Kathmandu University’s Centre for Buddhist Studies at Rangjung Yeshe Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>TLAN 201</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Classical Tibetan III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester, Year</td>
<td>Fall 2024</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Schedule: class day & time**

**On-Campus section**
- Master Class - Tuesday / Thursday 09:45a-11:15a
- Traditional Class - Friday: 3:15p-4:15p

**Online section:**
- Tuesday / Thursday 10:00 pm to 11:30 pm
- Traditional Class: Wednesday 9:00 to 10:00pm

Note: all times in NPT

**Required text(s)**

**On-Campus Section:**

This handbook is used for review and reference throughout the semester. A course-reader and further materials on Tibetan grammar will be available at the beginning of the semester. Students need to have access to or more (digital) Tibetan-English dictionaries:

- The “TibetanDict” app is available for android and apple devices. It provides entries from various Tibetan English dictionaries, as well as Tibetan dictionaries like *tshig mdzod chen mo*.
- Christian Steinert’s online dictionary: provides entries from various dictionaries as well: [https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de](https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de)
- Illuminator Dictionary *Tibetan Dictionaries and Glossaries - Padma Karpo Translation Committee (pktc.org)* needs to be purchased.

**Online Section:**
Apart from dictionaries all required texts and handouts will be made available in Microsoft Teams

All students are required to have access to a Tibetan-English dictionary. Some popular electronic dictionaries are:

- Christian Steinert’s online dictionary: a convenient online dictionary, that combines many dictionaries into one platform. [https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/](https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/)
The “TibetanDict” app available for iOS. This includes two Tib-Tib dictionaries (Tshig mdzod chen mo and dag yig gsar bsgrigs) in addition to numerous Tib-Eng lexicons.


The Illuminator Tibetan – English Dictionary by PKTC: [https://pktc.org/tibetan-dictionaries/](https://pktc.org/tibetan-dictionaries/)

Printed dictionaries:

Optional Readings

| --- |

PREREQUISITES:
Either the completion of the Classical Tibetan courses TLAN 101/102 or an equivalent level of proficiency attained after one year of study of Classical Tibetan language.

Course Description

**On-Campus:**
Building on a foundational knowledge of Classical Tibetan, this course will help students to develop their language proficiency significantly. For that purpose the course combines different elements. We will read together texts from different genres, historical periods and traditions. For an easier understanding of longer and complex structures we practice systematic grammar analysis in class. Active vocabulary practice and quizzes accompany the process to enhance the students’ fluency in reading. There will also be time for exchange about the use of online resources like dictionaries.

For the two master classes students are required to prepare reading and translation of the texts covered in the course. During the class we will share the understanding of sections of the texts and grammatical structures and clarify difficult points. Students are required to review the textual material and vocab covered in class on a regular basis.

The main focus of the class is reading and translating. Additionally, a specific amount of time every week – depending on the needs of the students – will be reserved to explain and practice grammar analysis and -structures. The three hours of masterclass are led by an international instructor. Additionally, a traditional class will be held by a Himalayan Tibetan speaking instructor who is familiar with indigenous Tibetan grammar. That section focuses on traditional approaches to
learning classical Tibetan, like enhancing your skills in spelling and reading aloud, while learning a
traditional approach to grammar and the respective terminology.

The readings covered in class will be prepared in a comprehensive reader and cover extracts from
texts from various genres:
- Sūtra (Wisdom at the Time of Death, a Mahāyānasūtras)
- Historical texts (Buton’s history about the life story of the Buddha; from the history of the
  Boudhanath Stupa)
- Biographies (extracts from life stories of Milarepa, Atisha, some of the eighty-four
  Mahasiddhas)
- Liturgy (The Treasury of Blessings: A Ritual of Buddha Shakyamuni by Mipham Rinpoche)
- Prayers (f. ex. Maha Guru, Samantabadhra Dzogchen Prayer)
- Instructional texts (extracts Patrul Rinpoche’s Words of my Perfect Teacher)
  meditation instructions by Mipham Rinpoche and Jamyang Khyentse Wanpgo
- Spiritual songs (like the Song of the Feast by Jigme Lingpa; songs by Longchenpa, Milarepa)

The selection of texts may be slightly modified and adjusted to the needs of the students. A
compilation of texts in a course reader will be made available at the beginning of the semester.

**Online Section:**
This is an interactive online course. It helps students who already have basic knowledge of classical
Tibetan language to significantly develop their language proficiency. The course focuses on reading
selected texts from different genres, traditions, and times.

Students will be expected to:
1) Before each class: read and prepare sections of the text.
2) During each class: participate by sharing their translation or understanding of certain
   sections of the text when called upon, and by asking questions as needed.
3) After each class: review the sections read in class to consolidate understanding of the texts.

Most time in class will be spent on reading together and discussing the structure and meaning of
the Tibetan. All classes will be taught online in MS Teams. In addition to three weekly hours of
master classes held by an international instructor, there will be one weekly hour of a traditional
class that will be led by an instructor who is Tibetan speaking and familiar with indigenous Tibetan
grammar. The traditional class portion includes indigenous approaches to learning the classical
Tibetan language, focusing on spelling aloud, reading/writing and learning the Tibetan terminology.

We will read excerpts from a selection of the following texts:

1. Buton’s History of Buddhism, Life Story of the Buddha
2. Wisdom of the Time of Death Sūtra (Atyayajñānasūtra)
3. Seven Point Mind Training and Commentary (Chekaba, Kongtrul)
4. How to Ascertain the two Types of Selflessness (Mipham)
5. Mahamudra Prayer of Definitive Meaning (3rd Karmapa)
6. How to Take Sickness onto the Path (Thogme Sangpo)
7. A Song by Shabkar
8. Words of my Perfect Teacher, cultivating equanimity (Patrul)
9. Milarepa’s Hagiography, first meeting with Marpa (Tsang Nyon Heruka)
10. A Condensed (Sukhāvatī) Prayer (Mingyur Dorje)
11. Three Principal Aspects of the Path (Tsongkhapa)
12. How to Cultivate Calm Abiding (Mipham)
13. The Four Immeasurables, Equanimity (Buddhagupta)
14. The Treasury of Blessings: a Ritual of the Muni (Mipham)
15. Calling the Guru from Afar: a devotional prayer (Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye)
16. Khenpo Kunpal’s commentary on the Bodhicāryāvatara
17. Eliminating the Darkness of Ignorance by the ninth Karmapa

The reading list may be adjusted during the course in order to meet the needs of the participants. Due to time limitations only a small portion of these texts will be covered.

COURSE STRUCTURE OF THE ONLINE CLASSES (OL):
Two 90-minutes live classes per week
One 60-minutes traditional class per week

Learning Outcomes

- Students will develop more fluency in reading and understanding Tibetan sentences and texts of different genres and periods in history.
- With the help of grammar analysis practiced in class they will be able to understand grammatical structures and complex sentences more easily.
- Through exposure to the traditional Tibetan grammar students can broaden their understanding of the language in its cultural context.
- Students have the chance to build up their general and specifically dharma- vocabulary for higher efficiency in reading and translation.
- Students can develop a careful usage of online resources with the perspective to rely more strongly on Tibetan resources and dictionaries in the following semester and in the future.

Course Requirements

How do I succeed in the course?
You can best benefit from the course by actively participating and investing the necessary amount of time in preparation and review. That includes preparing and reviewing the readings for class, studying vocabulary and grammar on a regular basis. You will have the chance to test your knowledge in regular vocabulary quizzes. In the midterm and final exam you will be able to demonstrate your knowledge in translation and grammar analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class participation, for example</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Quizzes</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Traditional Component</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>