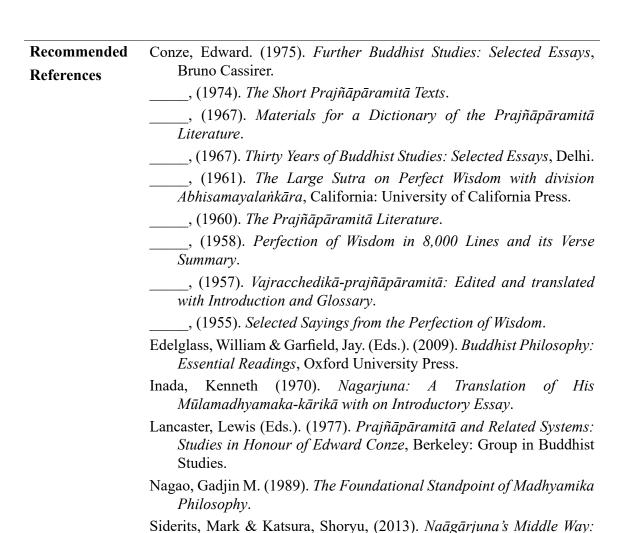
Course Code	MABS 62
Course Title	The Doctrine of Śūnyatā (Emptiness): Prajñāpāramitā Scriptures
	and Early Madhyamika
Aim	To educate students of the doctrine of emptiness as expounded in the Prajñāpāramitā sutras and the Early Mādhyamika School.
Content	This course introduces the doctrine of emptiness as expounded in the Prajñāpāramitā sutras and the Early Mādhyamika School. It highlights the historical fact that this doctrine was undoubtedly inspired by the Early Buddhist teachings as preserved in the Pāli suttas and Chinese āgamas. Nāgārjuna, generally regarded as the effective "founder" of the Mādhyamika School, certainly declares that his śūnyatā doctrine is none other than the Buddha's teaching of Conditioned Co-arising (pratītya-samutpāda). The course will begin by examining the Sūnyatā doctrine in the Aṣṭasāhaśrikā Prajñāpāramitā demonstrating that, just as the Early Buddhist teachings, the early portion of this text—constituting the stratum of "primitive prajñāpāramitā teaching" as well as the Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā, in fact, consistently emphasizes the doctrine of non-Self (nairātmya) and non-attachment rather than the term śūnyatā. This will be followed by a discussion on the development of this doctrine in the Pañcaviṃsati-sāhaśrikā Prajñāpāramitā where the term śūnyatā came to be increasingly emphasized and distinctively elaborated. In conjunction with the discussion of the Aṣṭasāhaśrikā, important stanzas from Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamaka-kārika will also be critically examined.
Duration	30 hours
Method of	Lectures and class discussions
Teaching	
Method of	Essay assignmentsIn-class participation
Evaluation	
Expected	At the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate:
Learning Outcomes	i. a comprehensive understanding of the doctrine of <i>sūnyatā</i> in the early <i>Prajñāpāramitā</i> texts and Nāgārjunas exposition;
	ii. gain a proper historical perspective of the development of the śūnyatā doctrine from the Buddha's teaching of <i>pratītya-samutpāda</i> in the discourses of Early Buddhism;
	iii. distinguish the subsequent development of the śūnyatā doctrine in the relatively later <i>prajñāpāramitā</i> textual materials from its earliest or primitive form in the earliest period (as discernible from the earliest portion of the <i>Asṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā</i>).



Mūlamadhyamakakārikā.