

**Course Title:** BUDS5012 Graduation Paper 畢業論文 2023-24  
Second Term Tuesday, 7:00pm - 9:30pm, ELB 308  
Professor: TAM, Wai Lun 譚偉倫 (CRS)

**Course Description:**

This capstone course provides integrative learning experiences that build on knowledge from student's previous courses. It will be taken by students **in their final year** (in case of full-time student, in the second term of their studies) who will carry out independent research on a topic approved by the program and supervised by a teacher. Through writing a final paper, this course enables students to synthesize and integrate skills and knowledge acquired throughout the curriculum of the MA in Buddhist Studies. Students should acquire greater depth or sharpness of focus and deepening intellectual maturity in their final year. Excellent students would display originality, insight, and the ability to progress to further studies and research. Students should also be able to participate in a meaningful discussion of different topics in the field of Buddhist Studies chosen by students of the same class. As a course requirement, student should submit at the end of the course a final paper that allows student to synthesize different knowledge they learn over the whole period of their studies and to ensure independence and intellectual maturity are attained.

**Learning outcomes**

Knowledge Outcomes

- (1) Student would be able to demonstrate their understanding of Buddhism in its historical settings and/or contemporary contexts of modern living, globally and locally.
- (2) Students would be able to demonstrate how the Buddhist religion as a phenomenon, can be analyzed historically, psychologically, sociologically, philosophically, and artistically.

Skills Outcomes

- (1) Student would learn to present with confidence, write with clarity and lay the groundwork for future success.
- (2) Student would be able to demonstrate an ability to frame questions and pursue answers to social, cultural, and global problems using interdisciplinary methods.

### Attitude Outcomes

- (1) Student would be able to demonstrate their self-critical awareness of presuppositions and recognition that statements should be tested, that evidence and arguments are subject to assessment, that the interpreter's role demands critical evaluation.
- (2) Student would be able to demonstrate their awareness of the plurality and multi-faceted complexity within the Buddhist traditions and have an appreciative attitude towards diversity in a pluralistic global society.

### **Assessment**

The purpose of this seminar is to assist students in preparing their final paper for graduation. The topic must be decided in December 2023-January 2024 with the approval of course instructor. Students are required to:

- (1) Submit a 1-page proposal before the Chinese New Year (10%) (details below)
- (2) Hand in a written draft a week before the presentation via the *Blackboard Learn* eLearning platform and perform one week later a 25-minute presentation followed by an open discussion in another 15 minutes. (24%)
- (3) Participate in **discussion in all class presentations** (16%)
- (4) A final version of their paper is due toward the end of the second term to be submitted via the *Blackboard Learn* eLearning platform. (50%)

In addition to writing a final paper, all students are expected to **participate in the discussion of all other students' papers.**

Therefore, the requirements for credits include:

- carefully reading the paper draft of other students before coming to class and
- participate in the discussion and commenting on others' paper. Comments could be put in the Discussion Forum of the Blackboard in case of not enough time for discussion in class.

While the final version of the paper of each student will count for 50 % of the term grade, the remaining 50 % will base on students' proposal (10%, see below), presentation of one's own thesis/project (24 %) and participation in the discussion of others' papers (16 %). All students are required to make their first draft of their paper available for the whole class including the course instructor one week before their presentation through the *Blackboard Learn* eLearning platform.

**Note that the 24% of your presentation will be awarded based on a peer review by**

**your fellow students.** Please log in the given link and submit your review after each presentation <https://cloud.itsc.cuhk.edu.hk/mycuform/view.php?id=915319>

A summary of the assessment scheme for the course is as follows:

Written Proposal with reference (%)	Presentation of thesis/ project draft (%)	Response or comment on presentations (%)	Thesis or Project Report (%)
10	24	16	50

### Course schedule

<u>First Term</u>	4 September 2023 (Mon) – 2 December 2023 (Sat)
December	Consultation with subject specialist(s) related to one’s paper Consultation with course teacher on one’s topic.
<u>Second term</u>	8 January 2024 (Mon) – 20 April 2024 (Sat)
January 9	Finalize a topic with course teacher in the 1st class meeting.
January 16	In-class individual consultation.
January 23	Submission of a proposal (300 words <u>with full references</u> ) via the <i>Blackboard Learn</i> eLearning platform (10%).
January-Feb	Writing of first two chapters ( <i>individual consultation every Tuesday night by appointment</i> )
Feb 20-April 16	Presentation of first two chapters (24%) & submitted a written draft of the two chapters for course teacher and classmate one week before the presentation.
Reading week	4 March 2024 (Mon) – 9 March 2024 (Sat) [ <b>for BA program only</b> ]
April	Writing of the remaining chapters
April 25	Submission of Final written version of a Graduation paper (about 10,000 to <b>15,000</b> words) via the <i>Veriguide</i> and <b>another copy</b> via the <i>Blackboard Learn</i> eLearning platform where comments will be given (50%).

