/21	Not-Self in Buddhism	Rahula, Chapter 6 Holder, Chapters 3 (verses 1-32), 12	
9/23	Not-Self in Buddhism	Siderits Chapter 3 Holder, Chapter 7	Weekly Reflection
9/26	Buddhist Ethics	Siderits Chapter 4 Holder Chapter 6	
9/28	Buddhist Ethics	Holder Chapter 9, 16	
9/30	Buddhist Ethics		<b>Short essay due</b>
10/3	Abhidharma	Siderits Chapter 6	
10/5	Abhidharma	Kalupahana Chapters 12-14 (handout)	
10/7	Abhidharma	Abhidharmakośa (handout)	Weekly Reflection
10/10	Mahāyāna	Siderits Chapter 7	
10/12	Yogācāra	Siderits Chapter 8	
10/14	Yogācāra		Weekly Reflection
10/17	Madhyamaka	Siderits Chapter 9	
10/19	Review and Discussion		<b>Mid-term essay due</b>
10/21	(Academic Holiday)		
10/24	Nāgārjuna	Westerhoff Chapter 1	
10/26	Svabhāva	Westerhoff Chapter 2	
10/28	Svabhāva		Weekly Reflection
10/31	Negation	Westerhoff Chapter 3	
11/2	Negation		
11/4	The Catuṣkoti	Westerhoff Chapter 4	Weekly Reflection
11/7	The Catuṣkoti		
11/9	Causation	Westerhoff Chapter 5	
11/11	Causation		Weekly Reflection
11/14	Motion	Westerhoff Chapter 6	
11/16	Motion		
11/18	The Self	Westerhoff Chapter 7	Weekly Reflection

11/21	The Self		<b>Final Essay Proposal Due</b>
11/23 11/25	(Happy Thanksgiving!)		
11/28	Epistemology	Westerhoff Chapter 8	
11/30	Epistemology		
12/2	Language	Westerhoff Chapter 9	Weekly Reflection
12/5	Language		
12/7	Conclusion	Westerhoff Chapter 10	
12/9	Wrap-Up		Weekly Reflection
12/12	<b>Final Essay Due: 5:00 pm</b>		