

THE CURRICULUM IN ORIENTAL STUDIES: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

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Curriculum in OS at Yangon and Mandalay: Mission

University of Yangon

Mission

to teach the value of Oriental Studies to people.

- for the next generation to know about the culture of Buddhism, to conserve Buddhism..
- to support the development of Myanmar's daily life.
- to present a detailed history of Myanmar related to traditional Buddhist Philosophy.
- to teach the importance and benefits of Myanmar's Buddhist Society.

University of Mandalay

Mission

To upgrade the traditionally prestigious teaching of Oriental Studies

To safeguard the Myanmar Cultural heritages based on Pāli literature and to keep alive the national spirit

To honor the welfare of human society with the admonition of Oriental Studies (Pāli Literature)

Oriental Studies curriculum at the U of Yangon (BA)

SUBJECT

CREDITS

Pali Language & Literature

72

Electives

30

English

24

Sanskrit

16

Prakrits

8

Epigraphy

8

Myanmar (Aspects of)

6

Oriental Studies curriculum at Yangon: electives

ELECTIVE COURSES (Oriental Studies specialization)

- OS 2010 (3) **Buddhist** Councils
- OS 3106 (3) History of **Buddhism**
- OS 4112 (3) **Buddhist** Culture
- OS 4106 (3) **Buddhist** Ethics
- OS 4114 (3) **Buddhist** Art and Architecture
- OS 4113 (3) **Buddhist** Philosophy
- OS 3113 (3) **Abhidhamma**
- OS 3105 (3) **Pāli** Conversation and Composition
- OS 4105 (3) History of **Pali** Literature in Myanmar
- OS 3114 (3) Linguistics
- Hist 1001 (3) Introduction to **Myanmar** Civilization
- Hist 2002 (3) World History
- Geo 1004 (3) Geography of **Myanmar**
- Geo 1003 (3) Geography of South-east Asian Countries
- Phil 1003 (3) Logic in Practice
- Phil 2003 (3) Aesthetics
- Phil 2001 (3) History of Western Intellectual Development
- Psy 1004 (3) Understanding Human Interaction
- Psy 1003 (3) Public Relations
- Eng 2005 (3) Developing Communicative Skill

Research areas & Learning outcomes

News

Research

Faculty Members

- Sanskrit Language and Literature
- Prakrit Language and Literature
- Pāli Language and Literature
- History of Buddhism
- Buddhist Councils
- Buddhist Culture
- Buddhist Philosophy
- Buddhist Ethic
- Buddhist Art and Architecture
- Linguistics
- Pāli Philology
- Mahāyāna Buddhism in Southeast Asia
- Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia

Research areas

U of Yangon

U of Mandalay

Research Areas & Interest

- Pali Language and Literature
- Inscription and Manuscript
- Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Culture
- Buddhist Art and Architecture
- History of Buddhism

Knowledge

fundamental knowledge of Pāli & Sanskrit Language and Literature

the ancient indian history & philosophy

knowledge of the history of Buddhism

the arrival and advent of Buddhism in Myanmar

essence of Buddhist Philosophy & Ethic

various Prākritis and their nature

Buddhist Culture

Learning
outcomes

U of Mandalay

Curriculum improvement: two possible lines

A substantial enhancement of the present curriculum is a desideratum, following two major lines:

1. Greater attention and emphasis should be given to all that concerns ancient and medieval India, its history and its culture (“Ancient Indian History & Philosophy”, “Sanskrit Language and Literature”, etc.)
2. The teaching of subjects such as “History of Buddhism” and “Buddhist Philosophy” should be enhanced, so to become as comprehensive and exhaustive as possible (it should not be concerned with Theravāda Buddhism only)

How to improve the curriculum in OS (1)

1. In order to better understand the beginnings & early history of Buddhism (not only Theravāda Buddhism): increase the number of courses on ancient & medieval India, including the study of extra-Buddhist literatures, philosophies and religions
 - ancient India: Vedic religion, the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, Jainism, Brahmanism
 - medieval India: Tantrism, the Bhakti religious movements, “Puranic” Hinduism

How to improve the curriculum in OS (2)

2. In order to gain a wider view on the history of Buddhism worldwide: strengthen the offer of courses on the history & culture of countries that are/were deeply influenced by Buddhism: SE Asia (including Malaysia and Indonesia), Himalayan area (Nepal, Tibet etc.), China, Korea, Japan
 - enhance the teaching about the different forms that Buddhist doctrines assumed locally (e.g, Indian Mahāyāna > Chán in China > Zen in Japan)
 - enhance the teaching about the indigenous religious traditions which interacted with Buddhism (e.g. Taoism in China, Bon in Tibet, Shinto in Japan)

Mandalay University: Career profiles

Career profiles

(please provide examples of typical/possible/intended careers/jobs of the graduates of the program below)

Government service:

Staff in Religious Department, Culture Department and Archeological Department

Teachers in Basic Education

Professional/ practitioner:

Cultural affairs Consultant, tourism management Consultant

Civil society:

Tourist Guide Association, NGO, CSO

Other:

Tour Guide

How to improve the curriculum in OS (3)

In order to fulfill with the “Career profiles” and to achieve a more comprehensive view on the architectural treasure of Myanmar, the existing courses on Buddhist art and architecture should be integrated with new teachings, covering:

- ancient and medieval Indian architecture and art (Myanmar’s Buddhist architecture has its precursor in Indian models)
- secular architecture of Myanmar (Yangon majestic colonial architecture, the royal palace in Mandalay, other royal buildings around the country, etc.)
- archaeology of Myanmar (major archaeological sites of Myanmar)