

KHYENTSE FOUNDATION

Khyentse Foundation Survey of Buddhist Studies in Major Universities Worldwide

A project outline, December 5, 2007

OBJECTIVES

- To review existing Buddhist study programs, both academic and community outreach, in major universities and institutions of higher study worldwide.
- To identify major gaps in Buddhist studies programs and to ascertain areas for effective enhancement of Buddhist programs and faculty.
- To rank institutions for potential endowed chairs or program recipients based on Khyentse Foundation policy and criteria.
- To provide information for sourcing and connecting with existing and potential patrons and funding organizations.

FUNDAMENTAL CRITERIA

- Create critical mass by supporting “centers of excellence”
- Be in touch with living traditions of Buddhism
- Nonsectarian; include all Buddhist traditions
- Include academic models and outputs to lay and ordained communities
- Revive Buddhist studies in countries with a strong Buddhist heritage

SCOPE: GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS AND COUNTRIES

- Western academia: North America, Western Europe, Australia, South America, India, Eastern Europe (Hungary)
- Countries with a Buddhist heritage:
I.e. Indonesia, Afghanistan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Nepal, Pakistan, Laos, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Cambodia
- Special Interest Countries - China, Russia, Mongolia, India,

WORKING STRUCTURE

Advisory Committee

Richard Dixey
Steven Goodman
Brian Mahanay
Peter Skilling
Gene Smith

Working Committee

Isaiah Seret: Research Coordinator
Cangioli Che
Lynn Holberg, Researcher
International researchers: to be decided

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Committee has developed a nine-step methodology.

1. Initial research

Find out about other similar studies (in English, French, Hindi, or Sanskrit) in the past 10 years.

2. Identify at least 50 universities and institutions of higher learning

- Identify academic institutions based on available listings:
 - Top universities of the world.
 - Top religious studies departments.
 - Most-published Buddhist studies professors and other sources.
 - List of recipients of masters degrees in Buddhist studies in the past 10 years and/or List of universities that give master's degrees in Buddhist studies in the past 10 years
- Identify at least one top university or institution in each country with a strong Buddhist heritage.
- Identify at least one top university or institution in each country listed under "Scope."
- Advisors to suggest or nominate "must include" institutions.

3. First-Level Protocol

- Create an "Internal Factors Survey," based on a questionnaire about the institutions that are researchable primarily by web, via the advisors and other contacts, and through general inquiries.
- The first-level protocol questionnaire will have two parts, which are related and should be considered as a whole. Advisors will suggest questions to submit to the universities.
 - Questions related to the school: Where is their Buddhist studies program housed, enrollment in Buddhist studies, collections of texts, languages offered, what related subjects are taught, cost of endowing a chair, existing chairs, sponsors and funding sources, and so on.
 - Questions related to the community surrounding the school: What is the country's history with Buddhism, what Buddhist institutions are nearby, dharma centers, access to living traditions, collections, and so on. Will also include existing funding criteria and sources in the country.

4. Create an international research committee, divide up the list of universities, and distribute the first-level protocol to data collectors across the world.

5. Receive and analyze the data.

This interactive process includes the purely statistical data as well as fundability and other factors and considerations.

6. After analyzing the data, narrow down the list of universities to the 20 or 30 with the most promise.

7. Distribute the second-level protocol to selected universities.

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At this point the university can apply and tell us why they should be selected and what they can offer to support a chair; for example, Berkeley explained about their other programs and sources of funding.

8. Data and application analysis.

This continuing interactive process will consider all factors.

9. Final report and recommendations to the Board

Brian Mahanay will help with this report

SCHEDULE

We expect each of the 9 steps to take about 2 months, for a total of 1.5 years to select a list of universities or institutions

November 2007	Define research scope and parameters Set up Advisory and Working Committees Begin steps 1, 2, and 3
December	Explore involvement from potential funding sources Step 1: Initial research
January 2008	
February	Step 2
March	
April	Step 3
May	Locate international data collectors
June	Step 4
July	
August	Step 5 Interim report to the Board Start fund raising
September	
October	Step 6
November	
December	Step 7
January 2009	
February	Step 8
March	
April	Step 9
May	
June	Report to the Board Fundraising
June 2010	Endow first chair

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NEXT STEPS

1. Follow up with Professor Skilling -- Isaiah
2. Proceed with steps 1, 2, 3 – Isaiah and Brian
3. Advisors suggest institutions (step 2) and questions (step 3) -- All
4. Identify and appoint international researchers
5. Plan parallel fundraising strategy – Cangioli and all

KF POLICY ON ENDOWED CHAIRS

In October, 2007, on the recommendation of KF advisors Gene Smith, Steven Goodman, and Richard Dixey, the Foundation adopted a five-point long-term policy on promoting endowed chairs:

1. A major aim of Khyentse Foundation is to promote the development of Buddhist Studies in major academic institutions.
2. For such an initiative to bear fruit, it is important to promote centers of excellence where the support of the Foundation will give a "critical mass" of scholarly and academic activity in any particular institution or restart an important tradition of study in institutions where it has been lost.
3. To be considered, institutions should be able to demonstrate a willingness and knowledge and track record of working with the "living traditions" of Buddhism.
4. To identify such institutions, it is suggested that the Foundation sponsor a research effort to catalog all major academic centers that offer or promote Buddhist Studies, according to criteria that align with points 1, 2 and 3.
5. The Foundation should then rank these institutions and consider solicitation of donations toward the establishment of endowed senior lectureships as well as endowed professorial positions at those academic institutions that meet KF standards and criteria for such funding