KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES AT
RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

Web Syllabus

Course Code	BSTD 415
Course Title	Special Topics in Buddhist Studies
Course Topic	Sanskrit–Tibetan Readings in Mahāyāna Thought: *The Thirty Verses on Consciousness-Only*
Credit	3
Semester, Year	Fall 2027
Schedule: class day & time	Please consult F27 course schedule
Class Location	Please consult F27 course schedule
Course Delivery Mode	Lecture, On Campus
Required text(s)	Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā* in Sanskrit and Tibetan; Texts will be provided by the instructor.
Optional Readings	TBD
Prerequisites	Completion of BSTD 102, SLAN 102, TLAN 102, or equivalent

Course Description

BSTD 415 builds on students' prior knowledge of Mahāyāna Buddhism, Sanskrit, and Tibetan studies through an in-depth study of a foundational treatise of the Yogācāra tradition: Ācārya Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā-kārikā* (Tib. *Sum cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*, Tōh 4055), commonly known as the *Triṃśikā* or *Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā* (*Thirty Verses on Consciousness-Only*). Comprising thirty verses, this influential work presents a concise and systematic exposition of key principles of Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda thought. Through close, comparative readings of the Sanskrit original and its Tibetan translation, students will analyze the text's grammatical structures, technical vocabulary, philosophical arguments, and interpretive nuances, with particular attention to the relationship between textual analysis and the interpretation of Yogācāra doctrines.

Course Aims

- Deepen students' understanding of the central doctrines of Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda through a close study of Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā* in Sanskrit and Tibetan.
- Develop students' ability to analyze the grammatical structures, technical vocabulary, and philosophical terminology of the text.
- Cultivate comparative philological skills through the examination of Sanskrit and Tibetan readings, identifying significant differences in wording, translation, and interpretation.
- Enable students to evaluate how philological analysis informs the interpretation of key Yogācāra doctrines and philosophical arguments.

- Strengthen students' ability to engage critically with primary textual sources and relevant scholarly interpretations of Yogācāra thought.
- Provide a foundation for advanced study of Yogācāra literature and Buddhist philosophical and textual studies more broadly.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Read, translate, and interpret Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā* in Sanskrit and Tibetan.
2. Explain and critically analyze the principal doctrins of the *Triṃśikā*.
3. Identify, explain, and accurately use key technical terms of Yogācāra thought in Sanskrit and Tibetan.
4. Compare the Sanskrit text with its Tibetan translation, analyzing grammatical structures, translation choices, and their philological and doctrinal implications.
5. Situate the *Triṃśikā* within the broader Yogācāra tradition and the intellectual history of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism.
6. Interpret primary textual sources and critically engage with relevant scholarly interpretations of Yogācāra doctrines and textual traditions.
7. Construct and communicate clear, evidence-based philological and philosophical arguments in written and oral forms, drawing on close textual analysis and relevant scholarly sources.

Course Requirements	
How do I succeed in the course?	Come to class prepared and ready to participate actively in discussion, and complete all assignments on time, accurately, and with all required components.

Assessments	**Weight**
1. In-class discussions: students are expected to consistently demonstrate engagement with the assigned readings by contributing regularly to class discussions.	10% of final grade
2. Short Paper I (~5 pages).	10% of final grade
3. Presentation I (~10 minutes).	10% of final grade
4. Short Paper II (~5 pages).	10% of final grade
5. Presentation II (~10 minutes).	10% of final grade
6. Final Paper I (~8 pages).	25% of final grade
7. Final Presentation (~15 minutes).	25% of final grade