Rangjung Yeshe Institute Fall 2023 - Course Overview

*Please be aware courses highlighted in yellow are offered online and available for non-credit study*

Language Courses
1. Nepali
2. Sanskrit
3. Classical Tibetan
4. Colloquial Tibetan

Undergraduate Level Courses
1. BSTD 101 Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture
2. BSTD 203 Fundamentals of Buddhism
3. BSTD 205 Anthropological Study of Nepalese Religions
4. BSTD 412 Special Topics: Root Verses on the Middle Way (Mulamadhyamakākarikā) II - donation based for non-credit students
5. BSTD 413 Special Topics: Comparative Philosophy
6. BSTD 308 Buddhist Philosophy in Indian Context

Graduate Level Courses
1. BSTD 505/603: Research Seminar: “Introduction to Canonical Translation Literature”
2. BSTD 601: Thesis Writing Workshop
3. BSTD 705 Methodology Seminar I
4. BSTD 707/801 Translation Workshop
5. BSTD 802/803 Methodology Seminar III

Tibetan Medium Philosophy Courses
1. TSTD 101 བློ་དྱོང་གེ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ལེན་དཔོན་ལྡན། Bodhicaryāvatāra, The Way of the Bodhisattva by Śāntideva.
2. TSTD 201/301/401: འཕགས་པ་ལ་འཇུག་པ The Gateway to Knowledge by Ju Mipham.
3. TSTD 305/405: བུད་བཟོ་བཞི་བརྒྱ་པ Words of My Perfect Teacher by Dza Patrul.
4. ATSP 501/601/ TSTD 701: དབུ་མ་རྩ་བ་ཤེས་རབ Mulamadhyamikākāriā, The Root Verses on the Middle Way by Nāgārjunā\n5. ATSP 502/602/ TSTD 701: རྣལ་འབྱྤོར་སྤྱོད་པ་བཞི་བརྒྱ་པ The Fourhundred Verses by Āryadeva
Detailed Information

Language Courses - all language courses are available for online study

**Nepali**

**NLAN 101 Nepali I**

**Schedule**
- NLAN 101 MC 1 OC on campus  M, W 2:00p-3:00p
- NLAN 101 MC 2 OL online  M, W 8:00-9:00p

**Instructor:**
- Pavitra Paudyal

**Course Description**
This course introduces students to basic patterns of spoken and written Nepali centering on various situational examples. Students learn the Devanāgarī script and basic sentence structure and begin building a vocabulary of colloquial words and phrases. Basic grammatical concepts of spoken Nepali are introduced and illustrated. Emphasis is placed on active learning, with students using techniques such as role-playing in order to develop confidence in speaking. During classes students are given the opportunity to practice their skills privately or in small groups with a native Nepali speaker.

**Additional Information**
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- Prerequisites: None.

**NLAN 201 Nepali III**

**Schedule**
- NLAN 201 MC 1 OC on campus  M, W 3:15p-4:15p
- NLAN 201 MC 2 OL online  T, Th 7:45p-8:45p

**Course Description**
This course builds on the basic understanding of Nepali grammar and vocabulary acquired in Nepali I and II. Students develop facility with more complex sentence structures and gain a more extensive vocabulary. After a review of the basic Nepali grammatical structures learned previously, this course covers increasingly more complex sentence structures while emphasizing practical language use and application so that students become more and more comfortable and fluent with their spoken Nepali. During classes students are given the opportunity to practice their skills privately or in small groups with a native Nepali speaker.

**Additional Information**
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
Prerequisites: NLAN 102: Nepali II or permission of the instructor.

**Sanskrit**

**SLAN 101 Sanskrit I**

**Schedule**
SLAN 101 Lec 2 OL  M, W 6:15p - 7:45p  
SLAN 101 Lec 3 OL  M, W 9:30p - 11:00p

**Course Description**
This course covers the Devanāgarī script and the rules of euphonic combination (sandhi). Students are introduced to the general principles of Sanskrit word construction, syntax, and grammar. Although this course focuses upon understanding and memorization of the rules of declension and conjugation, students also begin building a Sanskrit vocabulary of Buddhist terminology.