**Note that penalty applies to late submission after the deadline specified above.**

### Feedback for evaluation

An end-of-term Faculty wide course evaluation will be conducted in class. Students’ comments and feedback on the course through the *Blackboard* or personal meeting are welcomed.

### Teacher’s Contact Details

Prof. TAM, Wai Lun 譚偉倫 (Department of Cultural and Religious Studies); Office: KKL 219

Departmental Webpage: <https://www2.crs.cuhk.edu.hk/faculty-staff/teaching-faculty/tam-wai-lun>

### **Facility for Posting Course Announcements**

Details for assignment and feedback for written assignment will be given through the *Blackboard* in due course. All questions regarding the course could be posted on the discussion forum within the *Blackboard*.

### **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

Students **must** submit the final version of their theses or reports via *VeriGuide* <http://veriguide1.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/portal/page/index.jsp> and hand in a print out of receipt and a signed Academic Honesty Declaration Statement with their assignments. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Please also submit a copy through the *Blackboard Learn* eLearning platform where comments on your thesis/ report will be given. Relevant information on plagiarism and academic honesty in academic work can be allocated via: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty>

### **Grade Descriptors for Course**

Our course adopts the criterion referenced assessment. Students are measured against specific criteria and learning outcomes. Assessment results is typically associated with percentage guidelines set by the University to provide incentives for students to excel, prevent large numbers of students lumped together in the grades at the extremes (A or D) and grade inflation.

A, A-	A more comprehensive understanding of relevant ideas and knowledge with a clear presentation; a clear thesis and a certain extent of originality; dialogue with different scholarly works.  Active participation in Class discussion with constructive comments. Be able to respond appropriately and follow up on the feedback.
B+, B, B-	A good understanding of relevant ideas and knowledge with a clear presentation and a reference to scholarly works; a relatively less defined and less argued thesis.  Fair participation in class discussion. Respond to and follow up on some feedback.
C+, C, C-	A relatively weak understanding of relevant ideas and knowledge; weak presentation; unclear thesis, and even contradiction; references are limited.  Low participation in class discussion and less receptive to feedback.
D+, D, F	showing little understanding of relevant ideas and knowledge; no reference to scholarly works; weak presentation.  Lack of participation in class discussion. Respond with a defensive defiance to feedback.

### **Grade descriptor for thesis**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor/ Inadequate</b>
<b>Introduction/ Thesis</b> _____	*exceptional introduction that grabs interest of reader and states topic. **thesis is exceptionally clear, arguable, well-developed, and a definitive statement.	*proficient introduction that is interesting and states topic. **thesis is clear and arguable statement of position.	*basic introduction that states topic but lacks interest. **thesis is somewhat clear and arguable.	*weak or no introduction of topic. **paper's purpose is unclear/thesis is weak or missing.
<b>Quality of Information/ Evidence</b> _____	*paper is exceptionally researched, extremely detailed, and historically accurate. **information clearly relates to the thesis.	*information relates to the main topic. **paper is well-researched in detail and from a variety of sources.	*information relates to the main topic, few details and/or examples are given. **shows a limited variety of sources.	*information has little or nothing to do with the thesis. **information has weak or no connection to the thesis.
<b>Support of Thesis/Analysis</b> _____	*exceptionally critical, relevant and consistent connections made between evidence and thesis. **excellent analysis.	*consistent connections made between evidence and thesis **good analysis.	*some connections made between evidence and thesis. **some analysis.	*limited or no connections made between evidence and thesis. **lack of analysis.
<b>Conclusion</b> _____	*excellent summary of topic with concluding ideas that impact reader. **introduces no new information.	*good summary of topic with clear concluding ideas. **introduces no new information.	*basic summary of topic with some final concluding ideas. **introduces no new information.	*lack of summary of topic.
<b>Organization/ Development of Thesis</b> _____	*exceptionally clear, logical, mature, and thorough development of thesis with excellent transitions between and within paragraphs.	*clear and logical order that supports thesis with good transitions between and within paragraphs.	*somewhat clear and logical development with basic transitions between and within paragraphs.	*lacks development of ideas with weak or no transitions between and within paragraphs.
<b>Citation/ Bibliography Format</b> _____	*conforms to academic rules for formatting and citation of sources are perfect.	*conforms to academic rules for formatting and citation of sources with minor exceptions.	*frequent errors in academic format.	*lack of academic format/numerous errors.

**Tentative Schedule for Presentation** (signed up on first class on January 9;

**(2 presentations per class but will increase to 3 when class size is bigger than 20)**

Feb 20

Feb 27

March 5

March 7

March 12

March 19

March 26

April 2

April 9

April 16

April 23 (*make-up class if needed*)