



# **FALL 2021 COURSE EVALUATIONS**

**CS301** (evaluations: 7)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

**FACULTY**

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- As the course promised, I have realized the importance of the art of Listening. I have never known that Listening is something that could be taught.
- I enjoyed the course and its content! Namdrol was wonderful throughout and did an amazing job of creating a gentle welcoming environment without sacrificing learning and growth. I got a lot more out of the course than I expected going in and am excited to continue the CS course pillar.
- I thought the course content was a little disconnected at times. Seemed to jump from one topic to the next. Sometimes it didn't seem like there was a clear flow.
- Allow for tough conversations to take place in class discussion. There doesn't always have to be an answer (good or bad). Utilizing inquiry when tough questions come up (such as abuse in the monetary) rather than looking to answer for Buddhism or Tibetan Buddhism I believe could lead to a richer learning environment. Maitripa as a graduate school has a responsibility to contribute to the content of the world, not just from the professors side, but from the student side as well. Encouraging debate, inquiry, curiosity (even around difficult subjects that might include questioning the way Tibetans had done things prior to 1950 and possibly today due to their displacement) and contribution to positive evolution of Buddhism will only

strengthen Maitripas position in and influence in the academic world.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- The breadth of perspectives and materials, ways of interacting with concepts really expanded the ways to think and engage!!!
- I think the course was excellent! I loved learning from Namdrol and am excited to take more of her courses. I would like to have seen a little bit more overt contextualization of the material in terms of service. Since there wasn't an opportunity for a service project this term that element of the class felt a little thin to me.
- kind and understanding
- Thank you so very much.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**






- While online is convenient, I much rather be attending in person. I enjoy the experience of being a student. I want to sit in the same energy fields as my instructors and classmates.
- I thought it was excellent! I actually thought it went as well if not better over zoom!
- I strongly prefer in person classes to online classes and wish the majority if not all classes were taught in person. That being said I think the circumstantial and institutional drive for remote learning was handled very well this year, the hybrid option and opportunities for gathering were a great addition to the learning experience. I would like even more opportunities for in person learning, practice, and engagement at Maitripa!
- online was good. in person was better.
- I like both. In person there was more of a chance to connect more deeply with the peer group, the gorgeous space that maitripa offers and feel grounded in the experiences outside of Zoom.

**CS303** (evaluations: 6)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

## FACULTY

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class
				

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- This was an excellent class with such rich content and skillfully lead discussions and assignments. i loved it all.
- "I feel this class would benefit from 2 classes per week to really be able to digest how the curriculum influences and weaves with our service work; and also feel that it really benefits from having a service/volunteer or work in the world where techniques and approaches can be tested, applied, and practiced, and then processed in the cohort with the mentorship of the instructor.
- The instructor is excellent!"
- the reading and exercises were thoughtfully designed to help students who wish to become chaplains understand the process, what will be expected of them and what kinds of questions and experiences they can expect. the homework included draft essays, which will help those applying for CPE, verbatims and other relevant work closely aligned with the CPE process.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- Leigh is an excellent teacher who gives so much to each class. It was very enriching to have guest teachers come- Anita and Nathan and Stephanie. Leigh does a wonderful job at building expanding sense of theological community and I was enriched by each voice and also by the voices of my classmates. I really appreciated all the discussions.
- Leigh Miller is an outstanding teacher. I would take virtually any class she offered.
- Fantastic class. Thank you so much for all you do Leigh!
- I love that Leigh is doing a unit of CPE. It really attests to her desire to bring as much knowledge, experience, and relatability to the program.
- Leigh is the best. I love how she is doing CPE so she can have a first hand experience of what students have and will experience. Thoughtful, kind, articulate and supportive.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- great, works well with small class. intimate and no masks is nice.
- I cannot compare as I've never been to Maitripa.
- While I am pretty used to the online format, I also appreciated being able to be in class in person. I do think with a small class it felt a little better to all be together, whether on zoom or in person. Still I appreciate the online format for flexibility and opportunity to connect with those outside of our geographic area."
- Good - thumbs up.
- zoom is so convenient; in person is always better.

