Buddhist Studies

Minor

The Group in Buddhist Studies offers a minor in Buddhist Studies. Students interested in majoring in Buddhist Studies should consider the East Asian Religion, Thought, and Culture (http://guide.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/degree-programs/east-asian-religion-thought-culture) major offered by the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures.

Declaring the Minor

To declare the minor, please visit 3414 Dwinelle Hall.

Students who have a strong interest in an area of study outside their major often decide to complete a minor program. These programs have set requirements and are noted officially on the transcript in the memoranda section, but are not noted on diplomas.

General Guidelines

1. All courses taken to fulfill the minor requirements below must be taken for graded credit.
2. A minimum of three of the upper division courses taken to fulfill the minor requirements must be completed at UC Berkeley.
3. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 is required for courses used to fulfill the minor requirements.
4. Courses used to fulfill the minor requirements may be applied toward the Seven-Course Breadth requirement, for Letters & Science students.
5. No more than one upper division course may be used to simultaneously fulfill requirements for a student’s major and minor programs.
6. All minor requirements must be completed prior to the last day of finals during the semester in which you plan to graduate. If you cannot finish all courses required for the minor by that time, please see a College of Letters & Science adviser.
7. All minor requirements must be completed within the unit ceiling. (For further information regarding the unit ceiling, please see the College Requirements tab.)

Requirements

Language Requirement

Two semesters of a relevant Asian language:

- CHINESE 1A Elementary Chinese
- CHINESE 1B Elementary Chinese
- CHINESE 110 Introduction to Literary Chinese
- CHINESE 11 Introduction to Literary Chinese
- JAPAN 1A Elementary Japanese
- JAPAN 1B Elementary Japanese
- KHMER 1A Introductory Khmer
- KHMER 1B Introductory Khmer
- KOREAN 1A Elementary Korean
- KOREAN 1B Elementary Korean
- SANSKR 100A Elementary Sanskrit
- SANSKR 100B Elementary Sanskrit
- THAI 1A Introduction to Thai
- THAI 1B Introduction to Thai
- TIBETAN 1A Elementary Tibetan
- TIBETAN 1B Elementary Tibetan

Upper Division Core Requirement (5 courses)

Select three courses in Buddhist Studies:

- BUDDSTD C50 Introduction to the Study of Buddhism
- BUDDSTD C50 Introduction to the Study of Buddhism
- BUDDSTD C118 Buddhist Thought in India
- BUDDSTD C117 Tibetan Buddhism
- BUDDSTD C117 Tibetan Buddhism
- BUDDSTD C114 Japanese Buddhism
- BUDDSTD C118 Buddhism in China
- BUDDSTD C117 Buddhist Thought in India
- BUDDSTD C122 Buddhism and the Environment
- BUDDSTD C121 Buddhism and the Environment
- BUDDSTD C150 The Origins and Development of Buddhist Art in South Asia
- BUDDSTD C150 The Origins and Development of Buddhist Art in South Asia
- BUDDSTD C150 Buddhism and the Environment
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1. Students with previous language experience will be required to take a placement exam with department language coordinators.
2. This includes students with prior facility in a relevant Asian language. Such students have the choice of studying a further relevant Asian language on the introductory level, or of taking advanced language classes including seminars dedicated to reading Buddhist sources in the original. Admission to such advanced language classes and seminars is subject to the instructor’s approval and may include a placement exam in accordance with the standard policy employed for the language in question.
3. All courses require adviser approval.
4. BUDDSTD 50 or BUDDSTD C50 may be substituted for one of the five courses.
5. In addition to content courses this may include upper division courses in a relevant Asian language. Note that courses used to satisfy the language requirement do not count towards meeting the upper division course requirement.
6. EAP course(s) may be used to satisfy one of the electives; however, not all EAP courses will be approved for the minor. Please check with the adviser in advance.
Buddhist Studies

BUDDSTD 39 Freshman/Sophomore Seminar
1.5 - 2 Units
Terms offered: Not yet offered
Freshman and sophomore seminars offer lower division students the opportunity to explore an intellectual topic with a faculty member and a group of peers in a small-seminar setting. These seminars are offered in all campus departments; topics vary from department to department and from semester to semester. Freshman/Sophomore Seminar: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1.5-2 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered. Final exam not required.
Freshman/Sophomore Seminar: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD 50 Introduction to the Study of Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Summer 2017 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2011 Second 6 Week Session
This course will consider materials drawn from various Buddhist traditions of Asia, from ancient times down to the present day. However, the course is not intended to be a comprehensive or systematic survey; rather than aiming at breadth, the course is designed around key themes such as ritual, image veneration, mysticism, meditation, and death. The overarching emphasis throughout the course will be on the hermeneutic difficulties attendant upon the study of religion in general, and Buddhism in particular. Introduction to the Study of Buddhism: Read More [+]

