Institute of Buddhist Studies

Seminary & Graduate School Established 1949



2026-2027 Catalog

Revised June 2026

Common Questions and Who to Contact for Help

Admissions and related questions

Contact our Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment, Dr. Thomas Calobrisi at tcalobrisi@shin-ibs.edu

Questions about housing or the IBS Dorm

General questions about housing in Berkeley and the Bay Area can be answered by Dr. Calobrisi. Contact the Dean's office for questions about how to reserve a room in the newly renovated IBS Dorm.

Questions about scholarships or financial aid

During the admissions process and once admitted, scholarship application and renewal questions can be directed to Dr. Calobrisi.

Questions about the registration process, help with Populi, and access to the library

Once admitted, Dr. Calobrisi. will set up students' Populi accounts and provide information about how to register for classes and access the GTU library.

Technical questions about the IBS student email account

Contact Mr. Gordon Lee at ibsadmin@shin-ibs.edu.

Technical questions about the Moodle learning platform

The GTU manages Moodle and the easiest way to resolve most issues is to contact them directly via the GTU library website at gtu.edu.

Questions about a specific class, the syllabus, or if it is online or hybrid

It is always best to contact the instructor of record directly. A faculty directory can be found on our website as well as in this catalog.

Questions about my specific program, which classes to take, dates and deadlines

You should always consult your academic advisor first. Their role is to help support you as you make your way through the program and can answer most questions about IBS policies. Always read this catalog for more information. The academic calendar on the IBS website has all the important dates and deadlines. And visit the Office of the Registrar page for important forms, handbooks, and checklists.

Still have questions?

Most questions can be answered by this catalog, so **read the catalog!** And feel free to reach out to the Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment or the Dean for further assistance.

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Introduction



Welcome to the Institute of Buddhist Studies

The Institute of Buddhist Studies is a leading American Buddhist graduate school and seminary that provides graduate-level education across the full breadth of the Buddhist tradition, with specialized training in academic Buddhist studies, Buddhist chaplaincy, and Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist ministry.

In addition to our graduate degree and certificate programs, IBS produces excellent and innovative scholarship and fosters engaged and inclusive community through conferences, symposia, and other events of interest for scholars and practitioners alike.

This catalog contains the most current information on our degree and certificate programs, academic policies, and student support programs. Whereas this catalog is comprehensive, it should be used in conjunction with other handbooks and information located on the IBS website or available from the GTU, especially in regards to the GTU-administered M.A. program.

This catalog is in effect for the 2026-2027 academic year, July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.

IBS's administrative offices and classrooms are located inside the
Jodo Shinshu Center
2140 Durant Avenue
Berkeley, California 94704 USA

www.shin-ibs.edu
Telephone: 510.809.1444
Facsimile: 510.809.1443
info@shin-ibs.edu

Office Hours: M-F, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
See Academic Calendar for Academic and Administrative Holidays

A Word from the President



Writing in her memoirs, Jane Imamura mentions the establishment of a study group at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple in 1949. Organized by young Japanese American Buddhists with little more than ideals and hope, they dreamed of deeply learning the Buddhadharma and helping to spread Buddhism in America. Over the following decades, these study classes developed into the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

We often speak of the innumerable causes and conditions that make our lives possible, that bring us together. These causes are often those who came before us, people we have met, many we have not, who through their dedication and work made our present world a reality. As you begin your studies at IBS, I invite you to reflect on our history and the many people who have made today possible. You are welcome, just as you are, into a long lineage devoted to studying and sharing Buddhist thought and practice.

Though IBS today offers graduate-level programs covering the full diversity of the Buddhist tradition, we are grounded by our founders' hopes and wishes that Buddhism might spread in America. And just as our forebears created the causes and conditions for our coming together today, so too are we creating the causes and conditions for future generations to share the Buddhadharma.

In gassho,

Scott A. Mitchell, Ph.D.

President and Rev. Yoshitaka Tamai Professor of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist Studies

A Word from the Dean



The Institute of Buddhist Studies was created with the intention of educating American Jodo Shinshu ministers here on US soil. The challenges our ancestors faced in a difficult environment were akin to attempting to cultivate crops in infertile land. Yet, they persevered, and the Nembutsu teaching flourished despite the odds.