**Additional Information**
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- Prerequisites: None
- This course has additional traditional chanting classes:

  SLAN 101 TR 1 OC  F 10:00a-11:00a
  SLAN 101 TR 2 OL  F 7:00am-8:00am
  SLAN 101 TR 3 OL  F 5:00p-6:00p

**SLAN 201 Sanskrit III**

**Schedule**
SLAN 201 Lec 2 OL  T, Th 9:00p-10:30p

**Course Description**
This course focus on furthering the ability to read classical Sanskrit texts with an emphasis on Buddhist literature. In reading from a spectrum of literary genres such as that found in poetry, dramatic literature, epics, and philosophical discourse, students gain familiarity with the variety of style and grammar used in written Sanskrit. Through in-depth analysis of the grammatical systems employed in this literature, the courses increasingly consolidate the understanding of Sanskrit grammar gained in Sanskrit I and II.

**Additional Information**
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- **Prerequisites**: For SLAN 201, SLAN 102: Sanskrit II.
- This course has additional traditional chanting classes

SLAN 201 TR 1 OC  Th 10:00a-11:00a
SLAN 201 TR 2 OL  Th 7:00a-8:00a
SLAN 201 TR 3 OL  Th 5:00p-6:00p

**SLAN 301 Sanskrit V**

**Schedule**
SLAN 301 Lec 2 OL  T 6:45p-8:45p

**Course Description**
This course focuses on furthering the ability to read classical Sanskrit texts with an emphasis on Buddhist literature. In reading from a spectrum of literary genres such as poetry, dramatic literature, epics, and philosophical discourse, students gain familiarity with the variety of style and grammar used in written Sanskrit. Through in-depth analysis of the grammatical systems employed in this literature, the courses increasingly consolidate the understanding of Sanskrit grammar.

**Additional Information**
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- **Prerequisites**: For SLAN 201, SLAN 102: Sanskrit II.
- This course has additional traditional chanting classes

| SLAN 301 TR 1 CC | W 9:45am-11:15am |
| SLAN 301 TR 2 OL | W 6:30p-8:00p |

**Colloquial Tibetan**

**TLAN 103 Colloquial Tibetan I**

**Schedule**
TLAN 103 MC 1 CC  M, W 2:00p-3:00p
TLAN 103 MC 2 OL  M, W 7:45p-8:45p

**Course Description**
This course introduces students to the basics of spoken Tibetan. Basic sentence structure is taught and students begin building a vocabulary of colloquial words and phrases. Basic grammatical concepts unique to spoken Tibetan are introduced and illustrated. Emphasis is placed upon active learning, with students using techniques such as role-playing in order to develop confidence in speaking. In classes, students are given the opportunity to practice their skills privately or in small groups with a native Tibetan speaker.

**Additional Information**
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- **Prerequisites**: No course prerequisites exist, but familiarity with the Tibetan alphabet is assumed.
TLAN 203 Colloquial Tibetan III

Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TLAN 203 MC 1 OC</td>
<td>T, Th 3:15p-4:15p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLAN 203 MC 2 OL</td>
<td>T, Th 7:45p-8:45p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Description
The aim of this course is to bring students to the point where they are able to communicate comfortably in spoken Tibetan. A wide variety of techniques are employed to ensure that students are able to understand more complicated sentence structures and express complex ideas. The use of honorific language is explained in detail, and there is a thorough review of the grammar of spoken Tibetan.

Additional Information
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- Prerequisites: TLAN 104: Colloquial Tibetan II or permission from the instructor.

TLAN 303 Colloquial Tibetan V

Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TLAN 303 MC 1 OC</td>
<td>M, W F 2:00p-3:00p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLAN 303 MC 2 OL</td>
<td>M, W F 7:45p-8:45p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Description
The aim of this course is to refine the students' ability to communicate clearly and correctly in Colloquial Tibetan and to augment their understanding of the language by drawing links between colloquial usages and classical grammar. This course also further emphasizes the correct and natural use of honorific language. The first section of the semester is devoted to reviewing and refining knowledge from previous courses and to teaching a traditional presentation of the grammar of Classical Tibetan as it is related to the colloquial language. Students then read material that combines the usage of colloquial and classical language and discuss that material in class. Homework includes translation and composition exercises and preparation of short talks and presentations.

