

World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

Teacher Name: Jeffrey Dodge

Humanities Discipline: Philosophy

Date: January 20, 2017

World Religion: American Buddhism

Teaching Module Title: American Buddhist Religious Traditions

Introduction to Philosophy: Eastern Thought (Buddhism focus) (PHIL 101)

Introduction to the Ethics: Ethics of American Buddhism (PHIL 102)

The Philosophy of Religion: American Buddhism Beliefs (PHIL 220)

Teaching Module Goals:

1. (PHIL 220) Introduce students to American Buddhist thoughts on religious ideas and experiences.
2. (PHIL 102) Introduce students to American Buddhist moral thinking.
3. (PHIL 101) Introduce students to American Buddhist philosophy, especially on religion and morality.

Assigned Readings and/or Websites:

1. Bowker, *World Religions: The Great Faiths Explored and Explained*, "Buddhism," pp. 58-81.
2. Singh, Numrich, and Williams, *Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs in America*, "Buddhism," pp. 1-42.
3. Vaughn, *Living Philosophy*, "Eastern Thought" (chapter for PHIL 101), pp. 139-148.

Study Questions and/or Discussions Prompts for Students:

1. What has shaped Buddhist thoughts and practices in America, and give a brief explanation of how they have changed or adapted?
2. As Buddhist people immigrated to America, what events, beliefs, and practices shaped their identity? How have those beliefs and practices changed over time?
3. Explain the forms of Buddhism such as Theravada, Mahayana, Zen, what role monks play, and what impact these groups have had on American society (PHIL 102, 220).
4. Explain a major Buddhist belief, and how different Buddhist groups view a particular belief as the most important.
5. Explain the effect of Americanization on Buddhists. What was it like for the first generation of immigrants?
6. What was the effect of Americanization on the second generation of Buddhists (those born in the U.S.)?
7. Explain the differences in belief and practice between refugee Asian Buddhist immigrants' experience of America versus those Asian Buddhists who have been raised in the U.S.
8. What differences exist between those who were born into Buddhism and those from America that converted to Buddhism?
9. What are some other popular major Buddhist religious books, other than *sacred texts*, that have influenced the development of Buddhism in America?
10. What are the key changes in Chinese, Japanese, and Tantric Buddhism in America?
11. What is the role of stupas, relics, and temples in American Buddhism?

Written Assignments and/or other Assessment Instruments:

1. (PHIL 220) Black Board Journal entries (essay minimum 500 words each).
2. (PHIL 102) Black Board Discussion Board (minimum 500 words).
3. (PHIL 101) Black Board Discussion Board (minimum 500 words).

Additional Resource information:

From NEH WRIGI readings



Buddhism Readings.pdf

Harris, Stephen E., "Suffering and the Shape of Well-Being in Buddhist Ethics," *Asian Philosophy*. Aug2014, Vol. 24 Issue 3, p242-259. 18pages (copyright permission pending for attached article below).

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