Course Description: This course is an introduction to the Buddhist arts of India, China, and Japan, with a special focus on the early periods of their development within each country. Selected artworks will be examined in detail with an emphasis on their historical and socio-religious contexts. Though the course is divided into three separate geographical units, similar themes are addressed throughout. Topics that are highlighted in each unit include the iconography and iconology of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other celestial beings; the roles of imperial and monastic patronage; the development of different schools of Buddhism and their interactions with other religious traditions; and the ritual use of art.

Course Objectives and Goals: This course is designed to familiarize students with the Buddhist arts of Asia, specifically India, China, and Japan. The goal is to attain a clearer understanding of selected artistic forms, contents, and contexts of artworks produced in these countries. By engaging in the visual cultures of Asia, students can cultivate a thorough knowledge of this important area within the field of art history, and, at the same time, foster the essential skills of critical looking, reading, and writing about art.

Goals of the course include:
(1) to enhance critical reading skills
(2) to refine writing skills
(3) to recognize a variety of approaches and paradigms employed in the study of Buddhist art

Course Structure: This is a lecture course that meets for 1 hour and 20 minutes, twice a week. Reading assignments for the course are listed below in the lecture schedule under each main subject of study. In order to fully prepare for lecture, the student should complete the reading assignment before the scheduled class.


Required Readings: In addition to the textbook, required readings are available through Blackboard.

Articles/Chapters on Blackboard:


**Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:**

**In-Class Exams** (3 @ 25% each) ........................................................................................................ 75%

**Written Assignments** (2 @ 10% each) .......................................................................................... 20%

**Attendance and Participation in Class Discussions** ................................................................. 5%

**Description of In-Class Exams:** There will be a total of three essay-based exams. The third exam, which is *not* cumulative, will be conducted during the scheduled final day for this class. Dates for exams are highlighted in bold in the lecture schedule.

At least one week prior to each in-class exam, 20-25 images will be available on Blackboard for review. For the in-class exam, I will select 6-8 images. On the exam, I will provide the relevant information of each artwork (title, location, date), but you will need to answer specific questions relating to the images (either as a pair or individually). You will have approximately 15 minutes to write a response to each of the questions. It is imperative that you arrive to class on time, as I will not re-show the images once the exam is in progress.

In addition, **there will be no make-ups for the in-class exams**. If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero on that test unless you provide proper documentation for a University-sanctioned absence (e.g., documented illness, team event, family emergency, religious observance, etc.). You must contact me within 24 hours of the missed exam. If, after reviewing your documentation, I agree to schedule a make-up exam with you, it must be taken within one week of the missed test.

**Description of Written Assignments:** Two short papers are required in this class. The first is a written analysis of a scholarly debate addressed in two publications. The readings and date of discussion are highlighted in bold in the lecture schedule. The second paper consists of a review of a current exhibition of Asian art at the Crow Collection of Asian Art in Dallas. Specific content guidelines will be distributed at the appropriate time in the semester. In terms of format, both papers must be 3 pages maximum,
double-spaced with 1” margins and a 12-point font. Check the lecture schedule for discussion and due dates and read over the Grading Criteria for written work at the end of this syllabus.

**Late Assignments:** Papers received after the collection in class are considered late. Email submissions are not accepted at any time, under any circumstances. If you email your paper to me, I will simply delete it. You must hand in a hard copy. Late work is also not accepted unless there is a documented emergency. As with the exams, the student must notify me about the emergency within 24 hours of the due date of the assignment. If I agree to accept a late assignment, it will be marked down 5 points per day (not class meeting) that it is late.

**Checking Grades on Blackboard:** It is the student’s responsibility to verify that the recorded grade on an exam or written assignment matches the grade documented on Blackboard. Grades are released on Blackboard the day after I hand back an assignment or exam. Students have two weeks after that date to verify that the grades correlate. This means that I will not entertain a grade dispute at the end of the semester for a missing assignment.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance WILL be taken via a sign-up sheet that is passed around during each class. It is up to you to make sure that you have signed the roster. You are allowed three absences without penalty. After that, your attendance grade (which is initially recorded as 100% A) will be lowered by half a letter grade for each absence over those three. It is also important for you to attend class as the exams are based on lectures and the visual material presented. In many cases, I do not completely agree with the information provided in the readings and so I will offer alternative interpretations of selected artworks and include supplemental visual comparisons during lecture. Since you will be responsible for this material when preparing for and taking exams, it is imperative that you come to class and participate fully if you wish to do well. Thus missing lectures will negatively impact your grade. Do not rely solely on your textbook to try to pass this class!

Should you miss a class lecture, it is up to you to get notes from a classmate. I do not respond to emails asking “what did I miss” nor do I repeat entire lectures during my office hours.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (Disabilities Accommodation):** The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline.

Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940.565.4323.

**Student Behavior in the Classroom:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be
tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr

**Academic Dishonesty -- Plagiarism:** It is very important that you understand what plagiarism is and recognize that it is a serious academic offense. When you use other people’s ideas or other people’s words without giving acknowledgement, this is plagiarism. According to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities (www.unt.edu/csrr), “the term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and/or
2. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.”

Plagiarism necessitates that I file an incident report to the appropriate authorities and this may result in your failing the assignment, failing the course, or being expelled from the University. Please consult the University’s Code of Student Conduct or ask me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how you should give proper acknowledgement to your sources in your written work.