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Also listed as: EA LANG C50/S, SEASN C52
Introduction to the Study of Buddhism: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C113 Buddhist Thought in India 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2016
This course is an advanced introduction to the major teachings of Indian Buddhism and their philosophical elaborations. We will cover the core tenets attributed to the Buddha, and the later doctrinal and scholastic developments that turned Buddhism into one of the principal philosophical traditions of India. For this we will read select primary sources—in principle, extracts of the scriptures and later treatises—and academic articles and book chapters. Rather than offering a broad introductory survey of Buddhist traditions across space and time, this class is geared towards students who are already familiar with the basics of Buddhism and want to deepen their understanding of the principal teachings of Buddhism originating in India. Buddhist Thought in India: Read More [+]

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Also listed as: S ASIAN C113
Buddhist Thought in India: Read Less [-]
BUDDSTD 114 Tibetan Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Summer 2016 10 Week Session, Summer 2016 Second 6 Week Session, Summer 2014 Second 6 Week Session
This course is a broad introduction to the history, doctrine, and culture of the Buddhism of Tibet. We will begin with the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet in the eighth century and move on to the evolution of the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhist literature, ritual and monastic practice, the place of Buddhism in Tibetan political history and the contemporary situation of Tibetan Buddhism both inside and outside Tibet.
Tibetan Buddhism: Read More [+]
Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week
Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Tibetan Buddhism: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C114 Tibetan Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2017, Fall 2016, Fall 2014
This course is a broad introduction to the history, doctrine, and culture of the Buddhism of Tibet. We will begin with the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet in the eighth century and move on to the evolution of the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhist literature, ritual and monastic practice, the place of Buddhism in Tibetan political history, and the contemporary situation of Tibetan Buddhism both inside and outside Tibet.
Tibetan Buddhism: Read More [+]
Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Tibetan Buddhism: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C115 Japanese Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2017, Fall 2015, Fall 2013
A critical survey of the main themes in the history of Japanese Buddhism as they are treated in modern scholarship. The course covers the transmission of Buddhism from China and Korea to Japan; the subsequent evolution in Japan of the Tendai, Shingon, Pure Land, Nichiren, and Zen schools of Buddhism; the organization and function of Buddhist institutions (monastic and lay) in Japanese society; the interaction between Buddhism and other modes of religious belief and practice prevalent in Japan, notably those that go under the headings of “Shinto” and “folk religion.”
Japanese Buddhism: Read More [+]
Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week
Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Also listed as: JAPAN C115
Japanese Buddhism: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C116 Buddhism in China 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2018, Spring 2015
This course is an introduction to the history of Buddhism in China from its beginnings in the early centuries CE to the present day. Through engagement with historical scholarship, primary sources in translation, and Chinese Buddhist art, we will explore the intellectual history and cultural impact of Buddhism in China. Students will also be introduced to major issues in the institutional history of Buddhism, the interactions between Buddhism and indigenous Chinese religions, and the relationship between Buddhism and the state. Previous study of Buddhism is helpful but not required.
Buddhism in China: Read More [+]
Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Also listed as: CHINESE C116
Buddhism in China: Read Less [-]
BUDDSTD C117 Mongolian Buddhism 4 Units
This course covers the history of Mongolian Buddhism from its inception in the Yuan dynasty to the present. The importance of Mongolian Buddhism to the greater dharma lies not only with the ways of its priests but also with the means of its patrons, the Mongol aristocracy, in forging a distinctive tradition in Inner Asia and disseminating it throughout the world. While maintaining a historical thread throughout, this course will examine in detail some of the tradition’s many facets, including Mongolian-Buddhist politics, the politics of incarnation, the establishment of monasteries, economics, work in the sciences, astral science and medicine, ritual practice, literature, sculpture and painting, music and dance, and more.
Mongolian Buddhism: Read More [+]

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Also listed as: MONGOLN C117
Mongolian Buddhism: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C120 Buddhism on the Silk Road 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2016, Fall 2015, Fall 2014
This course will discuss the social, economic, and cultural aspects of Buddhism as it moved along the ancient Eurasian trading network referred to as the “Silk Road”. Instead of relying solely on textual sources, the course will focus on material culture as it offers evidence concerning the spread of Buddhism. Through an examination of the Buddhist archaeological remains of the Silk Road, the course will address specific topics, such as the symbiotic relationship between Buddhism and commerce; doctrinal divergence; ideological shifts in the iconography of the Buddha; patronage (royal, religious and lay); Buddhism and political power; and art and conversion. All readings will be in English.
Buddhism on the Silk Road: Read More [+]

