The Chinese University of Hong Kong
2025-26 Term 2 Course Outline
BUDS5011 Basic Sanskrit 基礎梵語

Course description

This course is designed for absolute beginners in Sanskrit and does not require any prior knowledge of the language. It offers a comprehensive introduction to Sanskrit, with a focus on reading and writing in Devanāgarī script, essential vocabulary, and fundamental grammatical structures. The aim is to develop students' basic proficiency in reading and writing Sanskrit, enabling them to engage with simple primary texts and understand key linguistic patterns. In addition to following the standard framework of introductory Sanskrit courses commonly offered at the university level, this course will also explore, together with students, how contemporary AI tools can be applied to support the self-directed learning of Sanskrit. (For this purpose, it would be better for students to have their own computer, or the best a laptop in the classes.)

本課程為梵文初學者設計，無需任何先學條件。課程提供對梵文全面的介紹，專注於天城體的認讀、詞彙、主要語法。課程旨在開發學員對梵文的基本讀寫能力，使他們能使用簡單的梵文原典和了解關鍵的語言結構。另外，相較於所有同類大學傳統的標準基礎梵語課程，本課程將與學員一起探索如何應用人工智能工具進行自學梵文。

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:
1) read and comprehend simple Sanskrit passages, building foundational skills in decoding and understanding basic texts;
2) develop their understanding of the basic structure and grammar of the Sanskrit language, including syntax, morphology, and pronunciation, facilitating accurate language use.
3) gain an introductory understanding of Sanskrit Buddhist literature, fostering appreciation of its historical and cultural significance within the broader Sanskrit corpus.
4) be equipped with the knowledge and skills to use AI tools effectively as a resource for their ongoing and self-directed study of Sanskrit, encouraging autonomous learning and technological engagement.

Course syllabus

Topic	Contents/ fundamental concepts
Introduction to Sanskrit	1. introduction to this course 2. alphabet, roman and devanāgarī script 3. nouns and adjectives 4. genders and numbers 5. cases 6. verb to be 7. indeclinable particles 8. declension of masculine noun ending in -*a* 9. sentence structure 10. introduction to the Sanskrit learning sources on the

	internet.
Case (1), Declension (1), Verb (1), Particle (1)	1. accusative and ablative case 2. declension of neuter noun ending in -*a* 3. verbs (classes I, IV, VI, X) and verbal prefixes 4. three grades of strength of vowels 5. particle *iti*, *eva*, *hi*
Case (2), Declension (2), Verb (2), Particle (2), Pronoun (1)	1. dative, genitive, vocative cases 2. verb "to have" 3. declensions of *ā*-ending noun 4. suffixes -*tā*, -*tva*, -*tas* 5. verbs (classes I, IV, VI, X) 6. pronouns 1st person *mad*, 2nd person *tvad*
Declension (3), Pronoun (2), Verb (3), Denominative (1), Case (3), Participle (1)	1. declensions of *u*-ending noun 2. declensions of pronoun *saḥ, eṣaḥ, etat* 3. pronoun *enam* 4. causative verbs 5. instrumental case 6. denominatives 7. past passive participles
Declension (4), Pronoun (3), Verb (4), Particle (3), Consonant, Conjugation (1), Gerunds, Sandhi (1), Suffix (1)	1. declensions of *i, ṛ*-ending noun 2. pronoun *sā, kaḥ* 3. declensions of *ayam, idam, iaym,* 4. particles *api* and *kim* 5. *parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* verbs and paradigm for the conjugation of *ātmanepada* verbs 6. gerunds 7. consonants (unvoiced and voiced) 8. sandhi 9. primary and secondary suffixes
Suffix (2), Case (4), FPP, Relatives, Numerals	1. suffix -*in* 2. genitive as noun 3. FPP gerundive 4. Relatives 5. numberals
Declension (5), Suffix (3), Tense (1), Compound (1), Infinitive, Verb (5)	1. declension of -*vant* 2. suffixs of -*mant*, -*vant* 3. future tense 4. *dvandva*, *tatpuruṣa* 5. infinitive 6. verbs formed from noun/adjective + √*bhū* and +√*kṛ* 7. declension of *asau, adaḥ*
Declension (6), Verb (6), Passive Voice, Participle (2), Compound (2)	1. declension of -*an* 2. verbs (II) 3. passive voice 4. PrP 5. *karmadhāraya* and *avyayībhāva*

Declension (7), Verb (7), Imperative, Numbers	1. declension of *manas*, *sumanas*, *āyus*, *saṃpad*, *vāc* 2. declension of *grāmaṇiḥ, pathin* 3. verb (IX) 4. imperative mood 5. numbers (ordinal)
Declension (8), Verb (8), Tense (2), Conjugation (2), Optative, Compound (3)	1. declension of agent nouns 2. periphrastic future 3. conjugation of verbs (V, VIII) 4. optative mood 5. *bahuvrīhi*
Participle (3), Conjugation (3), Tense (3), Absolute	1. PPA 2. conjugation of verbs (III), √*budh* 3. imperfect tense 4. locative and genitive absolute
Verb (9), Tense (4), Suffix (4)	1. verb (VII) 2. conditional and perfect tense 3. comparative and superlative suffixes
Tense (5), Desiderative, Intensive	1. aorist tense 2. desiderative and intensive mood

Note: The presented schedule serves as an approximate and flexible framework, subject to modification based on the students' comprehension pace and feedback received during instructional sessions.