From these humble beginnings, IBS has certainly expanded its scope over the years. Classes focus not just on Jodo Shinshu, but cover other traditions while also engaging with how Buddhist values and teachings can inform the way students approach issues that affect our society today.

The IBS itself is a contemporary project that is an unfolding tapestry full of potential and wonder. Students are not just encouraged to study the rich history and tradition that spans 2,500 years. They are also challenged to imagine what a world would look like where the Buddha Dharma informs their worldview in an ever-changing world. In this way, students today are undertaking the same challenge that our ancestors faced when Buddhism first came to this country. They are sowing seeds in a dynamic and unpredictable future, one that demands an inquisitive, imaginative, and creative mind. It is my hope that every student appreciates the indispensability of the work they will do and accepts the continuing challenge that is handed down to them by our forebears. Namo Amidabutsu.

In gassho,

Rev. Takashi Miyaji, Ph.D.

Dean and His Eminence Kosho Ohtani Professor of Shin Buddhist Studies

History of IBS

The beginnings of the Institute of Buddhist Studies can be found in the early history of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), a branch of the Japanese Pure Land Jodo Shinshu Honpa Hongwanji-ha headquartered in Kyoto. In 1930, under Bishop Kenju Masuyama, a training program and residence center for English-speaking ministers was established in Kyoto, Japan. An educational program of lectures and correspondence courses began in the mid-1930s, operated out of BCA headquarters in San Francisco. Because the need for English-speaking ministers increased after World War II, in 1948 Bishop Enryo Shigefuji established a monthly study class at the home of Mrs. Shinobu Matsuura. The program was open to any person interested in Buddhism; however, its main purpose was to prepare ministerial aspirants for the rigors of study in Japan.



Jane Imamura stands outside the recently opened Buddhist Study Center at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, circa mid-1950s.

In 1949, as part of the 50th anniversary of the BCA, the program was expanded and moved to the Berkeley Buddhist Temple where it became known as the Buddhist Study Center (BSC). The BSC was placed under the guidance of Rev. Kanmo Imamura, resident minister of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple.

In 1958, the BCA resolved to establish a ministerial training center in the United States where all instruction would be conducted in English. Prior to this, all ministerial candidates were trained in Japan. Rev. Imamura was appointed to establish such a program at the BSC. Rev. Masami Fujitani took over the directorship soon afterward and developed the educational program (1958-1963); Rev. Imamura returned to serve a second term (1963-1967).

In October 1966, the BCA acquired a building on Haste Street in Berkeley, and the BSC was renamed the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), incorporating with the State of California as a graduate school and Buddhist seminary. The Haste Street location was the home of the IBS for twenty-two years prior to moving to its second location on Addison Street. Bishop Shinsho Hanayama (Professor Emeritus, Tokyo University) and Bishop Kenryu Tsuji played vital roles in the early stages at the Haste Street campus. Rev. Haruyoshi Kusada served as Executive Director from 1968 to 1983, laying the educational foundation for the graduate program.



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In February, 1985, under the guidance of Bishop Seigen Yamaoka, the IBS became an affiliate of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), a unique consortium of graduate schools and Christian seminaries and one of the largest concentrations of ministerial and theological educational resources in the world

In 1986, Dr. Alfred Bloom, a noted Shin Buddhist scholar, was appointed Dean and Head Professor. Dr. Bloom retired in 1994, and Dr. Richard K. Payne was appointed to the position of Dean.

After having its administrative offices located in Mountain View for over a decade, IBS moved back to Berkeley in 2006. With its new offices and classroom space in the Jodo Shinshu Center, the IBS has experienced renewed growth, including the establishment of a Buddhist chaplaincy program and several online certificate programs.

After serving as Dean for twenty-five years, Dr. Payne stepped down from this position in 2016. The Board of Trustees delegated his responsibilities to the newly appointed President, Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, and Dr. Scott Mitchell, Dean of Students and Faculty Affairs.

In 2020, the Institute of Buddhist Studies was granted initial accreditation by the WASC Senior College and University Commission.