**Course Risk Factor:** According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category 1 course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students in this class will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

**Emergency Procedures:** In case of emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your teacher and act accordingly.

**Please Note:** The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus if necessary. © 2011 Lisa N. Owen

**Schedule**

Jan 18 (T): *Introduction to the Course*

Jan 20 (Th): *Biography of the Buddha*
    Readings: textbook 7-16 and Lopez on Blackboard

Jan 25 (T): *Buddhism and Ashoka*
    Readings: textbook 29-30 and “Edicts” on Blackboard

Jan 27 (Th): *Art of the Stupa*
    Readings: textbook 31-41

Feb 1 (T): *Art of the Stupa con’t*
Feb 3 (Th): *Debates over Aniconism; Instructions for Writing Assignment #1*
Readings: Huntington and Dehejia on Blackboard

Feb 8 (T): *Origins of the Buddha Image; Writing Assignment #1 due in class*
Readings: textbook 41-52

Feb 10 (Th): *Buddha and Bodhisattva Imagery*
Readings: Schopen on Blackboard

Feb 15 (T): *Buddhist Monastic Architecture*
Readings: textbook 52-61

Feb 17 (Th): *Buddhist Monastic Architecture con’t*
Readings: Owen on Blackboard

Feb 22 (T): *Buddhist Art and Practice: Past and Present*
Readings: textbook 62-66 and Malandra on Blackboard

Feb 24 (Th): *Buddhist Art and Practice con’t*
Readings: Mathur on Blackboard

Mar 1 (T): *Exam 1 -- India*

Mar 3 (Th): *Art and the Silk Road*
Readings: textbook 86-90

Mar 8 (T): *Early Buddhist Imagery in China*
Readings: textbook 90-92

Mar 10 (Th): *Sacred Architecture: Pagoda and Caves*
Readings: textbook 92-98 and Abe on Blackboard

Mar 15 (T) & 17 (Th): No Classes – Spring Break

Mar 22 (T): *Sacred Architecture con’t*
Readings: McNair on Blackboard

Mar 24 (Th): *Pure Land Buddhist Art in China*
Readings: textbook 99-110

Mar 29 (T): *Popularization of Kuan-yin; Instructions for Writing Assignment #2*
Readings: textbook 115-124 and Reed on Blackboard

Mar 31 (Th) and Apr 5 (T): No Classes – Visit Museum and work on Writing Assignment #2

Apr 7 (Th): *Chan Buddhist Art and the Development of Landscape Painting (Neo-Confucianism); Writing Assignment #2 due in class*
Readings: Fong on Blackboard

Apr 12 (T): *Tibetan and Mongol Buddhist Imagery*

Apr 14 (Th): *Exam 2 – China*
Apr 19 (T): *Buddhism and Prince Shotoku*
Readings: textbook 138-144

Apr 21 (Th): *Buddhist Monastic Architecture*
Readings: textbook 144-148 and “Proclamation” on Blackboard

Apr 26 (T): *Esoteric Buddhist Art*
Readings: textbook 148-154

Apr 28 (Th): *Pure Land Buddhist Art in Japan*
Readings: textbook 154-156 and Yiengpruksawan on Blackboard

May 3 (T): *Zen Buddhist Art*
Readings: textbook 156-166

May 5 (Th): *Zen Buddhist Art con’t; Last class*

May 12 (Th): Exam 3 – Japan (during scheduled final time 10:30-12:30)

---

**Grading Criteria for Written Work**

**A** = Such a grade indicates that the student assessed the reading(s) and did so with rigor and clarity of thought. An ‘A’ paper means that there were little to no errors in grammar/spelling and that the introduction and conclusion were clear as was the development of the body of the paper. An ‘A’ paper also demonstrates that the student not only carefully read the entire assignment, but thought about the larger issues and considered the author's use of evidence.

**B** = Such a grade indicates that the student was able to execute the assignment with diligence and forethought, though some main issues in the reading(s) were not addressed fully by the student. A grade of ‘B’ also usually indicates that there were limited structural, spelling, or grammatical problems.

**C** = This is similar to the ‘B’ description, but the number of problems is more extensive. These may include significant grammatical or structural problems, adding irrelevant material or new material inappropriately, too many generalities, and/or not addressing the main issue(s) in the assigned reading(s). ‘C’ papers often contain too many quoted passages.

**D** = A grade of ‘D’ indicates that the student did a poor job in demonstrating that s/he read the assignment. Further, grammatical/structural problems make a ‘D’ essay quite difficult to follow. There are usually far too many generalities and a lack of analysis.

**F** = This either indicates that the assignment was not done or what was done was simply unacceptable for any number of reasons. This includes any indication of plagiarism, which may entail further academic penalty. See the description of plagiarism in this syllabus.
Please fill out the following and return it to me by Jan 27 (Th)

I ____________________________ (print name) acknowledge that I have read the course syllabus. I understand the course structure, criteria for grading, attendance policy, scheduled dates for assignments/exams, and the definition of plagiarism. I also understand the risk factor rating of 1 for this class. I hereby agree to the syllabus and its provisions.

AEAH 4824: Topics in Asian Art – Buddhist Art of Asia

___________________________
Student email address

___________________________
Signature

___________________________
Date