Course components (Teaching modes and Learning activities)

Teaching Modes and Learning Activities	
On-site face-to-face (Contact hours)	**Percentage of time**
Lectures on-site fact-to-face	100%
Out-of-classroom	
Exercise and practice	

Assessment type, percentage and rubrics

Assessment type	Rubrics	Percentage
Attendance	Unexcused absence will affect student's final grade	10%
In class discussion	Students are expected to finish reading assignment and be prepared to participate in class discussion	10%
Weekly Translation and Reading	Weekly translation and reading report is due 11:59 pm before the class day. Student must submit at least 8 reports throughout the semester.	30%
Mid-term Quiz	Devanāgarī reading and writing; Vocabulary recall; Simple grammar including sandhi, noun cases, verb conjugation, etc.; Translation (Sanskrit to English or vice versa)	20%
Final Written Test	Devanāgarī reading & writing; Grammar drills (declensions, conjugations, sandhi); Vocabulary (fill-in-the-blank or matching); Translation: Sanskrit to English and English to Sanskrit; Comprehension of a short Sanskrit passage.	30%

Required and recommended readings

Required readings:
1. Dhammajoti (2014), *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts- An Elementary Grammatical Guide (4th or 5th edition)*. The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.

Recommended readings:
1. Taylor and Scotellaro (2014), *The Joy of Sanskrit*. ANU eTEXT. (with Egenes (2003), *Introduction to Sanskrit*, Vols 1. and 2. 3rd revised edition, Motilal Banarsidass.)
2. Macdonell (1927), *A Sanskrit Grammar for Students*. Oxford University Press. (張力生 譯 2011《學生梵語語法》。商務印書館。)
3. Ruppel (2017), *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
4. Perry (1936), *A Sanskrit Primer*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
5. Speijer (1998), *Sanskrit Syntax*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
6. Tubb and Boose (2007*), Scholastic Sanskrit: A Manual for Students*. The American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in the City of New York.
7. Whitney (1979), *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
8. Whitney (1879), *Sanskrit Grammar* 3rd edition. Druck und Verlag von Breitkopf und Härtel.
9. Williams (1978), *A Practical Grammar of the Sanskrit Language*. Clarendon Press.

Feedback for evaluation

End-of-term university course evaluation will be conducted online.
Student comments and feedback to the instructor are always welcomed, whether through emails or personal meetings.

Course schedule

Class/ week	Date	Topic	Requirements
1 / 19	Jan.5	Introduction to Sanskrit	Recommended reading
2 / 20	Jan.12	Case (1), Declension (1), Verb (1), Particle (1)	Recommended reading Assignment report
3 / 21	Jan.19	Case (2), Declension (2), Verb (2), Particle (2), Pronoun (1)	Recommended reading Assignment report
4 / 22	Jan.26	Declension (3), Pronoun (2), Verb (3), Denominative (1), Case (3), Participle (1)	Recommended reading Assignment report
5 / 23	Feb. 2	Declension (4), Pronoun (3), Verb (4), Particle (3), Consonant, Conjugation (1), Gerunds, Sandhi (1), Suffix (1)	Recommended reading Assignment report

6 / 24	Feb. 9	Suffix (2), Case (4), FPP, Relatives, Numerals	Recommended reading Assignment report
7 / 26	Feb. 23	Mid-term Quiz Declension (5), Suffix (3), Tense (1), Compound (1), Infinitive, Verb (5)	Completion of the quiz Recommended reading Assignment report
8 / 27	Mar. 2	Declension (6), Verb (6), Passive Voice, Participle (2), Compound (2)	Recommended reading Assignment report
9 / 28	Mar. 9	Declension (7), Verb (7), Imperative, Numbers	Recommended reading Assignment report
10 / 29	Mar. 16	Declension (8), Verb (8), Tense (2), Conjugation (2), Optative, Compound (3)	Recommended reading Assignment report
11 / 30	Mar. 23	Participle (3), Conjugation (3), Tense (3), Absolute	Recommended reading Assignment report
12 / 31	Mar. 30	Verb (9), Tense (4), Suffix (4)	Recommended reading Assignment report
13 / 33	Apr. 13	Tense (5), Desiderative, Intensive Final Examination	Recommended reading Assignment report Completion of the examination

Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

Professor/Lecturer/Instructor:	Lecturer
Name:	LO King Chung
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Teaching Venue:	ELB_206

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.

- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.

- Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.

- Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

The copyright of the teaching materials, including lecture notes, assignments and examination questions, etc., produced by staff members/ teachers of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) belongs to CUHK. Students may download the teaching materials produced by the staff members/ teachers from the Learning Management Systems, e.g. Blackboard, adopted by CUHK for their own educational use, but shall not distribute/ share/ copy the materials to a third-party without seeking prior permission from the staff members/ teachers concerned.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Use of generative AI tools

Approach 4 - Use of some AI tools is allowed with no acknowledgement

Students may use any AI tool in some in-class activities and assignments.
Students are reminded to learn and use AI tools responsibly and ethically and be aware of the limitations.

Guideline on sharing lecture recordings

Guideline on sharing lecture recordings
Attention is drawn to the following:
- The copyright of any lecture recordings shared in the course, whether they are produced by teachers, students, or peer note-takers, belongs to the University.
- Students should not share these recordings with others without obtaining prior written consent from the teacher(s).