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.
Also listed as: EA LANG C120
Buddhism on the Silk Road: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C126 Buddhism and the Environment 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2011, Fall 2009, Spring 2008
A thematic course on Buddhist perspectives on nature and Buddhist responses to environmental issues. The first half of the course focuses on East Asian Buddhist cosmological and doctrinal perspectives on the place of the human in nature and the relationship between the salvific goals of Buddhism and nature. The second half of the course examines Buddhist ethics, economics, and activism in relation to environmental issues in contemporary Southeast Asia, East Asia, and America.
Buddhism and the Environment: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: One lower-division course in Buddhist Studies or consent of instructor

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Also listed as: EA LANG C126
Buddhism and the Environment: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD 128 Buddhism in Contemporary Society 4 Units
Terms offered: Summer 2015 10 Week Session, Summer 2015 First 6 Week Session
A study of the Buddhist tradition as it is found today in Asia. The course will focus on specific living traditions of East, South, and/or Southeast Asia. Themes to be addressed may include contemporary Buddhist ritual practices; funerary and mortuary customs; the relationship between Buddhism and other local religious traditions; the relationship between Buddhist institutions and the state; Buddhist monasticism and its relationship to the laity; Buddhist ethics; Buddhist “modernism,” and so on.
Buddhism in Contemporary Society: Read More [+]

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details
Instructor: von Rospatt
Buddhism in Contemporary Society: Read Less [-]
BUDDSTD C128 Buddhism in Contemporary Society 4 Units
A study of the Buddhist tradition as it is found today in Asia. The course will focus on specific living traditions of East, South, and/or Southeast Asia. Themes to be addressed may include contemporary Buddhist ritual practices; funerary and mortuary customs; the relationship between Buddhism and other local religious traditions; the relationship between Buddhist institutions and the state; Buddhist monasticism and its relationship to the laity; Buddhist ethics; Buddhist "modernism," and so on.
Buddhism in Contemporary Society: Read More [+]

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Instructor: von Rospatt
Also listed as: EA LANG C128/S, SEASN C145
Buddhism in Contemporary Society: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C130 Zen Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2013, Spring 2010, Summer 2007 Second 6 Week Session
This course will introduce students to the Zen Buddhist traditions of China and Japan, drawing on a variety of disciplinary perspectives (history, anthropology, philosophy, and so on). The course will also explore a range of hermeneutic problems (problems involved in interpretation) entailed in understanding a sophisticated religious tradition that emerged in a time and culture very different from our own.
Zen Buddhism: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: One lower division course in Asian religion recommended

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.
Instructor: Blum
Also listed as: EA LANG C130
Zen Buddhism: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C132 Pure Land Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2017, Fall 2015, Fall 2014
This course will discuss the historical development of the Pure Land school of East Asian Buddhism, the largest form of Buddhism practiced today in China and Japan. The curriculum is divided into India, China, and Japan sections, with the second half of the course focusing exclusively on Japan where this form of religious culture blossomed most dramatically, covering the ancient, medieval, and modern periods. The curriculum will begin with a reading of the core scriptures that form the basis of the belief system and then move into areas of cultural expression. The course will follow two basic trajectories over the centuries: doctrine/philosophy and culture/society.
Pure Land Buddhism: Read More [+]

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Instructor: Blum
Also listed as: EA LANG C132
Pure Land Buddhism: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C135 Tantric Traditions of Asia 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2013, Spring 2010
The emergence of the tantras in seventh and eighth-century India marked a watershed for religious practice throughout Asia. These esoteric scriptures introduced complex new ritual technologies that transformed the religious traditions of India, from Brahmanism to Jainism and Buddhism, as well as those of Southeast Asia, Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea, and Japan. This course provides an overview of tantric religion across these regions.
Tantric Traditions of Asia: Read More [+]

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Instructor: Dalton
Also listed as: EA LANG C135/S, SEASN C135
Tantric Traditions of Asia: Read Less [-]
BUDDSTD C140 Readings in Chinese Buddhist Texts 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2016, Spring 2014, Fall 2009
This course is an introduction to the study of medieval Buddhist literature written in classical Chinese. We will read samples from a variety of genres, including early Chinese translations of Sanskrit and Central Asian Buddhist scriptures, indigenous Chinese commentaries, philosophical treatises, and sectarian works, including Chan (Zen koans). The course will also serve as an introduction to resource materials used in the study of Chinese Buddhist texts, and students will be expected to make use of a variety of reference tools in preparation for class. Readings in Chinese will be supplemented by a range of secondary readings in English on Mahayana doctrine and Chinese Buddhist history.