# HIS301 (evaluations: 12)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

## FACULTY

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- maybe having readings that are a little shorter so i can actually commit realistically to reading them.
- "I loved this course so much - one of the best courses I've ever taken at Maitripa, for sure. The way Namdrol arranged the course content was outstanding. The focus on narratives made the content accessible and interesting, rather than dry, as some history courses can be. The class discussions and breakout rooms were always well thought-out and fruitful. An enriching and wonderful course overall, one that I learned a lot from and that also gave me more confidence in being able to explain the history of Buddhism to others.
- My only criticism is that the readings were way too much - so much so that I just gave up on them at a certain point, around halfway through the term. I really wanted to do the readings, but we started to see that they weren't actually being used in class (for discussion, etc.), so I think other students also just stopped doing them. Some weeks we were given entire books to ""read"", which of course is impossible. The problem was that, a) There were so many that I knew I couldn't do them or even skim them, and b) I didn't know which were more important, so some weeks I just didn't do them at all, which was really a shame. It would have been much better if there were more targeted, shorter readings that were do-able, and if we had actually discussed them in class. That would have made the readings much better integrated and I would have been more motivated to read them.

- One last comment: As Namdrol mentioned often during the class, it is only an overview so she had to speed through the material very quickly. I think this course could conceivably be split into two, with one ending at present times, and the second being about how Buddhism came to the West. This part was going to be the last 2-3 weeks but had to be cut due to time. I could see this being a fascinating course that could look at the different traditions of Buddhism, how they came here, the role of translation, particular teachers and their impact, etc. There are lots of readings and films available on this topic so it could be a very rich and relevant elective course. Just a thought for the future."
- The only thing that didn't work was time! This class was so rich with information and meaningful detail that I truly wish it met twice a week. Wonderful course!
- Sometimes the assignment to read a whole book would come at the same time as many other reading assignments. It was difficult to complete all the reading. A little more advance notice or a reminder in the lesson to start reading a book would allow more time to plan out when/how to complete the extensive readings.
- The only request I have is to have more history classes :)
- So much to cover in this class. With that being said, it would be interesting to incorporate a little of the Bon tradition and how Buddhism integrated over the top of that tradition as it entered Tibet.
- There is so much to cover, it might help to somehow limit the scope of the history (although at the moment I can't think how this would be done) It would be fun if this were a two semester course with an India - Tibet divide but again, I don't know if this is possible. I really enjoyed the course content and the thoughtfully chosen (but maybe a bit overly ambitious) readings and videos. This is really a helpful course in setting the context for Buddhist studies -- things make much more sense as you see the way they developed and the sequence of teachers/ideas over time.
- One of my favorite classes I've taken. There's just not enough time to talk about all of Buddhist history; I could study it forever. The content was great though.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- I appreciated guest teachers Robert and Michael. Very rich addition.
- Namdrol is a fantastic teacher! She was always very organized and well prepared, and her Powerpoints were extremely useful. She understands students' needs and her pedagogical training was obvious in this course. I'd love to take more courses like this with her.
- Incredible breadth of history while also getting real depth!!! I learned so much and now have such a better handle on a historical scaffolding to guide my understanding! Invaluable!
- I'm grateful to you both - you both helped me gain insight into this history and lineage. Can we have more history classes?
- "It was good to see Linda as the TA. I appreciated her assistance with the dual zoom/in-class responsibilities.
- Thank you Namdrol and Linda."
- "Really wonderful over all. Enjoyed also hearing from knowledgeable classmates and alumni as well as all that Namdrol had to share!
- I think I actually give the input feedback for this class in the CS 301 class! It was mainly around discussions and wanting to see more room around difficult conversations related to where Tibetan Buddhism in conventional reality may have room to evolve. There seems to be a desire to defend Tibetan Buddhism rather than facilitate a critical inquiry based look at what aspects of the culture that might not be effective.
- Thank you so much."
- Linda is a great TA and very helpful. She and Namdrol make an excellent pair! Aside from the exigencies of technology, all was well.
- Almost as good as teacher as Rinpoche; Namdrol is amazing.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- best is one or another. hybrid tricky when you are the one online. you miss out of dialogue in one form or another that is happening in class.
- Being online in hybrid mode was not very satisfying, though I know the staff and faculty did their best. Those on Zoom can't hear or see well and often feel left out. To be honest, I'd have preferred that we were all on Zoom together, rather than in hybrid mode. When we are all on Zoom together, it's totally fine and for me, preferable to hybrid.
- Coming in person was Ok but not great. If we'd been in the classroom it would have been much better. Having a content-heavy class like that in the Jokhang doesn't really work, as it's hard to see the powerpoint or the instructor. I hope that in the future we can have such classes in the classroom, and just use the Jokhang for meditation classes."
- I am always impressed by how smoothly things work out at Maitripa. No complaints just a request to have a few more

weeks on campus all together...






