

# Buddhist Studies Summer Intensive

June 13 - July 27, 2018 in Boudhanath

(Six weeks of class, including four days of orientation)

July 29 - August 10, 2018 at the Asura Cave Retreat Centre (2 weeks of retreat)

The Centre for Buddhist Studies (CBS) at Rangjung Yeshe Institute is pleased to offer a summer of intensive Buddhist Studies training for international students. The program provides the opportunity for study with both traditional Tibetan scholars and western academic scholars. An integral part of the program is the two-week retreat at the end of the course, which allows students to integrate their learning into their own experience. For the retreat to be successful, retreat participants must have the interest and maturity needed to conduct themselves properly in a retreat setting and to engage in meditation practice for up to an hour and a half during a single session (see the sample retreat schedule at the end of this document).

Weekends are generally left for students to explore the Kathmandu Valley and mingle with the local Tibetan community of Boudhanath. However, several times throughout the program, the Centre for Buddhist Studies will arrange guided tours of major cultural sites of the Valley. Instructors at the program are Tibetan Khenpos, Lopons, and international faculty from the Centre for Buddhist Studies.

## **The Academic Program**

This summer intensive is offered for students with no Buddhist Studies background, while also being of interest to students with some experience in Buddhist Studies. Two of the courses are taught by Tibetan Khenpos, Lopons, or Lamas and translated into English. Students study in the traditional way, receiving in-depth explanations of the texts being studied, as well as word-by-word commentaries from the Tibetan teachers. The third course is taught by a western professor and approaches the topic from a broader perspective that includes consideration of other Buddhist traditions and examines the historical context in which Buddhist philosophical issues and debates have arisen.

In addition to satisfactory grades, students must maintain an attendance rate of 80% throughout the course in order to pass. The level of intensity of the program is high and the students are expected to invest considerable time and effort in order to meet class

requirements and academic expectations. Students who complete the course receive academic credit at the Centre for Buddhist Studies for TSTD 120 Buddhist Studies Summer Program I (6 credits total). This course covers two full semesters of material and therefore earns six credits. Students spend four hours each day in class and the expected work time outside of class ranges between two and four hours per day depending on student interest and ability.

### **Additional Features and Services**

- Orientation program with introduction to Nepal
- All classes are held in a traditional monastic setting near the Boudhanath Stupa
- Opportunities to meet and receive teachings from resident Buddhist teachers
- Cultural visits to ancient sites of the Kathmandu Valley
- Efficient medical referral system
- Access to the full facilities of the CBS campus including wireless Internet access at selected campus locations, assistance from our full-time Student Services Coordinator, and on-site library facilities.
- Good links to local trekking, rafting and sight-seeing companies

### **Price**

Price includes tuition, lunch at the Institute's restaurant on school days, retreat expenses (busses, food and lodging) and tours.

### **Admission Criteria**

This program has a maximum intake of 20 students and all applications are subject to approval by the Centre for Buddhist Studies.

### **Application**

To apply for the program, fill in the application form found at the registration page of this website.

### **Course Description:**

*Part I: Foundations of Buddhist Studies – Theory and Practice*

Introduction to *Mahāyāna* Buddhism

This part of the course introduces students to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition through an in-depth study of a classic Tibetan Buddhist text, *The Thirty Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva*. The course gives students the opportunity to study this text as it is traditionally presented in a Tibetan Buddhist style of teaching. It introduces central aspects of the Great Vehicle (*Mahāyāna*), Buddhist view, meditation, and conduct.

Emphasis is placed on students becoming familiar with some of the central concepts and terminology of Buddhist philosophy and practice. Study will take place in the context of a living practice tradition so that subject matter will be explored in relation to practical expressions of Buddhist spiritual life.

### Meditation Course

This course provides a practical introduction to Buddhist meditation. Through a theoretical as well as an experiential approach, a Tibetan Lama will lead daily meditation sessions, providing basic instruction in *śamatha* (calm abiding) and *vipaśyāna* (clear seeing) meditation.

### Buddhist Philosophy and Textual Studies

The course will lead students through some of the primary texts and doctrines of Indian Buddhism, the foundation for most of Tibetan Buddhism. We will look at the Buddha's life and early teachings, including *Abhidharma* ideas, the rise of *Mahāyāna*, and the ideas of the two major *Mahāyāna* schools, *Madhyamaka* and *Yogācāra*. We will balance historical and academic perspectives with philosophical and practical understanding.

### *Part II: Contemplative Practicum at Asura Cave Retreat Centre, Pharping*

During this part of the course, the format of the program will change from classroom study to a contemplative practicum, with the instruction now focused primarily on meditation training. The teaching sessions are framed within a full-day schedule of individual and group meditation sessions. Please note that although there is no exam following the second part of the course, active participation in this section of the course is required in order to receive credit for the course as a whole. Students may or may not be required to keep a journal during this time at the instructor's request.

### **Course Materials**

The primary textbook used for the Buddhist Studies summer intensive is a translation of the *Thirty Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva*, a meditation text selected by the lama teaching the class and other English language Buddhist Studies materials.

### **Course Materials**

All course materials are available in the CBS office.

### Sample Retreat Schedule

A typical day's schedule during the retreat might look like this:

6:00 am	Wake up
6:30	Breakfast
	<i>Personal practice</i>
8:00-9:30	Teaching Session with Lama*
	<i>Personal practice</i>
11:00	Lunch
12:00-2:00pm	Rest period
2:00-3:00	Group Practice*
3:00	Tea break
4:00-5:00	Question and Answer/meditation session with Lama*
5:00-6:00	<i>Personal practice</i> /pilgrimage to sacred places near Asura
6:15	Dinner
7:30-8:30	Group meditation*

Retreat participants are expected to have the interest and maturity to conduct themselves properly in a retreat setting and engage in meditation practice for up to an hour and a half during a single session.