RELG451
Zen Buddhism: Poetry and Art

online only.

Prof. Mikael Bauer: mikael.bauer@mcgill.ca, Birks 004

Online office hours: Monday 11-12 or by appointment (mikael.bauer@mcgill.ca)

Assessment: Three five-hundred word response papers each worth 20%; one 2000 word essay (35%) to be submitted by DECEMBER 10 (10pm) and the composition of your own Zen poem (5%). The format of the three short response papers will be introduced in class but the basic purpose of these response assignments will consist of your analysis of a ‘Zen’ poem or painting.

The 2000 word essay should be submitted electronically (WORD file !) through the course website only. The font should be Times New Roman (size 12), pages should be numbered and no title page is required. Style format should be Chicago.

Readings: No purchases necessary. All books are available through e-book/online where indicated.
**Week 1**

Lecture 1: Introduction, course outline, objective and assessment method

Lecture 2: Zen matters and the matter of Zen!


**Week 2**

Lecture 1: Japanese Buddhism: Nara period


Lecture 2: Japanese Buddhism: Heian period


**Week 3**

Lecture 1: Japanese Buddhism: Kamakura period


Lecture 2: The Japanese Zen tradition


**FIRST RESPONSE PAPER (500 words to assigned question)**
**Week 4**

**Lecture 1: The Japanese Zen tradition, main figures**


**Lecture 2: Reading Zen, gazing at Zen**


**Week 5**

**Lecture 1: Karma of Words**


**Lecture 2: The Vimalakīrti Sūtra**


**Week 6**

**Lecture 1: The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch**

McRae, John, trans., *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, pp. 17-27 (scans online under ‘readings’ folder)

**Lecture 2: Sudden or gradual?**

SECOND RESPONSE PAPER (500 words to assigned question)

Week 7 Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō (Treasury of the True Dharma Eye)

Lecture 1:
Heine, Steven, ‘Reality and Mentality’ in Readings of Dōgen’s Treasury of the True Dharma eye, pp. 91-118. (e-book)

Lecture 2:
Cook, Francis. 'How to Raise an Ox', pp. 57-61, pp. 111-116 and pp. 129-158.

Week 8 Travel

Lecture 1: The Hermit and Zen precursors
Stavros, Matthew trans. ‘Hōjōki’- Kamo no Chōmei. Independently published, 2020. (This is a cheap paperback available for 7$ at Amazon, you can also use other versions of this translation, the library has several)

Lecture 2: The road of Matsuo Bashō
‘The Narrow Road to the Deep North’, pp. 97-144.

THIRD RESPONSE PAPER (500 words to assigned question)
**Week 9 Great Fool**

**Lecture 1: Curious Accounts**


**Lecture 2: Poems**


**Week 10 Materiality**

**Lecture 1: The problem**


**Lecture 2:**


**Week 11 The Monastery and Monastic Practice**

**Lecture 1:**

Lecture 2:

PERSONAL ZEN POEM (5%)

Week 12 Of Monks and Nuns

Lecture 1


Lecture 2
Foulk, Griffith trans. 'Daily Life in the Assembly', in: Lopez Donald ed. Buddhism in Practice, pp. 461-472 (scans available under readings folder)

Week 13
Conclusion

2000 word essay (35%) to be submitted by DECEMBER 10 (10pm)