- Amazing! Just as good as in-person!
- some connection problems
- The in-person classes for this course were far better than the online classes. But I must say that seeing fellow students face is a better feature of online classes.
- Good!
- Good.
- These were both effective delivery methods. Nice to see folks and get to know them in person as well as be in the beautiful space that is Maitripa. I think Maitripa did the leap to online to deal with covid very well.
- "I greatly appreciated the mix of in-person and online classes. On-line is ok but much harder to develop the sense of a cohort for obvious reasons. Having a few weeks of in-person class at the beginning greatly enriched the on-line discussions that we had later on. People seemed to feel more free to ask questions and enter into discussions on-line after we had actually met each other.
- I am grateful for on-line classes and the reach they afford to students, but there really is a great deal lost in terms of interactions and learning from other students, not to mention the student-teacher relation (which develops more openly when people are f2f."
- It works through the Covid times and suffices. I still learn a lot and love attending, even if it is online.

### MED301 (evaluations: 8)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

## FACULTY

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class
				

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- It would be nice to get grades back. We still have not received any.
- Venerable was incredible and really wonderfully complimented Rinpoche! Lots of wonderful handouts and guides which really connected and expanded ways to connect with topics!!! I loved the guests as well!!! I loved all the extra videos and youtube videos!
- the course content was excellent.
- Yonten's Videos on You Tube were very helpful as well.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- Maybe the discussions could be related more closely to how we need support in meditation sessions.
- "I think regular feedback of some sort might be useful. If written feedback is not something that wants to be engaged I suggest early and / or mid and end of semester conferences of even 15-20 minutes with students to help in witnessing, reflecting and direct feedback.
- Some training/reading about in best practices for leading discussions might also fill the gap between what is offered ("...today we are going to have a discussion...") and what actually happens.
- Venerable Yonten is a great compliment to Yangsi Rinpoches style. Together the two created a dynamic learning environment.
- This is an amazingly wonderful offering over all. Hope these suggestions can be useful.
- Thank you so very much for making this offering available."
- Yonten's help and expertise was crucial to my advancement and understanding. Venerable Rene was wonderful and I really resonated with him and his message and style of teaching and meditation.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- I much prefer in class instruction especially for a meditation class.
- Perfect!
- Both seem effective.
- Online as good as inperson as far as I'm concerned.



**MED 304** (evaluations: 19)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

**FACULTY**

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- I think it worked well. Is it possible in the future to give a general framework on how Rinpoche thinks of meditation on emptiness? He spends a lot of time preparing our minds to get into a state before even starting a meditation on emptiness such as non-reactive meditation and spacious awareness. Is it possible to get a framework on the difference approaches he is thinking of when teaching us?
- Usually there is an alignment of readings between the philosophy and the accompanying meditation courses (i.e. between PHL 304 and MDT 304). For some reason, this alignment was not in evidence until the second half of the semester. Better alignment would have benefitted the students.
- I never received any real feedback on any of my assignments for either this class or the MDT304. It starts to get pretty hard to motivate to do the assignments when its clear nobody is actually reading them. They start to feel a whole lot like busy work. This is particularly frustrating sense we are on Zoom and not meeting in person nearly as much, so we are not getting nearly as much discussion or feedback in class. The student experience in these classes now as compared to when I started feels much worse, sadly. I feel like Maitripa has gotten exited that they can offer the classes to more people

because its on-line but don't actually have the ability as faculty to provide the same quality of experience to more people.