In 2021, IBS became a member school of the Graduate Theological Union.

In 2024, Pres. Matsumoto retired, and the Board appointed Dr. Mitchell as IBS President.

Mission Statement

To provide graduate level education in the full breadth of the Buddhist tradition with specialized education supporting Pure Land and contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies, while advancing Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist ministry and Buddhist chaplaincy.

Institutional Learning Objectives

Creatively combining liberal arts and scholar-practitioner models of education, the Institute of Buddhist Studies:

- through educational programs grounded in critical thinking and academic freedom, empowers students to become effective and engaged scholars, teachers, ministers, and chaplains;
- through publications, scholarship, and research programs, promotes engagement with the Buddhist tradition and contributes to the public good;
- through institutional partnerships and in community, fosters an awareness, respect, and appreciation for Buddhist, religious, and cultural diversity.

Executive Staff & Board of Trustees

Rev. Marvin Harada, BCA Bishop
Chancellor

Executive Staff

Dr. Scott A. Mitchell
President and Chief Executive Officer

Ms. River Cullen
Director of Finance

Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji
Dean and Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Courtney Bruntz
Professor of East Asian Buddhism and Accreditation Liaison Officer

Please see the IBS website for a staff directory and contact information.

Board of Trustees

Dr. Leroy Morishita, Chair
Rev. Blayne Higa
Ms. Cheryl K. Ikemiya
Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki
Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara
Ms. Peggy Okabayashi
Mr. Charles Ozaki
Rev. Candice Shibata
Rev. Cyndi Jikaku Yasaki

Ex-Officio Members
Rev. Marvin Harada
BCA Bishop
Mr. Glenn Inanaga
BCA President
Rev. Henry Adams
BCA Ministers Association

Accreditation & Effectiveness

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WSCUC)

Institute of Buddhist Studies is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), 1001 Marina Village Parkway, Suite 402, Alameda, CA 94501, 510.748.9001.

Institute of Buddhist Studies' listing on the WSCUC website can be located here: https://www.wscuc.org/institutions/institute-buddhist-studies.

The most recent WSCUC Commission Action Letter, February 2026, can be found here: https://www.shin-ibs.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/CAL_260227_IBS_AV.pdf

Educational Effectiveness

The Institute of Buddhist Studies is committed to the highest standards of educational effectiveness in all of its academic programs. Measures of educational effectiveness include graduation rates, the length of time that students take to complete their degrees, and placement after graduation in positions appropriate to their vocational objectives.

Please visit our website for graduation rates and times to degree for the M.A.B.S. and M.Div. programs.



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Our Educational Model

Recognizing the many ways students come to IBS, we've developed programs that provide both flexibility and structure to meet our students' diverse personal and professional goals. Four paths of study are supported by three baskets or levels of education across our certificate and degree programs.

Four Paths

Buddhist ministry: IBS has been educating Jōdo Shinshū ministers for seventy-five years and now also supports Sōtō Zen and Theravada Buddhist ministerial education.

Buddhist chaplaincy: for more than a decade, IBS has been a leader in Buddhist chaplaincy education. As an accredited institution, our M.Div. degree meets the APC requirements for board certification.

Pre-doctoral study: grounded in academic Buddhist studies, many of our students have completed Masters degrees at IBS and continued their educations at the doctoral level, earning PhDs from the GTU, USC, Stanford and beyond.

Personal enrichment: our programs have always provided space for students charting their own paths. With a firm foundation in Buddhist history and thought, a wide range of electives and advanced seminars, and thoughtful academic advising and support, our programs can serve the needs of those students who simply want to learn more about Buddhism, need specialized knowledge for careers as psychotherapists and counselors, or as leaders in the nonprofit sector.

Three Baskets

Foundational education refers to the "full breadth" of the Buddhist tradition mentioned in our mission statement. Here, students learn about Buddhism's historical origins and spread across Asia and the world while contextualizing specific Buddhist traditions (such as Jōdo Shinshū, Sōtō Zen, and Theravada) within that broad history.

Further study allows students to build on this foundational knowledge by focusing on specific traditions, areas of study, or disciplines. Whether through sustained study of a specific lineage or teacher (the writings of Shinran, for example), or language study (Buddhist Japanese say), students will gain deeper insight into their chosen area of study.

