

**REL 475 SEMINAR ON BUDDHISM:
BUDDHISM IN HAWAI'I: LOCAL PRACTICES AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS**

Spring 2018 University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Classes: Tuesdays 1:30-4pm in Sakamaki Hall classroom B308

Office hours: Tuesdays 4-5pm, and by appointment, in Sakamaki Hall A407

Professor Jeff Wilson: jeff.wilson@hawaii.edu, 808-956-8345

A helpful link to consult before sending email to your professors:

<http://www.wellesley.edu/socialcomputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html>

Description:

In this course we will explore prominent traditions and key themes in the development and analysis of Buddhism in Hawai'i, with consideration of trans-Pacific contexts that affect Buddhism here. Issues covered will include gender, race, discrimination, economics, pop culture, and more. By the end of the term students will be able to explain how different varieties of Buddhism have manifested in different times and places in Hawai'i and North America, from the 19th century to the present day.

Objectives:

- 1) Students will learn about Buddhist beliefs and practices.
- 2) Students will become familiar with how religions change as they cross cultural boundaries.
- 3) Students will explore the Buddhist contributions to Hawai'i's religious and cultural heritage.
- 3) Students will consider the place of Buddhism in America's religious diversity, including how it impacts non-Buddhist religions and other elements of culture.

Required texts:

We will read five books for this course. They are all autobiographies by Buddhists of America, providing us an opportunity to consider how various people experience Buddhism in their lives. These books will be made available on reserve in the Hamilton library, and you are encouraged to purchase them for yourself:

Memoirs of a Buddhist Woman Missionary in Hawaii, by Shigeo Kikuchi
Saffron Days in L.A.: Tales of Buddhist Monk in America, by Bhante Walpola Piyandana

Saltwater Buddha: A Surfer's Quest to Find Zen on the Sea, by Jaimal Yogis
In Buddha's Kitchen: Cooking, Being Cooked, and Other Adventures in a Meditation Center, by Kimberly Snow

Dreaming Me: Black, Baptist, and Buddhist—One Woman's Spiritual Journey, by Jan Willis

There are also recommended supplemental readings for many days. These are not required, but will enhance the learning of students who do engage with them.

Marking:

Course marking for REL 475 is distributed into three areas. First, participation counts for 10%. Second, students will write five short papers in response to the assigned books. Details about those writing assignments will be provided. These papers are collectively worth 50% of the overall grade. Lastly, students will do a research project and present their findings to the class; the paper and presentation will count for 40% of the grade. Details about this assignment will be provided.

Optional Extra Credit Assignments

Students who wish to receive extra credit may read an extra book and hand in an additional short paper for up to five extra marks. The book is *The Empty Mirror: Experiences in A Japanese Zen Monastery* by Janwillem van de Wetering. This optional assignment is due March 13.

Students may also receive extra credit by completing a Buddhism scavenger hunt, due April 24. Details will be given in class.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend every scheduled class, and attendance will be taken. Failure to attend without an acceptable excuse will result in reduction of the participation grade. Repeated late arrivals or early departures from class will likewise result in reduction of the participation grade.

There are two types of excusable absences. Anticipated excused absences include the following: 1) The student is away from campus representing an official university function, (e.g., participating on an athletic team). A note from a University faculty or staff member (e.g. your coach) must be provided PRIOR to the absence. 2) Required court attendance. A note certified by the Clerk of Court must be provided. 3) Religious observances. The student must notify the professor and obtain permission PRIOR to the holiday. 4) Required military duty. A note from the student's commanding officer is required.

Emergency absences include the following: 1) Serious illness or injury. A note must be provided by an attending physician. 2) Death or serious illnesses in the family when documented appropriately. An attempt to verify deaths or serious illness may be made by the instructor. In all cases the reason for the unexpected absence must be reported to the instructor within

one week of the student's return to class.

Etiquette:

If you register for the course after lectures have already begun, you are responsible for finding out what you missed. There is no make-up work allowed in this course.

Laptops and all other electronic devices are to be turned off and stowed away during class time. You may use paper to take notes if you wish. Studies conclusively demonstrate that laptops and smartphones cause distraction for students and their classmates, and that handwritten notes result in better comprehension and retention than electronic ones. Students who violate the electronics policy will be asked to turn off their devices, and will have their final mark decreased. NOTE: students who need access to electronic devices for approved accessibility issues or one-time family emergency situations may ask for possible relaxation of this policy.

Students may eat and drink during class so long as it does not distract anyone else in the classroom. Therefore you should avoid smelly foods or noisy packaging.