- One thing that worked well in this class is that the required readings were not overwhelming in quantity. They were limited enough to get through weekly. (Readings in some of the classes I have taken were overwhelming in quantity, leading me to not complete them and/or not have time to understand them.) Also, I appreciated the short doses of Dose of Emptiness.
- Perhaps a few more specific meditation sessions on emptiness meditations in general
- There were times when the PHL304 and the MDT304 differed in their content but Rinpoche would not always teach like that. If it is good and possible to do in the future, please mirror more closely the content in both classes.
- I loved the meditations. This is my second time taking the class and I connected so much more deeply to the practice. I am glad I took it a second time.
- I found the class to be excellent! Rinpoche was a wonderful instructor as always and the guest teachers were also incredible. I don't know if this is possible to do, but it might be nice to have some clarity of expectation for what a beginner to emptiness meditation might be able to access or accomplish compared to the more experienced meditators in the class.
- Wonderful, amazing course! I loved everything about it. The substitute teachers were incredible and I really enjoyed the variety of subs, rather than just having one. Each instructor gave his or her own wisdom, understanding and experience to the meditations they led, which made the course very rich.
- The course content was excellent, including the addition of guest teachers (wonderful!) A variety of readings offered different approaches to the subject, which really helped get a grip on some difficult material. I was happy for the extra reading choices and the range of texts. Class discussions (on line and in person both) provided us with a beautiful range of topics and questions and answers and really enhanced the content of the readings!
- What worked was the generosity and flexibility of Yangsi Rinpoche and our TA, Tiffany, in bringing in many outside perspectives-with having additional teachers. What also worked was sharing about struggles for newcomers in practice, and allowing many methods and options of practice. Thank you all!
- Rinpoche and Ven. are great teachers and the content of the course is great.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- Nothing to note here for me.
- "No feedback was received by any of the Meditation Reports. I am genuinely interested in improving and deepening my meditation practice so I would really appreciate feedback. Otherwise, it feels like the meditation reports were just busy work, not meant to help the students.
- Tiffany's cheerful attitude was appreciated. It would have been helpful to have had her post the weekly online discussion questions, readings, and assignments in a more timely way.
- Students would have benefitted from having Tiffany align readings and content with the PHL 304 course during the first half of the semester; appreciated that this alignment was more in evidence the second half of the semester."
- Thankful to Yangsi Rinpoche and Tiffany for a wonderful class and learning environment. There is a feeling that we can really bring ourselves individually to the practice even as we release the grasping of self!
- Ven. Yönten was wonderful - kind and clear!
- Really loved all the guest teachers- Ven. Rene, Hopkins and Thubten Jinpe and others. we are so fortunate. thank you so much!
- Tiffany is a wonderful and loving TA, my only suggestion would be for her to post readings and discussions in a more timing manner and to coordinate better with Venerable Yönten (and vice versa).
- My deepest thanks to Tiffany and Rinpoche for their work and care this term. They were both wonderful and did a stellar job of facilitating a learning and development experience. We're all still learning about how to do the remote and hybrid learning effectively and they navigated it very well.
- Tiffany was amazing as well - she is such a kind, warm, loving presence! I really appreciated the way she led the discussions. Since I'm not in the accompanying philosophy class this term, if the discussions had relied heavily on the readings, it would have been more difficult for me, so I appreciated that the discussion prompts were more about our own meditation practice and experience. I'm so happy to see that she is going to be our TA next term as well. Thank you, Tiffany!
- "Tiffany did an excellent job as TA. She was present, responsive, and supportive. Thank you Tiffany.
- As I already wrote about Tiffany in the course eval for Philosophy let me also take this time to thank Venerable Yonten for her work as TA for our Philosophy class. Venerable Yonten is extremely knowledgeable, responsive, supportive, guided discussion well and led a wonderful meditation class for us as well. Thank you Venerable Yonten for your work."

- I think the online class worked well because of our tech person and our TA. Tiffany was happy to answer questions, sort out problems, etc. She also posted great discussion posts and assignments. Rinpoche was really in his element as a teacher and I am also grateful that he invited such wonderful guest speakers! It was a real honor to be part of this class. I just can't think of anything that didn't work.
- Our TA, Tiffany Patrella Blumenthal is a very kind and patient, loving support. I appreciated knowing she is there as a support, should I need anything, or flexibility. No requests to make at this time. Thank you!
- Amazing teachers I feel so fortunate to have been able to be taught from.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- I definitely prefer in person classes. There's something about the container of being in class as opposed to taking the class at home. From an administrative standpoint, online classes work as well but as a student it is tiring on the eyes. Sometimes, the audio has issue. I think there's a transcribing feature on Zoom and that may help students that have audio problems or English isn't their first language.
- While Zoom made it possible for us to meet during Covid, meditating in person was a thousand times more effective!
- Much, much worse. No real discussion. No feedback on assignments.
- I can't say as I've never attended classes in person to date at Maitripa.
- Unlike any others, I got more out of the online classes than I do in in-person classes — it was great to see the faces of fellow students. The first hybrid classes were difficult, but Alfredo wound up mastering the technology.
- great. best is in person, most challenging or least optimal is hybrid.
- Meditating with Rinpoche in person is a vastly more powerful and embodied experience. Meditating with Rinpoche over zoom is far more heady, meaning most of the awareness stays more in my head area than throughout the body like when in person.
- Zoom is very convenient, so I am NOT complaining. but nothing compares to the in person experience
- I give it a thumbs up.
- I am a strong advocate to maximize in person instruction. I understand the pressures for remote learning and I think that everyone at Maitripa has done an amazing job of navigating the restrictions of covid. That being said, I would love as many in person opportunities as possible, be that for class, practice, or other learning.
- I love doing meditation courses online, as I can be in the comfort of my own meditation space. When in hybrid mode, I choose to be online instead of in person for that reason.
- "I wrote about my experience in Meditation class in the course evaluation for the PHL class. So I will add only that for the philosophy class it was great to be in person to pose questions directly to Rinpoche and have a more traditional in class discussion where I also got to hear from my classmates in the classroom format. There is something to be said for the benefits of in class discussion that zoom can not quite imitate.
- I appreciate having both classes in person and on zoom, there is much to be gained from either scenario. As I said on the course eval for Philosophy - meditation in person was different in that I was more committed to staying with the meditation practice alone while on zoom I often felt compelled to stop the meditation and just listen and take notes from Rinpoche that I could apply to later meditation practice."
- I was very happy to have the opportunity to have a mix of online and face to face classes. Online classes are good but much is lost in terms of learning from each other and building support from classmates and our teachers. Also screen time is hard on the eyes after a while.
- "I most often prefer in person practice; and it is also nice to be able to practice from home.
- Having online class definitely has a different feel than in person."
- Prefer in person for the community
- It suffices during the Covid times.

