

Foundational Teachings 2016 Syllabus

We meet at the Sodo Building (8500 NE Siskiyou) on this schedule:

7-7:10pm Evening Service
7:10-7:40 Zazen
7:40-7:50 Tea, Announcements
7:50-9 Class
9-9:10 Vespers

Instructors: Gyokuko Carlson (gyokuko@dharmarain.org) and Kyri Kengan Treiman (<mailto:kjtreiman@yahoo.com>).

Why Study Foundational Teachings? For those new to Buddhist practice, it's helpful to get some of the basic vocabulary and concepts. For those who have been practicing a while or who are coming from different traditions, we'll be looking at the Zen perspective. Foundational Teachings is a requirement for the Seminary program, for those already enrolled as seminary students. It is a prerequisite for most other Seminary classes.

Schedule of classes

- **October 12.** Introduction. Life of the Buddha historical perspective. Life of the Buddha as myth (the hero's journey)
- **October 19.** Earliest teachings of the Buddha: Four Noble Truths / Eightfold Path
- **October 26.** Some basic vocabulary: Three Marks / Five Skandhas/ Hindrances
- **November 2.** The arc of our lives: Six Realms / Karma / Rebirth
- **November 9.** Chains of cause and effect: Dependent Origination
- **November 16.** Goals, mundane and transcendent: Paramitas, Brahma Viharas, Nirvana
- **November 30.** Mahayana, Lineage, and Zen

Those taking the class for **seminary credit** will have two choices of homework.

- A. After each class write out one half page summary of the class to demonstrate comprehension and integration of the material.
- B. After the class series submit an essay, 2-3 pages in length, expounding on the influence of some aspects of these foundational teachings on your life and your practice.

Others may do this as well if they wish, although in order to get seminary credit, you must be a registered seminary student. You can read more about the Seminary program, including how to register, at <http://dharmarain.org/getting-involved/programs/seminary/>

Text: Kyogen's book *Zen Roots* recommended but not required

Other Sources on Foundational Teachings

The Buddhist Handbook, by John Snelling

Heart of the Buddha's Teaching, by Thich Nhat Hahn

What the Buddha Taught, by Rahula Walpole

The Buddha and His Teaching, by Samuel Bercholz (Editor), Sherab Chodzin Kohn (Editor)

Open Heart, Clear Mind, by Thubten Chodron

More specialized / limited texts on basic teachings

Refuge Recovery, by Noah Levine (4 Noble Truths and Eightfold Path)

Four Noble Truths, by Ajahn Sumedo

Idiot's Guide: Zen Living, by Domyo Burk