

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF ARTS

Master of Buddhist Studies

CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

The Master of Buddhist Studies curriculum is offered by the Centre of Buddhist Studies in affiliation with the Faculty of Arts. It is an interdisciplinary curriculum that focuses on the study of different Asian Buddhist traditions from philological, doctrinal and historical perspectives and provides opportunities of student training in the application of Buddhist theories and teachings in contemporary society.

There are three types of courses offered in the curriculum: (1) foundation courses; (2) elective courses; and (3) capstone experience. The foundation courses and the elective courses carry 9 credits and 6 credits respectively, while capstone experience carries 12 credits. The number of hours of student learning activities (including both contact hours and all other forms of student learning activities) range from 120-180 hours for a 6-credit course to 180-270 hours for a 9-credit course. Contact hours are in a range of 36-48 hours for both 6-credit and 9-credit courses. Student learning hours and contact hours for the capstone experience are specified below. The curriculum has a minimum study load of 1,200 hours.

The elective courses are grouped into three categories: (1) Buddhist Languages; (2) Buddhist Texts, Thought, and Culture; and (3) Applied Buddhism. Students are assessed through a variety of methods as described below.

1. Foundation Courses (9 credits)

The aim of the two compulsory foundation courses is to provide students with survey knowledge of fundamental Buddhist theories and doctrines in early Buddhism and Indian Mahāyāna (mainly Madhyamaka and Yogācāra). Each course normally takes the form of lectures, tutorials, self-study and occasional seminars. Courses are assessed by examination and coursework which may take the form of essays (with no more than 3,000 words each), quizzes, presentations and in-class performance. Examinations may comprise a range of 20% to 40% of the assessment.

Illustration of total study load of Foundation Course

The study load of a typical foundation course is illustrated in the table below, based on one of our foundation courses. The example below has weekly lecture, self-learning, written assignments, in class quiz and a final examination.

Types	Activities	Average study load (learning hours) <u>per week</u>	<u>Total</u> study load (assuming a 13- week semester)
Direct contact	Weekly lectures	3 hours	39 hours
Self-learning	Class preparation (e.g. pre-lecture readings)	6 hours	78 hours
Written assignments	Literature review / research / analysis	2.5 hours	32.5 hours
	Write-up	2.5 hours	32.5 hours
Examinations and quizzes	Preparation	3 hours	39 hours
<i>Total:</i>		17 hours	221 hours

2. Elective Courses (6 credits)

There is a wide range of elective courses including Buddhist languages (Pāli, Sanskrit and Tibetan), Buddhist literature (Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan), art (Chinese and Central Asian), Buddhist philosophy (Abhidharma), and interdisciplinary studies such as, Buddhism and psychology, science, mediation and contemporary society. Elective courses with an interdisciplinary perspective emphasize the application of Buddhist theories across disciplines and encourage innovative and boundary-crossing modes in inquiry. Each course normally takes the form of lectures, research and self-study. All elective courses are assessed 100% by continuous assessment, though examinations may comprise a range of 50% to 60% of the assessment in a small number of elective courses. Assessment can take the form of essays (ranging from 1,500 to 3,500 words each), group presentations, quizzes, reports, in-class performance and/or examinations.

Illustration of total study load of Elective Course

The study load of a typical elective course is illustrated in the table below, based on one of our courses. The example below has weekly lecture, self-learning and written assignments.

Types	Activities	Average study load (learning hours) per week	<u>Total</u> study load (assuming a 13- week semester)
Direct contact	Weekly lectures	3 hours	39 hours
Self-learning	Class preparation (e.g. pre-lecture readings)	5 hours	65 hours
Written assignments	Literature review / research / analysis	1.5 hour	19.5 hours
	Write-up	1.5 hour	19.5 hours
<i>Total:</i>		11 hours	143 hours

3. Capstone Experience (12 credits)

The capstone experience is designed to integrate what students have learnt in the curriculum and allows for further research in Buddhist Studies and the development of analytical and critical skills. The number of hours of student learning activities is illustrated below. Students will meet regularly with the supervisor to complete the capstone experience and select their research topics. Students have two options:

Option A: *Capstone Experience: Dissertation*

Students should present a dissertation of 10,000 to 15,000 words based on a selected topic that has to be approved by the supervisor and the Faculty. Dissertation involves 300 hours of learning activities which include research, writing workshops, dissertation writing as well as regular supervision, emails and feedback on draft materials. Students are assessed by 100% coursework.

Illustration of total study load of Option A

Research step	Activities	Study load
Formulating a research question	General research in various research areas, identify area of interest	20 hours
	Research into a specific area, including extensive literature review and evaluation of past studies	35 hours
	State a research question, and write a preliminary research proposal	15 hours
	Fine-tune the research proposal and develop a detailed research plan under the supervision of supervisors	15 hours
Workshops	Prepare and attend workshops on writing skill and information searching	15 hours
Research	Conduct the library research or field research and analyse the research data or findings	80 hours
Consultations	Consultations with the supervisor, Capstone Experience coordinator etc.	20 hours
Write-up	Dissertation write-up	80 hours
	Write-up revision	20 hours
<i>Total:</i>		300 hours

Option B: Capstone Experience: An additional elective course and a portfolio

Students must take an additional elective course from the course list and complete the related coursework/examination. Students will also need to submit a portfolio of 10,000 to 12,000 words. Students should treat the extra elective course as a major component in preparing the portfolio. They should compile the portfolio by revising, integrating and consolidating three or

four individual papers (of 2,500 to 3,000 words each) from a total of two to four different courses with a mission statement (of 1,000 words) explaining how these essays contributed to their understanding of a specific theme in the area of Buddhist Studies within the context of the curriculum. The extra elective course will contribute 6 credits while the portfolio will also contribute 6 credits in the capstone experience. This option involves 300 hours of learning activities which include completion of the additional elective course (refer to item 2 above for the detailed learning activities), research and writing of portfolio, writing workshops as well as regular supervision, emails and feedback on draft materials of the portfolio. Students are assessed by 100% coursework for the portfolio. Assessment of the additional elective course will follow the coursework and examination ratio of the elective course concerned.

Illustration of total study load of Option B

Research step	Activities	Study load
An additional elective course	Attend lectures and complete course requirement	150 hours
Formulating a research theme	General research in various research areas, identify area of interest	25 hours
	Write-up the preliminary research proposal for approval	15 hours
	Fine-tune the research proposal and develop a detail research plan under the supervision of supervisors	15 hours
Workshops	Prepare and attend workshops on writing skill and information searching	15 hours
Consultations	Consultations with the supervisor and capstone coordinator	15 hours
Write-up	Portfolio write-up	50 hours
	Write-up revision	15 hours
<i>Total:</i>		300 hours

Full-time students should submit their dissertations and portfolios by **July 31** in the final academic year of their studies and submit the dissertation/portfolio titles for approval by **January 15** of that year.

Part-time students should submit their dissertations and portfolios by **July 31** in the final academic year of their studies and submit the dissertation/portfolio titles for approval by **January 15** of that year.