**PHL301** (evaluations: 7)



The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

**FACULTY**

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- The beginning of the term had a lot of complicated material. It would be great to spend time understanding why that is important. Study guides in advance would be helpful.
- Awesome! Best philosophy class I've ever taken!
- A little more scaffolding assignments for some of the bigger learning threshold concepts and integration. Discussions did some of this but over all synthesis only came at the midterm questions and the final questions. Maybe some students would see this as busy work but if done correctly - such as each week give a part of one of the midterm or final questions and then the midterm and final questions could have a second part (with revisions of the first part also possible from the weekly assignments).
- Beginning students with little to no background in Buddhism need additional help before beginning this course of study. Reading Tseling's 5 books would be very helpful prior to course start.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- Incredible!

- Great class!
- Yangsi Rinpoche's lectures were always very interesting and insightful. Thank you both so very much.
- I emailed through the main page numerous times for assistance and received no responses. We didn't receive our graded papers back until our next set of papers were nearly due. This is problematic for western students, unless you specifically set up other expectations initially.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**






- I prefer in person learning.
- Great! Zoom was just as good as in person!
- In person is better but online is more convenient.
- The energy in the classroom with professors especially Rinpoche could never be imitated in an online format.
- They both had their positives. The online classes did seem to be able to facilitate getting a peer to peer connection. Lectures delivered in both formats worked.
- This was the only way I could take the classes at Maitripa due to health considerations (beyond covid), so this was a wonderful opportunity for me. I have had a great deal of higher education and this being online was as effective as being in person regarding the learning aspects. A time for class members to get together and share on a regular basis might be a nice touch in the future. Also consistency between TA's regarding the use of dates for things to be read by would have been helpful.

**PHL304** (evaluations: 14)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

## FACULTY

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class
				

### Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?

- The most excellent TA! It might be good if Rinpoche used a translator sometimes; on occasion, I can see that he is challenged having to explain these philosophical fine points to us in English - repeating to himself the Tibetan and then searching for the most appropriate English words - such that we spend quite a bit of time in class coming up with the translations ourselves. But all in all a lovely class, so enjoyable and so instructive, worth taking again and again! I would also recommend that Rinpoche refers to specific sections/pages in the readings and takes us through them rather than the more free form approach; this has its attraction, but some of the reading material is quite complex and a line by line explanation and discussion would be more useful, especially to newer students.
- PHL 304 turned out to pretty much be a repetition of PHL 303; it would have been helpful to have known this before signing up. They looked like different courses in the catalog.
- In previous semester's the corresponding PHL and MDT courses always reflected back what the other class was doing. Meaning we always stayed on the same topic and had similar, if not the same, readings assigned in both classes. This semester started off that way, then separated and honestly caused a bit of confusion for many in that class. I would also like to suggest that we use Jeffery Hopkin's "Cutting Through Appearances" more to support the student's understanding of the difference between the Mind-Only and Middleway Autonomy school.
- There was a total lack of feedback on all of my assignments in this class and in the philosophy class. It starts to feel like a waste of time doing the assignments when nobody seems to be reading them. Further, with the Zoom school model, the other avenues for feedback are greatly reduced, as such, getting timely and useful feedback via the assignments is even more important, and when I don't get any at all, it's pretty de-motivating.
- The class was excellent! Very challenging material, a lot of subtle and unfamiliar topics and vocabulary to grasp. I'm only thinking of this now, but a useful tool for newer students could be creating some kind of common term vocabulary sheet or other reference for the common terms/logics.
- The content was always amazing, it never went too deep and Rinpoche always made sense of what he was teaching.
- I thought the course content was great. We definitely added depth moving from the previous Madhyamaka classes. I loved having Geshe la Thubten Jinpa. Having him again would be great!
- Sometimes I felt myself wanting different paths to be presented to access the material as to where I am. Like the Buddha taught differently to those with different capacities of understanding, at times I felt I was hanging on by a thread and wished there was space to slow down and rest in the simplest way of accessing the teachings around emptiness. Always a balance of spiritual vs. academic, however, I felt this course was very heady for me and hard to access more often than not.
- I don't think I accomplished #1 of the course learning objectives. I struggle to keep it straight in my head. I'm grateful for the spiral learning style and find comfort that I will see this again and again. But, I wonder if I might have comprehended this class better if I had PHL 303 beforehand.
- While I appreciate the readings we were given, as the source materials are so important, several were really too dense for me to be able to make any headway with. Examples of these are A Dose of Emptiness and Meditations on Emptiness especially. I feel that offering students readings in simpler English language instruction would benefit the novices in the class. I really could only skim those texts as it was fairly incomprehensible sentence by sentence.

### Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?

- Our TA was brilliant, knew the topics well, was great at helping us understand particular points by using the Zoom chat, so patient and so kind with our questions. The only fault I can mention, and it is one that characterizes all courses at Maitripa, is that feedback on our essays is virtually non-existent, that means that we are writing our final term essay before receiving any

feedback on the first essay! So you never know if you are doing well or not, how to improve, if that is needed etc. Perhaps this is deliberate, a sort of instruction in not expected blame or praise, two of the worldly concerns??!!

- Ven. Yonten is wonderful! So thorough and helpful and responsive. Never got any feedback from my first two reports. That could have been helpful to know I was on track....
- "Feedback on our three philosophy essays would be most appreciated; no feedback was received throughout the entire semester. It is like our efforts to learn the course content go into a vacuum.
- Venerable Yonten did an outstanding job of making sure assignments and readings were posted, providing alternative readings so we didn't only have the difficult/unfriendly Dose of Emptiness readings, and provided helpful visuals and follow up guided meditations that were practical and effective learning tools.
- Students would benefit from an evaluation of the weekly online discussion postings. While intended to be a tool for engagement and thoughtful questioning, after a while they felt like busy work. One issue is that many thoughtful questions were invited to be posted but only a handful were ever selected to be shared with Rinpoche to actually be answered."
- "The way Venerable Yönten organized our class readings was a bit confusing. The class readings would not be posted until the day of class (which can cause stress for the student) so we would come to class not having read what Rinpoche would be teaching. How can I engage with Rinpoche if I am not versed in the subject matter? Maybe this was just my experience but I wanted to share.
- Venerable Yönten, is a fabulous TA in every other regard. She is extremely knowledgeable and a wonderful teacher in her own rite. She always kept our class organized and would quickly share texts or quotes shared during Rinpoche's teachings. We have been incredibly fortunate and blessed to have had her here with us during COVID, it will be sad to see her go."
- Both Rinpoche and Venerable Yonten were excellent this term. I have nothing but positive experiences and feelings about both of them as instructors. They took a very challenging set of topics and presented them in a way that felt like I could really learn to tackle them! I really appreciate the additional resources that Ven. provided throughout the course!
- I always love the classes that Rinpoche teaches, it's truly amazing.
- I thought Rinpoche was great as always. I loved having Venerable Yonten as she adds a different dimension specifically with her adding different references for us to read.
- Our TA, Venerable Yonten is absolutely wonderful. She provide numerous additional resources that helped integrate the material this term. Thank you!
- "Although contact with Rinpoche was non-existent outside of this class, Venerable was completely accessible and very responsive, so, I didn't feel I was lacking anything regarding this.
- Thank you."
- Venerable's contributions of her Youtube videos and handouts were very beneficial to me - Thank you!
- Rinpoche is so kind and is able to elucidate complex concepts in ways I can understand. At times he seems to ramble and repeat himself while trying to clarify a point, and it can result in more confusion. I sometimes wish he had a lesson plan he was following with specific points to cover. That said, when we jump in (though no one wants to be disrespectful and interrupt his train of thought) then it pulls him back to the point and he seems to like when we do that. He is such a gift and truly precious to be in his presence!
- Tiffany is an excellent TA as usual. Responsive, clear, supportive and present. Thank you Tiffany.

