

**Dharma Rain Zen Center - Seminary Class Fall 2015  
The Lotus Sutra**

**Instructors:** Shintai, Shin'ei and Enji

**Objective:** "...honor, embrace, read, recite and preach this sutra..."  
(from the Lotus Sutra, Chapter 13)

**Required Text :** *(participants may select either translation):*

*The Lotus Sutra* translated by Gene Reeves. Published 2008 by Wisdom Publications  
- or -

*The Lotus Sutra* translated by Burton Watson. Published 1993 by Columbia University Press

**Weekly Reading Assignments & Discussion Topics**

Date	Chapters	Topics
September 15	Ch 1 - Introduction Translator notes or Intro	Seminary Housekeeping World of the Lotus Sutra Historical Context How to Read a Sutra Assignments/Reading
September 22	Ch 2	Expedient Means
September 29	Ch 3, 4, 5 & 7	Parables
October 6	Ch 6, 8, 9 & 10	Prophecies
October 13	Ch 11-15	Life Span and Awakening
October 20	Continue	More Life Span and Awakening
October 27	Ch 16 to end (except 25)	Bodhisattvas
November 3	Ch 25	Universal Gateway-Kanzeon
November 10	Lotus Sutra & Dogen	Dogen & Zen
November 17	Wrap Up & Presentations	

## Supplemental Resources

*Introduction to the Lotus Sutra* by Yoshira Tamura. Published 2014 by Wisdom Publications.

*Peaceful Action, Open Heart: Lessons from the Lotus Sutra* by Thich Nhat Hanh. Published 2008 by Parallax Press.

*The Stories of the Lotus Sutra* by Gene Reeves. Published 2010 by Wisdom Publications

*Visions of Space and Time: Dogen and the Lotus Sutra* by Taigen Dan Leighton. Published 2007 by Oxford University Press.

<http://buddhism.about.com/od/mahayanasutras/a/lotussutra.htm> - provides a general over view of themes and chapter-by-chapter content.

## Seminary Assignment

An additional assignment is required for seminary credit and may be a writing/research project of less than 10 pages, a copying with accompanying journaling or art practice through the term.

*Please discuss your project with Shintai beforehand.*

Written projects are not limited to these suggestions:

In your own word, identify principal doctrines of the sutra, explicate and discuss teaching and practice applications of:

1. Parable
2. Prophecies
3. Expedient Means
4. Bodhisattvas
5. Life Span of the Buddha
6. Sutra of Innumerable Meanings
7. Dogen and the Lotus Sutra – discuss Hokke-Ten-Hokke, Maka-Hannya-Haramitu and/or Kuge

OR

With your own imagery and permission beforehand:

1. Term long project: copy a portion of a verse text accompanied by sketches or drawing for each chapter.
2. Term long project: copy a portion of verse text and keep a journal of personal comments and impressions of the material
3. Project using another art medium
4. Develop 3 Lesson Plans for Dharma School based on the Lotus Sutra

*Additional project possibilities will also be added. Revised syllabus to be provided at the start of class.*

AND

1. Attend all classes (or almost all classes)
2. Participate in discussions and small group activities
3. Prepare a short **presentation** (5-7 minutes) for the last class summarizing a teaching or theme from the Lotus Sutra and your personal relationship with this teaching