Additional Information
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- Prerequisites: TLAN 204: Colloquial Tibetan IV or permission from the instructor.
Classical Tibetan

TLAN 101 Classical Tibetan I

Schedule
TLAN 101 Lec 1 OC M, W 9:45a-11:15a
TLAN 101 Lec 2 OL M, W 3:15p-4:15p
TLAN 101 Lec 3 OL T, Th 9:00p-10:00p

Course Description
This course develops students’ ability to read the Tibetan script and precisely analyze and understand Tibetan grammar. The course covers the principal topics of classical Tibetan grammar using handbook material as well as text passages from classical Tibetan Buddhist literature. Study of grammatical explanations from both Tibetan and Western traditions constitute the foundation for discussions in class where active student participation is of primary importance. Although the topic of grammar is central for this course, students are also introduced to the basic vocabulary of classical Tibetan philosophy.

Additional Information
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- **Prerequisites:** No course prerequisites exist, but familiarity with the Tibetan alphabet is assumed.

TLAN 201 Classical Tibetan III

Schedule
TLAN 201 Lec 1 OC T, Th 9:45a-11:15a
TLAN 201 Lec 3 OL T, Th 2:00pm-3:30pm
TLAN 201 Lec 2 OL T, Th 9:30p-11:00p

Course Description
This course focuses on the terminology of classical Buddhist philosophy as found in the literary genres of Abhidharma, Madhyamaka, and Yogācāra thought. Students further develop knowledge of grammar within scholastic literature and increase their ability to read texts from a variety of genres and time periods. In translating original text material from Tibetan to English, the methodology and principles of translating Buddhist texts begin to be discussed and analyzed.

Additional Information
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- **Prerequisites:** TLAN 102: Classical Tibetan II or permission from the instructor.

TLAN 301 Classical Tibetan Translation Project I

Schedule
TLAN 301/401 Lec 3 OL W, F 4:30a-6:00a
Course Description
This course aims to develop the ability to translate classical literary Tibetan into modern languages, primarily English. In weekly meetings selected readings on translation method and theory are introduced and discussed in relation to the field in general and to the area of Buddhist Studies in particular. Through translating a previously untranslated manuscript, issues of translation method and policy are introduced.

Additional Information
- This course is taught on campus and online
- This course can be taken for credit, earning 3 credits
- This course can be taken not for credit
- Prerequisites: TLAN 202: Classical Tibetan IV or permission from the instructor.

Undergraduate Level Courses

1. BSTD 101 Buddhist Traditions: History and Culture

   Schedule
   Tuesday, Thursday 8:00a-9:30a OC

   Course Description
   This course takes a global and inclusive approach to survey the origin of Buddhism in India and its globalization as it subsequently flowed throughout South and Southeast Asia. Who were the movers and shakers – the monks and nuns, cakravartins (kings), scholars and mahasiddhas – who charted and shaped the course of this mighty river of ideas, doctrines, narratives, rituals, and relics? Through selected readings, both scriptural and academic, peppered with the examination of various forms of Buddhist practice such as art, pilgrimage and devotional practices, this course will open up windows into the way that different countries and cultures encountered and embraced Buddhism. Beginning with the crucial question of self-location (what do I think Buddhism is? How did I come to have those notions?), the course aims to impart the ability to critically evaluate emic (‘insider’) and etic (‘outsider’) perspectives of the developments and transformations of Buddhist institutions, doctrines, and practices.

   The second half of this course (BSTD 102, offered in Spring 2024) tracks the transmission of Buddhism to East Asia, Nepal and Tibet, and will specially focus on the development of Himalayan Buddhist traditions. Taken together, the two modules will impart a broad understanding of the foundations of the various Buddhist traditions existing today as well as a sense of their vitality and vibrancy.

   Course Format
   This course is taught in two 90min classes per week. In addition, a fair amount of reading is required (about 50 pages a week). Lectures will largely follow the class readings, although from time to time, additional material not from the readings will be added. You are responsible for keeping up with all the materials covered in the lectures and in the readings. Weekly quizzes will
ensure that you grasp the key points of the material we cover. The topics of this class allow for ample class discussion in which you learn to develop an evidence-based evaluation of academic and traditional sources.