#### **How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- Oh, I preferred the in person, a much more interactive and productive learning environment. It is too easy when we are online for some students to "check out" of the discussion entirely.
- I like being in the Johkang with Rinpoche best, 2nd best is all online, last in line is being online in hybrid class ( hard to hear and feel separate from teachers and class).
- Zoom has made it possible for us to keep meeting during the pandemic and for this I am most grateful. It is more powerful to meet in person.
- Please more onsite classes. The learning in person is so much more dynamic and engaged.
- Much worse.
- I struggle to focus and grapple with the nuanced topics much more via online classes. I think that the faculty and staff has done an excellent job considering the circumstances of covid, but I would personally advocate for maximal in person classes as safety and logistics permit!
- Online works well through the Covid times.
- I would prefer if we were all in one room but it was great regardless.
- I notice a difference between in class and online experiences. In class is still much preferred, and online helps me take responsibility, in a different way-in my home.
- Philosophy is always better in person with Rinpoche.

- I enjoyed the online experience. However, it was hard to hear Rinpoche's soft-spoken voice at times, which may not have been the case if I had been there in person.
- As I began my studies during the pandemic, I cannot compare.
- I value both on line learning and in person class experiences. It is a different environment particularly for meditation when we are all together in the Jokang than online. At home and online I was more tempted to stop the meditation and listen and take notes instead. At Maitripa there was more incentive to stay with the meditation and leave note taking for another time.
- I like the online class; the hybrid class worked too after a few tweaks.

**THL320** (evaluations: 8)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

**FACULTY**

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- The course did not address the second objective really, but perhaps that is because it was a bit over-ambitious in its scope. Somehow the course did not communicate a "structure" around which Buddhist theology could be constructed so it felt like we jumped from one topic to the next in a hurry. I did not see the value in the presentation by the Rev. Rudd, we had



already conducted a class in mindful text reading, so a repeat of this seemed superfluous in such a crowded course. And as is often the case, there wasn't sufficient time for students to present their end of course exercises and have them critiqued in a constructive way.

- "Leigh modeled progressive education values by surveying us about our interests and then modified the syllabus and readings to reflect those interests. And, it was a bit cumbersome to return books that had been ordered online (from the required book list sent out in August), and then wait for the new books to arrive once the semester began.
- Not sure why, but the pacing of this course was fairly jerky."
- Excellent! I loved the guests too! Really added wonderful comparison and perspective!
- Great content, discussion and guest teachers. such a rich class. thank you so much! I learned a lot.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- I think a TA for the class would have helped to encourage more engagement and more resource materials. I will repeat my comment about feedback being a rather too little, too late; we have written our end of term essays without receiving any feedback on our second term assignment; this does not encourage enthusiasm or provide a measure of progress against which a student can say, "Oh, oh, I need to make more effort" or "I'm on the right track here". On q.5, it seems that outside of class communication is really asking too much of Maitripa's small faculty - with class preparation, conduct, reviewing discussion threads and marking assignments I can't imagine there is any time for out of class instructor-student interaction.
- "Appreciated Leigh's depth of knowledge, her planning and engagement.
- Would have appreciated a 5-10 minute break during the two hour class.
- Had difficulty printing off and closely reading the assigned readings; often the bottoms/sides were cut off, or the quality of the scan was poor.
- The first 2 papers were critiques of scholars. As someone at a very early stage along the Buddhist path, it felt premature in my Buddhist studies to be asked to critique scholars.
- Did get excellent feedback on the first written assignment. No feedback yet received on the other two assignments.
- Instructor did not keep up with the online populi feedback system on updated attendance, participation in online discussions, etc."
- none! Excellent!
- Excellent class instruction and guidance of discussion in class. Really appreciate Leigh's connections with larger spiritual community that allows for her to invite guest speakers.
- Thank you Leigh and Linda for a great class.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- Difficult to say for this class; sometimes the lecturer/speaker totally dominated the 2 hours, with little or no student participation, so on-line was fine for the format. In other instances, an in-person class could have promoted a discussion. It seemed that the hybrid classes did not work well, if I was on-line I was tempted to withdraw from participation altogether and leave the in-person students to carry the load.
- "Prefer in person instruction, but Zoom provided a workable alternative.
- At times it was a stretch to successfully manage class discussions via zoom with this particular class, not exactly sure why."
- Wonderful! Just as good as in person!
- great. in person classes were hard because class size was small, when you break up class like that it feels less intimate.
- No problems.

