

Rel 470/570 BUDDHIST WISDOM TEXTS
A repeatable course

This Spring we focus on texts written as guides to contemplative practice, an opportunity to read and reflect together on some of the most brilliant, beautiful, philosophical or poetic contemplative materials from the Buddhist tradition. Meditation based on some of these will be part of the course, both in and out of class. We will also consider select current research in contemplative science. Through reflecting on the readings and our own experience of their instruction, as well as third-person accounts emerging from neuroscience, we will inquire into the rich relationship between first, second, and third person approaches to this material, that is, among our own first-person experience, the instructional texts as well as the questions we ask each other being second person, and the scientific material a key example of third person accounts.

Class time will be spent largely in discussion of our readings, and will also include guided or silent meditation, some video material and lecture time. Each student will prepare a few minutes of discussion on a selection from the week's reading, and will make at least two 15-20 minute presentations during the semester. There will be room in the syllabus for you to pursue readings and initiate class discussion in areas of interest that develop during the semester.

Some basic background in Buddhism or other contemplative tradition is assumed. Questions...please contact me! ack@rice.edu

Detailed syllabus available in class and posted on OwlSpace next week.

Stages of the Path Most Briefly:

Stages of Meditation: Nyingma's Nine Vehicles and Geluk Lam Rim

Week 1 Jan 14 Introducing the Longchenpa's *Seven Trainings for Dzogchen* (handout)

Week 2 Jan 21

Further reflection on Longchen's *Seven* and close reading of Jigme Lingpa's commentary on it (Handout)

Recommended: Short Bios of Longchenpa and Jigme Lingpa (PDFs)
Student reflection

Week 3 Jan 28

A. Concluding Reflections on Longchenpa/Jigme Lingpa

B. *The Great Treatise (Lam Rim)* Foreward & Intro Prologue Skim 35-43.
Read 45-67 "How to Listen to and Explain the Teachings"

C. Griffiths, *Religious Reading* pp.3-21 (report, discussion)

Week 4 Feb 4 *Lam Rim* 69-116

“Relying on a Teacher,” The Meditation Session,” “Refuting Misconceptions about Meditation”

We’ll watch segments of the Dalai Lama introducing *Lam Rim Words* “how to follow a Spiritual Friend” 137-166

And also 5 minutes Bob Thurman

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3R_lz2UzakM

Words of My Perfect Teacher Prologue, Prologue, 7-18

Student reflection

Week 5 Feb 11

Lam Rim 117- 175 Human Life of Leisure and Opportunity,

Three types of persons, Mindfulness of Death, Reflecting on Your Future Life

Words 19-59 Human Life/Freedoms & Advantages; impermanence of life,

Recommended: *Reflections on Silver Lake*

Discussion: Compare with Longchenpa/Jigme Lingpa,

Insights from Griffiths

Week 6 Feb 18

Lam Rim 177-246 with emphasis on 177-214 Going for Refuge, Varieties of Karma

Words 61-134 Defects of Samsara, Actions, Cause and Effect, Benefits of Liberation

Words 171-192 *Refuge*

Rec, Ken McLeod *Wake up to your Life*, Karma & Dismantling Belief p. 127-205 (this relevant for next several weeks as well)

Report from Neuroscience! (Renee?)

Week 7 Feb 25

Lam Rim 247-313 with emphasis on 261-263 and 289-213

Cultivating ethical behavior, attitude of a person of small capacity, 8 types of suffering, 6 types of suffering, further meditations on suffering, origin of suffering

Words

Spring Break No Class Mar 4

Week 8 Mar 11 *Lam Rim* 315-353, emphasize 341-353 *Twelve factors of dependent arising*,

Nature of the Path to Liberation, Nature of the three trainings

Griffiths, *Reading* 22-59

Student Paper Reports

Week 9 Mar 18 BODHICITTA

Lam Rim Vol. 2 pp. 13-60 (c.f. also Shantideva)

Words 195-261

Anne "The Four Immeasurables" (PDF)

Ken, *Wake Up to Your Life*, "The Four Immeasurables" 243-272

Week 10 Mar 25 *Lam Rim* 61-141; emphasis 101-126 (Training & Generosity)

Ritual for Adopting the Spirit of Enlightenment,

Maintaining the spirit of enlightenment, intro to the six perfections,

Training in the Mahayana, Perfection of generosity

Rec. *Wake Up to Your Life*, 272-312

Contemplative Science on compassion

Week 11 April 1 (Before Easter, no Thursday classes)

Lam Rim 143-224; emphasis on Perfections of

Meditative Stabilization and Wisdom

c.f. Shantideva and Dalai Lama, *Perfecting Wisdom*

Week 12 April 8

BUDDHANATURE (Uttara Tantra/Sublime Continuum/Mindstream
Sublime) pp. 17-52; 79-150

Week 13 April 15 TANTRA & EMPTINESS

Words Vajrasattva

Creation & Completion Intro

Guy Newland, *Introduction to Emptiness*

Tsongkapa's *Middling Exposition of Emptiness*

Week 14 April 22 REVIEW AND REFINE AND CATCH UP

Continuing Newland, Introduction

TKP *Middling Exposition*

Student reports

Exams April 29-May 6th

READINGS:

Longchen Rabjam, *Seven Mind Trainings* (handout)

Jigme Lingpa, *Stairway to Liberation*, a commentary on Longchenpa's text (Handout)

Patrul Rinpoche, *Words of My Perfect Teacher*

Tsongkhapa *The Great Treatise* (especially volumes I and II) "one of the brightest jewels in the world's treasury of sacred literature." (Kindle & Hardcover, new & used)

Asanga/Maitreya, *Buddhanature*

Paul Griffiths, *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion* (Selections, pdf)

Harding, Sarah, *Creation & Completion*

Dalai Lama, *Perfecting Wisdom* (sections on the Two truths—review)

Guy Newland, *Introduction to Emptiness: As Taught in Tsongkhapa's "Great Treatise"* (available in paperback and on kindle)

<http://www.amazon.com/Introduction-To-Emptiness-Tsong-Kha-Pas-Treatise/dp/1559393327>