1. **BSTD 203 Fundamentals of Buddhism**
   **Schedule**
   Monday, Wednesday 8:00am-9:30am

   **Course Description**
   This course introduces students to the fundamental categories, doctrines and problems of Buddhist philosophy as presented in the early canon(s) and the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda traditions, with an emphasis on historical development and the relationship of doctrine to practice. Students will also be introduced to the modern academic study of Buddhist philosophy and its various methodological perspectives.

   Central topics include: the doctrines of not-self, dependent origination, karma, rebirth, psychology, meditation, and dharma theory. The course will also emphasize helping students develop the skills to read and critically assess primary and secondary sources and to write academic essays with greater confidence. Students will be expected to memorize several key lists around which Buddhist doctrines are organized as well as several English, Pali and Sanskrit terms critical to the study of Buddhist philosophy in the modern academy.

   **Outcomes:**
   Students who successfully complete this course will have gained a solid grasp of the fundamental concepts and doctrines of early Buddhist philosophy as well as their development over time, a rich conceptual vocabulary for further study in Buddhist philosophy, and improved skills of oral and written interpretation and analysis.

2. **BSTD 205 Anthropological Study of Nepalese Religions**
   **Schedule**
   T, Th 4:30p-6:00p OC

   **Instructor**
   Rev Dr Gregory Sharkey, SJ

   **Course Description**
   This course provides an overview of the primary religious traditions of Nepal, with special emphasis on the Kathmandu Valley. It is designed specifically for students pursuing the BA in Buddhist Studies who have completed the first-year curriculum.

   In response to the needs of students without a comprehensive foundation in South Asian traditions, the course begins with a survey of Hindu tradition. We begin with an overview of classical Indian religion, Hinduism, from which Buddhism took its rise, and alongside which it grew. 'Hinduism' embraces a diversity of symbols, beliefs and practices in a broad range of cultural contexts. This introductory survey attempts to identify some central elements and unifying themes of the Indian tradition, especially those relevant to Buddhism. The approach is thematic in that we examine key ideas such as dharma and karma, renunciation and liberation. It is historical in that we
trace the origin and development of these critical concepts and note how certain patterns and themes recur throughout the history of Hinduism.

The second part of the course focuses on Buddhism in Nepal, particularly as practiced by the Newars, the indigenous people of Kathmandu Valley. It presumes a general familiarity with Buddhist thought and history and complements the introductory Buddhism courses taught at KU-CBS. The first part of the course is heavily historical, or ‘diachronic’, the latter half is a more ‘synchronic’ survey of Newar Buddhist beliefs and practices.

4. BSTD 412 Special Topics: Root Verses on the Middle Way (Mūlamadhyamakākarikā) II

Schedule
Tuesday and Thursday 9:45am-11:15am

Course Description:
This course continues the study of the Root Verses of the Middle Way (dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab, Mūlamadhyamakakārikā) that started in the spring semester of 2023. This text is foundational to the Madhyamaka school of Mahāyāna Buddhism and is considered to be the most profound exposition on the philosophy of emptiness, śūnyatā. This study will begin with Chapter Six of the text

- On campus and concurrent streaming
- Recordings available for registered students
- Prerequisites: BSTD 304: “Madhyamaka Thought” or permission of the instructor.

5. BSTD 413 Special Topics: Comparative Philosophy

Schedule
Online only Monday, Wednesday 3:15p-4:45p

Instructor
Online visiting scholar Artur Przybyslawski

Course Description
This course focuses on the methods of analyzing philosophical texts. Its aim is to deepen the understanding of Buddhist philosophy from a comparative perspective involving the
European tradition of philosophical thinking. Translating Buddhist texts into European languages is the ongoing process of using and adjusting European philosophical terminology to express Buddhist ideas. That is why a comparative perspective is necessary to understand Buddhist scriptures that already function within Western culture. Unfortunately, not every translator had the necessary knowledge of European philosophical tradition, and that is why critical reading is crucial for studying Buddhism. The so-called “close reading” and scrupulous analysis based on solid methodology is the necessary foundation for critical reading, understanding, writing papers, and translating Buddhist texts. During the seminar, we will analyze both Buddhist and European philosophical texts and compare existing translations of Buddhist scriptures.