**THL360** (evaluations: 6)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

**FACULTY**

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- I thought having the three different sections with different teachers worked really well. I appreciated how each one represented three different aspects in spiritual leadership and enjoyed class every week.
- "I already shared this with you Leigh but I was hoping for a little more meat in the grief and loss section and more on trauma and felt the classes with Vitalia could have been a bit more trauma informed container and a little more structure. I loved the exercise and sharing with classmates and exploring the topic in general.
- Love the topics and the diversity of presenters and that they were chaplains/ministers in the field. I learned so much from them and also really liked the model of lots of peer sharing."
- I often felt that this class lacked direction. It was nice to listen to instructors' experiences, but I wasn't sure where we were supposed to go with it. Often we were asked to share trauma and times of grieving in our lives, but then no follow-up. I felt there was no follow-through. Ok, so we shared this - now what type of thing.
- "I am uncomfortable with the way some of the personal issues were approached. There were times when the class was asked to delve into personal histories and what was revealed as serious trauma. I am not convinced the teacher understood how to work with it. There was one class in which we talked about our grief histories and people shared some very

devastating stories. Vitalia was the teacher; Vitalia is a kind and compassionate person and also I think perhaps wasn't expecting that kind of trauma to be shared.

- Perhaps thinking about how much personal trauma is safe and advisable to encourage students to share would be good."

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**











- Howl would give both Vitalia and Tenzin "strongly agree" across the board also. I loved what each brought to us every week and enjoyed their perspective takes on spiritual leadership. I really enjoyed this class. Thank you.
- "see above.
- again loved: variety of presenters and perspectives they brought from their life experience, the topics we covered, format of class that allowed for lots of sharing by classmates.
- would have liked: a little more reading/context specifically in the area of grief/loss/trauma and more guidance and structure to classes on those topics."
- "Marilyn - played the therapist. I thought she often put people in boxes when they didn't ask. She seemed to connect with the class near the end, but she operated in a power-over delivery in the beginning.
- Tenzin - I enjoyed her approach and her book. It was great to hear about her experiences with those on hospice.
- Vitalia - I'm grateful for her wanting to share her knowledge but often felt lost with what she wanted from us."
- I think she had a lot going on, but initially Vitalia's lessons didn't feel as well guided by material, and as she incorporated more bereavement tools and theory, I connected more. I absolutely loved Tenzin, and I really liked some of her little games, tools, or exercises which helped demonstrate concepts in novel ways!
- "With respect to Marilyn, she sometimes did the things in the questions above and sometimes not, so I choice ""neither"". Marilyn has deep experience in church organization and leadership and strategic thinking and her insights in those areas were helpful/useful. In terms of her ability to hold space with compassion and safety, I did not believe she is as skilled. Sometimes her questioning appeared more like a cross examination than a trauma informed exploration. There were times when it seemed to me her ego was involved and I think she had trouble listening and/or seeing past her projections.
- Tenzin was really lovely, and I would put ""Agree"" on all the questions above for her. I loved her book; I started it and couldn't put it down.
- Vitalia had a strong and compassionate presence, and could see her skill in chaplaincy (as I could with Tenzin)."

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**






- I don't mind the on-line structure, however, miss being in person a lot.
  - Great. Hybrid was hard. Best is all online or all in person for such a small class.
  - I enjoyed it - no troubles.
  - Excellent! For me, Zoom was just as good as being in person!
  - I miss being in person but zoom is very convenient.
-

**TIB201** (evaluations: 2)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
				
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student
				

**FACULTY**

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class
				

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- I think it would be helpful to have a more detailed syllabus with weekly readings and assignments.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- The structure of the course felt very loose. Personally, I function better with more structure, e.g.: weekly readings and assignments clearly laid out in the syllabus.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- N/A

**TIB301R** (evaluations: 3)

Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Neither
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

The course met the stated learning outcomes	This course helped me develop my wisdom	This course helped me develop my compassion	This course helped empower and inspire me to work for the benefit of others	The readings supported my learning in this course
The assignments supported my learning in this course	I would recommend this course to others	I was able to apply the material I learned in this course to my life	My learning in this course positively impacted how I relate to others	This course supported my development as a student

**FACULTY**

He/She was kind, patient, and caring	He/She provided useful feedback in a timely manner	He/She facilitated excellent discussions	He/She demonstrated knowledge and competency in his/her field or profession	He/She communicated effectively with me outside of class

**Is there anything else you would like to share about the course content? What worked or didn't work? What requests or recommendations might you make?**

- The google doc continues to be the key way for us to interact as a team, even though it's temporally asynchronous.
- The class was similar to last semester. It works.

**Is there anything else you'd like to share about the instructor(s) or TA? What worked or didn't work? What other requests or recommendations might you make?**

- None. Rinpoche was great. Roberta as well.

**How would you describe your on-line class experience compared to in person classes at Maitripa?**

- It's great, I don't need to attend in person.
- The class works both ways though it is nice to have Rinpoche in class.
- The class was small enough it worked OK on zoom. However, the in-person classes we got to have were much better.
- There is so much lost on the screen.