

## Religion 337 – Tibetan Religions

Instructor: Dr. Jay Valentine

Office: Loree 130

Office Hours: Email for an appointment.

Tuesdays 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

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### Section 1

Monday/Thursday 11:30 AM - 12:50 PM

College Avenue Campus – Scott Hall 207



## Course Description

In this class, we will study the Tibetan religions of Buddhism (primarily) and Bön (secondarily) from a variety of different perspectives using an equally diverse set of sources. Students will study the historical development of Tibetan Buddhism, focusing on the Imperial Period, the Dark Age, and the Renaissance Period, during which the primary schools (Nyingma, Kagyu, Gelukpa, and Sakyapa) were founded. The class will also seek to understand Tibetan Buddhism from the soteriological perspective as a complex set of salvific paths as well as from the pragmatic perspective as a complex set of ritual practices. The first dozen classes will focus on the issue of sacred space in the Tibetan context. Other classes will also study Tibetan religions from the Feminist perspective, focusing on conditions in nunneries.

## Required Text

Kapstein, Matthew. *The Tibetans*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006. Print.

Mumford, Stan. *Himalayan Dialogue: Tibetan Lamas and Gurung Shamans in Nepal*. Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin, 1989. Print.

Tucci, Giuseppe. *The Religions of Tibet*. Berkeley: U of California, 1980. Print.

**Sakai:** Readings drawn from many other sources will be posted to Sakai.

Students are required to do all of the readings for the course in advance of the dates for which they are assigned. **Bring assigned readings to every class.**

## Course Grading Requirements

If you foresee a problem fulfilling any course requirement, see the instructor without delay. You may ask about your progress at any time.

<b><u>Grading Requirements</u></b>	<b><u>Percentages</u></b>
<b>Quizzes &amp; Classroom Assignments</b>	25%
<b>Short Paper (10%) and Revision (10%)</b>	20%
<b>The Rubin Art Museum &amp; Assignment</b>	5%
<b>Paper Topic &amp; Proposed Annotated Bibliography</b>	10%
<b>Final Research Paper</b>	30%
<b>Attendance and Participation</b>	<u>10%</u>
	100%

**Quizzes & Classroom Assignments** (25%) Students will be administered regular quizzes. Some will be announced, but others will not. The intention is to ensure that students are keeping up with the readings and engaging them intellectually while also retaining information discussed in lectures. Students will also receive points for active participation in classroom assignments, which will most often take place in groups.

**Short Paper and Revision** (20%) – Students will be assigned a short paper (3 pages), which will be revised in accordance with the professor's annotations and resubmitted. The goal is to give the students the opportunity to interact with the professor through formal written assignments before completing the final research paper.

**The Rubin Art Museum & Assignment** (5%) – Students will have the opportunity to go on a guided tour of the Tibetan art at the Rubin Art Museum in New York City on Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. The time of day has not yet been determined. Funding will be provided. There will be a short assignment to accompany the learning experience.

**Paper Topic & Proposed Annotated Bibliography** (10%) A statement of the paper topic and a proposed bibliography are required to be handed in AND APPROVED before writing the term paper. The statement of your paper topic (one page) must indicate (1) the subject of your term paper, (2) the analytical theme(s) that will guide your investigation, and (3) your preliminary argument.

The proposed bibliography should ideally list **five or more** readings (books, articles, etc.) you have actually consulted (read or skimmed). **Articles from scholarly journals (i.e., *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion*) that are accessed via the web are acceptable, but non-scholarly websites, blogs, and so forth should not be used as primary sources.** JSTOR is a good database for scholarly articles. Each entry in the proposed bibliography (Chicago Style) should be followed by notes that explain the relevance of the source and whether or not you have read the text in question. While the points for this assignment are few, the research paper will not be accepted until the proposal has been approved.

**Final Research Paper** (30%) The term paper (10 pages, double spaced) is due on the last day of class. It will be graded in accordance with a rubric that will be posted on Sakai. Additional details will be provided in class.

**Attendance/Participation** (10%) Attendance and participation are required. Twenty points of your final grade will be based on your informed and thoughtful participation in class, which will reflect not only your attendance, but also the quality of your preparation.

In accordance with University policy, if you expect to miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Such reporting does NOT EXCUSE your absence.

Because students learn more and retain more when they attend class, students are required to attend lectures and discussions. Aware, however, that illnesses, family crises, and such can make even the most diligent student miss class, the professor allows 3 absences without penalty. The 3 absences are not recommended, should be used only when you NEED to, and are NOT negotiable. Do not use up three absences just because they seem like a free pass and then expect a fourth absence to be excused when you are ill or have an emergency.

For every absence beyond three, your total grade for the course will drop 1/3 of a grade-point (e.g., from A to B+, from B+ to B, from B to C+, and so on).

In general, if you don't show up for an exam, it's a zero for the exam and an absence (set up a buddy-system wake-up for exam days!). Exams are re-scheduled only if I receive advance notification from you (you email me before class, notifying me that you're ill), and you receive advance approval from me (I email you back before class and say you can make it up later). Do not contact me later that day or the next day and expect to make up the exam.

Promptness: Being late interrupts the professor and your classmates, inconveniences those who must move to let you sit down, and generally causes problems for other people. Because all of us run late sometimes, you are allowed to be ***moderately late up to three times during the semester without penalty.***

Your fourth late arrival will be treated as an absence, as will any subsequent late arrivals. Please note that **I will not make exceptions for late arrivals caused by work schedules, campus bus schedules, or parking problems.** If you arrive after the roll has been called, you must talk to me after class is over. If you arrive more than 40 minutes after the class begins you are welcome to attend but you will be marked down as absent rather than late for that class.

## Course Policies

Academic Integrity – Familiarize yourself with Rutgers policies and materials concerning academic integrity and plagiarism at the following sites:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources>

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. Any student found to have committed or aided the offense of plagiarism will be subject to penalties in accordance with the policies of the university.

Use of Electronic Equipment – Please turn off all mobile phones, computers, and other electronic devices before class. Points will be deducted from your participation grade if you are found using electronic devices during class. If you must use a computer, tablet, or e-reader for electronic readings, please sit in the first two rows of the classroom. Recording devices are not permitted and therefore you are not permitted to post any content from this class without the express permission of the professor.

Grading System: A=100-90, B+=89-85, B=84-80, C+=79-75, C=74-70, D=69-60, F=59 and below. Incompletes, i.e., "T" grades, will not be given under normal circumstances.