PHIL 445 / PHIL 510B / AAAS 482P: 
Buddhist Metaphysics 
Fall 2017

Prof. Charles Goodman
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Office hours: Wednesdays, 2:00 – 4:00 PM in LT 1214, on the twelfth floor of the Library Tower; and by appointment

Course Description:
We will study philosophical theories about reality, and about our knowledge of reality, developed by Buddhists in India and Tibet. First, we will examine the ontology and metaphysics of early Buddhism and of Abhidharma texts, and compare their ideas with those of contemporary analytic philosophers. We will then use both primary and secondary sources to investigate Nāgārjuna’s radical critique of all philosophical views. In particular, we will give detailed examination to the interpretation of Nāgārjuna offered by the Tibetan philosopher Tsong kha pa. During class discussions, we will critically investigate Buddhist arguments and analyze their strengths and weaknesses. Among the issues we will discuss are time and change, causation, personal identity, and the nature of knowledge.

Prerequisites: Two courses in philosophy.

Course Requirements:
Attendance in class is expected, and since this is a seminar, active participation in class is essential. Students will be evaluated on the quantity and quality of class participation. There will be two papers, 6-8 pages in length. Each of these two papers must be revised and handed back in. There will also be a final seminar paper, 8-12 pages long. Late papers will lose one-third of a grade per day. At each class, a question about the reading for the next session will be provided. Five times during the semester, there will be an unannounced, one-page in-class writing assignment on the reading question.

Grading Policy:
Grades in Philosophy 486E/AAAS 482P will be based on the following factors:

- Attendance and Participation 15%
- In-class Writing Assignments 5%
- First Paper 15%
- First Paper Revision 10%
- Second Paper 15%
- Second Paper Revision 10%
- Final Seminar Paper 30%
**Plagiarism:**
As it is a type of academic dishonesty, plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated in this course. You may, however, discuss issues about Buddhist philosophy with your fellow students, as long as the papers you turn in are substantially your own work. If you do commit plagiarism on any assignment, you will receive a grade of F for that assignment, and additional measures may be taken at the discretion of the instructor.

**Learning Objectives:**

- To become familiar with the major forms of Buddhist philosophy and the differences among them.
- To learn the principal arguments for the doctrine of no self.
- To develop skill in comparing Asian and Western philosophical ideas.
- To increase proficiency in analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of philosophical arguments.
- To improve writing skills and critical thinking abilities.

This course fulfills the H general education requirement:
Students in H courses will demonstrate an understanding of human experience though the study of literature or philosophy.

This course fulfills the C general education requirement:
C courses emphasize writing as a process of revision and require a minimum of 20 pages of expository prose. Students will perform the basic operations of personal computer use; understand and use basic research techniques; and locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources. At least 50 percent of the course grade is based on student writing.

**Required Readings:**


List of Readings and Discussion Topics:

8/24: **What Is Buddhist Philosophy?** (Guest lecture, Schultz)

8/29: **Introduction to Buddhism**
Goodman, “Fundamental Buddhist Teachings,” available on the Blackboard website

8/31: **The Worldview of the Abhidharma**
Edelglass and Garfield ch. 1, 23

9/5: **Dependent Arising**
“Rice Sheaf Sutra,” on Blackboard

9/7: **Why There Is No Soul (I)**
Edelglass and Garfield ch. 26

9/12: **Why There Is No Soul (II)**
Edelglass and Garfield ch. 28

9/14: **A Question about Composition**
van Inwagen, Preface and ch. 1-2, pp. 1-32

9/19: **Some Answers**
van Inwagen, ch. 3, 6 and 8, pp. 33-37, 56-60, 72-80

No class 9/21 (Rosh Hashanah)

9/26: **Life and Substance**
van Inwagen, ch. 9-11, pp. 81-114

9/28: **Identity and Modality**
van Inwagen ch. 12-14, pp. 115-168

10/3: **Subjects of Experience**
van Inwagen ch. 15-16, pp. 169-212
First Paper Topics made available

10/5: **The Great Way**
“The 37 Practices of a Bodhisattva,” on Blackboard

10/10: **The Philosophy of Idealism**
Edelglass and Garfield ch. 3
First Paper due

10/12: **Causes and Conditions**
Siderits and Katsura ch. 1
No class 10/17 (Fall break)

10/19: **Substance, Property, Motion**  
Siderits and Katsura ch. 2, 6, 9, and 15

10/24: **Conventional Existence and Ultimate Freedom**  
Siderits and Katsura ch. 24, 25 and 27  
First Paper Revision due

10/26: **Pragmatism**  
Second Paper topics made available

10/31: **Buddhist Epistemology**  
Edelglass and Garfield ch. 9, 17; Siderits, “Deductive, Inductive, Both, or Neither,” on Blackboard

11/2: **The Problem of Universals**  
Siderits, “Buddhist Nominalism and Desert Ornithology,” on Blackboard

11/7: **The Madhyamaka Critique of Epistemology**  
Siderits, “The Madhyamaka Critique of Epistemology I” and “Madhyamaka on Naturalized Epistemology,” on Blackboard

11/9: **Zen Buddhism**  
Edelglass and Garfield ch. 7, 13, 22

11/14: **Buddhism in Tibet**  
Tsong kha pa ch. 1, 6

11/16: **Tibetan Philosophy of Mind**  
Garfield, “The Conventional Status of Reflexive Awareness,” on Blackboard

11/21: **Identifying the Object of Negation**  
Tsong kha pa ch. 9-11  
Second Paper Revision due

11/28: **The Status of the Conventional**  
Tsong kha pa ch. 12-14  
Final Paper Topic Suggestions made available

11/30: **Emptiness and Causation**  
Tsong kha pa ch. 15-16
12/5: **What to Negate**  
Tsong kha pa ch. 17-19

12/7: **How to Live the View**  
Edelglass and Garfield ch. 37; “The Perfection of Patient Endurance,” on Blackboard

Final Paper due during exam period