

Simon Fraser University

Paul Crowe

SFU has neither a Religious Studies nor Asian Studies department, however the Department of Humanities and the Asia-Canada Program frequently offer courses related to Indian, Chinese and Japanese culture and history within which Buddhism is often addressed. In addition, the David Lam Centre occasionally invites speakers and hosts forums in which Asian religious traditions are discussed.

During the spring semester of 2011 Gordan Djurdjevic offered a Humanities seminar on Hindu mythology that considered the function of myth as ideology in narrative form and the implications of such a view for considering questions of power in relation to various philosophical, social and gender positions in modern India. Michael Newton examined Japanese culture through the lens of our Humanities seminar on great cities in which he focused on the cultural history of Kyōto.

In the fall of 2011 Paul Crowe offered a second-year Humanities Department seminar on great Asian religious texts during which, two weeks were dedicated to a detailed reading and discussion of the *Diamond Sutra* in addition to literati and early Daoist works. In Humanities 320, Gordon Djurdjevic examined the influence of Indian, Japanese and Chinese religion on Leibnitz, Schopenhauer, and Heidegger.

During the spring semester of 2012, Paul Crowe led a fourth-year Asia-Canada seminar, *ASC 400: Asian Religions in British Columbia*, using the book of the same name edited by Larry DeVries, Don Baker and Daniel Overmyer and published through UBC Press in 2010. Much of the focus was on Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese, and Japanese Buddhists in BC. Students visited religious sites in teams of two or three and provided written and verbal field reports for their fellow students through discussion, video and photographic presentations. Ashutosh Kalsi is led a Humanities seminar on the question of sorrow in Indian religious tradition through an examination of key doctrines of the Upanishads, Buddhism, the yoga sutras and Advaita Vedanta by reading sections from *Nasadiya Sukta*, *Kathopanishad*, *Māndūkya Upanishad*, *Dharmachakra parivartan*, *Kalama Sutta*, *Dhammapada*, *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (Diamond Sutra), *Prajñāpāramitā-hridaya-sutra* (Heart Sutra) and *Brahma Sutra Bhashya*.

The David Lam Centre in cooperation with the SFU Institute for the Humanities hosted a talk by Ashutosh Kalsi (Ph.D, SUNY) on the roots of sorrow, *dukkha*, which he describes as lying at the very heart of Indian religious and philosophical inquiry. He related this question to challenges related to personal and global conflicts, and social and environmental problems. In August the David Lam Centre will host a talk on the relationship between Buddhism and art by Guojun Fashi, Dharma Heir to Chan Venerable Master Master Shengyen, founder of Dharma Drum Mountain.