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: Chinese 110A; or one semester of classical Chinese. Prior background in Buddhist history and thought is helpful, but not required

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.
Also listed as: CHINESE C140
Readings in Chinese Buddhist Texts: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD C141 Introductory Readings in Japanese Buddhist Texts 4 Units
Terms offered: Spring 2018, Spring 2017, Fall 2015
This course is an introduction to the study of medieval Buddhist literature written in Classical Japanese in its wabun (aka bungo) and kanbun forms (including kakikudashi). The class will read samples from a variety of genres, including material written in China that are read in an idiosyncratic way in Japan. Reading materials will include Chinese translations of Sanskrit and Central Asian Buddhist scriptures, scriptural commentaries written in China and Korea, Japanese subcommentaries on influential Chinese and Korean commentaries, philosophical treatises, hagiography, apologetics, histories, doctrinal letters, preaching texts, and setsuwa literature. This course is intended for students who already have some facility in literary Japanese.

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: Japanese 120. One semester of classical Japanese. Prior background in Buddhist history and thought is helpful, but not required

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.
Instructor: Blum
Also listed as: JAPAN C141
Introductory Readings in Japanese Buddhist Texts: Read Less [-]
BUDDSTD 150 The Origins and Development of Buddhist Art in South Asia 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2017, Spring 2016
Rather than offering a comprehensive survey, this course deals with select themes that shed light on the origins, development and diffusion of Buddhist art chronologically and geographically through a combined study that considers the archaeological record (excavations, coins, etc.), key religious texts and epigraphy. Typical themes will be the early notion of aniconism and the evolution of iconic art (Buddha and bodhisattva images); the depiction of Jatakas and other narratives in reliefs and painting; the cave sculptures of the Western Deccan; tantric art, temples and monasteries; the art, archaeology and architecture of South India and Sri Lanka; Indic Buddhist monuments in South-East Asia such Bagan in Burma, Borobudur, and Angkor.

BUDDSTD 190 Topics in the Study of Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Spring 2016
This course will focus on specific themes, developments, and issues in the study of Buddhism. The course is intended to supplement our regular curricular offerings, and the content will change from semester to semester.

BUDDSTD C154 Death, Dreams, and Visions in Tibetan Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Fall 2014, Fall 2010
Tibetan Buddhists view the moment of death as a rare opportunity for transformation. This course examines how Tibetans have used death and dying in the path to enlightenment. Readings will address how Tibetan funerary rituals work to assist the dying toward this end, and how Buddhist practitioners prepare for this crucial moment through tantric meditation, imaginative rehearsals, and explorations of the dream state.

BUDDSTD 154 Death, Dreams, and Visions in Tibetan Buddhism 4 Units
Terms offered: Summer 2013 First 6 Week Session
Tibetan Buddhists view the moment of death as a rare opportunity for transformation. This course examines how Tibetans have used death and dying in the path to enlightenment. Readings will address how Tibetan funerary rituals work to assist the dying toward this end, and how Buddhist practitioners prepare for this crucial moment through tantric meditation, imaginative rehearsals, and explorations of the dream state.

Death, Dreams, and Visions in Tibetan Buddhism: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Additional Details
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Dalton

Also listed as: S ASIAN C154/TIBETAN C154

Death, Dreams, and Visions in Tibetan Buddhism: Read Less [-]

Topics in the Study of Buddhism: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements
Prerequisites: Some prior study of Buddhism or Asian culture is recommended
Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format
Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week
Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details
Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate
Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Dalton

Death, Dreams, and Visions in Tibetan Buddhism: Read Less [-]
BUDDSTD 198 Directed Group Study 1 - 4 Units
Terms offered: Prior to 2007
Small group instruction not covered by regularly scheduled courses.
Directed Group Study: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Junior or Senior standing

Credit Restrictions: Enrollment is restricted; see the Introduction to Courses and Curricula section of this catalog.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of directed group study per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 2-7.5 hours of directed group study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

Directed Group Study: Read Less [-]

BUDDSTD 199 Independent Study 1 - 4 Units
Terms offered: Prior to 2007
Independent study in topics not covered by regularly scheduled courses.
Independent Study: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Junior or Senior standing

Credit Restrictions: Enrollment is restricted; see the Introduction to Courses and Curricula section of this catalog.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Summer:
6 weeks - 2.5-10 hours of independent study per week
8 weeks - 2-7.5 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

Independent Study: Read Less [-]