Class begins at 1:30am and ends at 4pm. Students who are not seated by 1:30pm will be marked late; students who leave before the end of class will be docked in their attendance mark. If you are unable to be in class by 1:30pm or unable to stay until the end of class you should register for a different course instead.

Please read this course outline very carefully. Note that this outline may evolve as new possibilities for activities emerge, but the amount of required work will not significantly increase or decrease.

January 9: Introduction

January 16: Early Buddhist History in America

Optional reading: Thomas A. Tweed, *The American Encounter with Buddhism, 1844-1912*, University of North Carolina Press (2000).

January 23: Pure Land Buddhism

Paper due on *Memoirs of a Buddhist Woman Missionary in Hawaii*

Optional reading: Michihiro Ama, *Immigrants to the Pure Land*, University of Hawaii Press, 2011.

January 30: East Asian Mahayana

Optional Reading: Sharon Suh, *Being Buddhist in a Christian World*, University of Washington Press, 2004.

February 6: Visual and Material Culture

Optional reading: George J. and Willa Tanabe, *Japanese Buddhist Temples in Hawai'i*, University of Hawai'i Press (2013).

John R.K. Clark, *Guardian of the Sea: Jizo in Hawai'i*, University of Hawai'i Press (2007).

February 13: Theravada Buddhism

Optional reading: Douglas M. Padgett, "The Translating Temple: Diasporic Buddhism in Florida," in *Westward Dharma*, Charles S. Prebish and Martin Baumann, eds., University of California Press, 2002: 201-217.

February 20: Theravada Buddhism

Paper due on *Saffron Days in L.A.*

Optional reading: Wendy Cadge, *Heartwood*, University of Chicago Press, 2004.

February 27: Issues in the Study of Buddhism in America

Optional reading: Thomas A. Tweed, "Who is a Buddhist? Night-Stand Buddhists and Other Creatures," in *Westward Dharma*, Charles S. Prebish and Martin Baumann, eds., University of California Press, 2002: 17-33

Optional reading: Wakoh Shannon Hickey, "Two Buddhisms, Three Buddhisms, and Racism," *Journal of Global Buddhism*, vol. 11 (2010): 1-25,

<http://www.globalbuddhism.org/jgb/index.php/jgb/article/view/112/126>

Optional reading: Jeff Wilson, "Mapping the American Buddhist Terrain: Paths Taken and Possible Itineraries," *Religion Compass*, vol. 3, no. 5 (2009): 836-846.

March 6: Zen Buddhism

Optional reading: Jorn Borup, "Aloha Buddha: The Secularization of Ethnic Japanese-American Buddhism," *Journal of Global Buddhism*, vol. 14 (2013): 23-43,

<http://www.globalbuddhism.org/jgb/index.php/jgb/article/view/136/151>

Optional reading: David L. McMahan, "Repackaging Zen for the West," in *Westward Dharma*, Charles S. Prebish and Martin Baumann, eds., Univ. of California Press, 2002: 218-229.

March 13: Zen Buddhism

Paper due on *Saltwater Buddha*

Optional papers due on *The Empty Mirror*

Optional reading: Richard Jaffe, ed., *Selected Works of D.T. Suzuki, Volume I: Zen*, University of California Press (2014).

March 20: Tibetan Buddhism

Optional reading: Donald S. Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, University of Chicago Press (1998)

March 27: Spring Break (No class)

April 3: Tibetan Buddhism

Paper due on *In Buddha's Kitchen*

April 10: Economics and Buddhism Outside Asia

Optional reading: Senryō Asai and Duncan Ryūken Williams, "Japanese American Zen Temples: Cultural Identity and Economics," in *American Buddhism: Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship*, Christopher Queen and Duncan Ryūken Williams, eds., Routledge (1999): 20-35.

Optional reading: Jiemin Bao, "Not Simple Temple Food: Thai Community Building in the United States," *Journal of Global Buddhism*, vol. 18 (2017): 189-209

<http://www.globalbuddhism.org/jgb/index.php/jgb/article/view/205/219>

Optional reading: Jeff Wilson, "Selling Mindfulness: Commodity Lineages and the Marketing of Mindful Products," in *Handbook of Mindfulness*, Ronald E. Purser and David Forbes, eds., Springer (2016): 109-120.

April 17: *Dreaming Me*

Paper due on *Dreaming Me*

April 24: Mindfulness and Pop Culture

Optional scavenger hunt due

Optional reading: Jeff Wilson, *Mindful America*, Oxford University Press, 2014

May 1: Student presentations (Last day of class)

May 4: (No class): **Research papers due**