All students will be expected to keep pace with weekly reading and writing assignments and to produce a research paper at the end of the term.

6. BSTD 308 Buddhist Philosophy in Indian Context

Schedule
M, W 3:15p - 4:45p OC

Course Description
This course engages Buddhist philosophy as it evolved in the Indian subcontinent, from approximately 200 to 1200 CE. This evolution emerges from debates between Buddhists with various commitments—abhidharmikas, mādhyamikas, yogācāras, and others—as well as non-Buddhist thinkers and groups. This course engages some of the major debates in a diachronic manner in order to provide students with a more detailed picture of the evolution and character of Buddhist philosophy in India.

This class is focused around the theme of perception. This key theme of Buddhist philosophy allows us to engage with the idea that ordinary experience is “ignorant” in order to appreciate how various thinkers distinguish between ordinary and enlightened cognition. This theme also allows students to appreciate how Buddhist authors respond to critiques by non-Buddhists, and the role of those responses in the development of Buddhist philosophy in both the Indian subcontinent and the Himalayan Plateau. Major controversies involving perception that this course will investigate include: debates about the existence and nature of external objects, about the relationships between perception and conceptuality, and about the difficult issue of what—if anything—a Buddha perceives.

We begin with disputes in abhidharma and the rise of the two major Mahāyāna philosophical systems, madhyamaka and yogācāra. We then attend to developments in Pramāṇa Theory (valid cognition, ནི་ོ་)—its integration with both madhyamaka and yogācāra viewpoints as well as Candrakīrti’s unique refutation of pramāṇa. Key thinkers with whom we will engage include Dharmakīrti, Bhāviveka, and Śāntarakṣita as well as the non-Buddhists Kumārila, Rāmakanṭha-Bhaṭṭa, and Abhinavagupta. This approach exposes students to the diversity of views that contribute to Buddhist philosophy and its reception in Tibet. It thereby also indirectly highlights the uniquely Tibetan contributions to Buddhist philosophy.
This course offers students a chance to hone their skills in understanding and evaluating both primary and secondary literature on Indian Buddhist philosophy. It likewise exposes students to both emic and etic methods for engaging in both philosophical discourse and intellectual history.

**Prerequisites:**
BSTD 203: Fundamentals of Buddhist Philosophy or permission of the instructor. Any student who has not completed that course but is interested in taking this class is encouraged to contact the instructor.

---

**Tibetan Medium Philosophy Courses**

1. **TSTD 101 Buddhist Philosophy and Hermeneutics**
     - Taught by Lopon Zopa Sangpo
     - This course is translated into English
     - Taught on campus, live-streamed and recorded for online study
     - Can be taken not-for-credit
     - Can be taken for credit by BA and MA prep students (TSTD 101)
     - Continues in the spring as TSTD 102

2. **TSTD 201/301/401: The Gateway to Knowledge** by Ju Mipham. Fundamental text with translation for BA and MA prep students (མཁས་པ་ལ་འཇུག་པ)
   - Taught by Khenpo Tsondru Sangpo,
   - This course is translated into English
   - Taught on campus, live-streamed and recorded for online study
   - Can be taken as not-for-credit study (register as TSTD 201)
   - Can be taken for credit by BA and MA prep students (according to your level as TSTD 201/301/401) and by MA students (ATSE 501)
   - Continues in the spring as TSTD 202/302/402

3. **TSTD 305/405: ང་སོང་ས་པའི་ཞལ་ལུང Words of My Perfect Teacher** by Dza Patrul.
   - Fundamental text of Tibetan Buddhist ethics and practice
   - taught by a monastic professor
   - untranslated class
   - continues in the spring as TSTD 306/406
   - Can be taken for credit and not-for-credit
4. ATSP 501/601/ TSTD 701:Mulamadhyamikākariā, The Root Verses on the Middle Way by Nāgārjunā
   - Taught by Lopon Tsundru Tharchin
   - Taught in Tibetan only
   - Untranslated class
   - On campus only

5. ATSP 502/602/ TSTD 701:The Fourhundred Verses by Āryadeva
   - Taught by Lopon Orgen Sangpo
   - Taught in Tibetan only
   - Untranslated class
   - On campus only