Field education further connects the academic study of Buddhism and its practical application beyond IBS's programs. Whether students intend to become ministers or chaplains, scholars or teachers, or leaders in their communities, our programs provide the means for students to develop and integrate connections between Buddhist thought and Buddhist practice. Students will also develop relevant skills to be of service to their communities and the public.

The four paths form the basis of tracks of study in our Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies and Master of Divinity degree programs. And our stackable curriculum is interwoven with the three baskets, allowing students to complete a certificate program and apply those units toward a degree program.

Enrollment Options & Admissions

Choosing a path: What are my options?

There are many ways to start your education at the Institute of Buddhist Studies. Once you have reviewed the information on our website and in this catalog, you may be ready to apply directly to a certificate or degree program. Some students begin by auditing a class or taking one for credit as a special student. Here are the different options for enrollment and general information about the admissions process.

Be sure to review certificate and degree program-specific admissions requirements, as well as information on tuition and scholarships.

Degree Program Applications

Application deadlines for degree programs students are:

- Priority Deadline for Fall 2026 admission: March 1, 2026
- Deadline for Spring 2027 admission: November 1, 2026
- Priority Deadline for Fall 2027 admission: March 1, 2027

See the section on degree programs for more information and program-specific admission requirements.

Certificate Program Applications

- June 1, 2026 for Fall 2026 admission
- November 1, 2026 for Spring 2027 admission
- Priority Deadline for Fall 2027 admission: March 1, 2027

See the section on certificate programs for more information and program-specific admission requirements.

Special Student Status

Students who do not wish to matriculate in a degree or certificate program may apply for status as a special student.

Special student status is reserved either:

(1) for students preparing to enroll at IBS as a degree program student; or
(2) for students wishing to take classes for credit to transfer to another institution.

In either case, ordinarily a student can take **no more than two courses** as a special student.

Special students are expected to be able to work at the graduate level, and are required to fulfill all academic work expected of other students in the classes they take. They receive most privileges accorded to degree program students, with the exception of academic advising and library privileges. Special students must abide by tuition and fee schedules and other academic policies contained in this catalog.

The application for special student status is available on the IBS website.

Auditing a course

Some courses are open to enrollment by auditors. No grade is given to the auditor, nor is any record of attendance maintained by the Institute. Transcripts are not available for audited classes. Auditor status does not include library privileges or academic advising. *Permission to audit a course is always at the discretion of the instructor.* Whereas auditors can expect to work at the graduate level, attend all class sessions, and participate in discussion, the instructor's first priority will always be to regular students. The auditor shall not expect to receive any guidance, feedback, or advising from the instructor.

Contact the IBS Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment to audit a course.

Online and Hybrid Courses

Each semester, IBS offers a number of online courses which run the length of a regular semester and may be either synchronous or asynchronous. Online courses are listed as 8000-level courses. The course schedule on our website will list a class's delivery modality (online, hybrid, in person, synchronous or asynchronous). Students should always contact the instructor of record first with any questions about course format or delivery modality.

Regardless of delivery modality and regardless of whether a student is enrolled in an online or on campus program, all students should expect to be able to perform at the graduate level. Graduate level courses require a substantial commitment in terms of time and energy. Not all courses will have an asynchronous modality. And students should anticipate the necessity of participating in class activities scheduled in Pacific Time.

For definitions of terms related to course modality, plus requirements for online courses, students should review the Expectations for Online Learning.

At present, IBS offers a fully online M.A.B.S. degree program but not a fully online M.Div. degree program. All students should review the Residential and Online Units Policy.



The Admissions Process

The application process serves two functions: first, it ensures that applicants have the necessary prior education or experience to succeed in a graduate-level program; second, it ensures that the institution has the necessary courses, programs, and faculty to support a student and their chosen path of study.

Prior experience: an applicant can demonstrate their ability to do graduate-level work in a number of different ways — through prior education, degrees, or coursework, standardized test scores, letters of recommendation, and so forth. You should be prepared to submit transcripts of prior coursework and degrees. Strong letters of recommendation from past professors or those who can speak to your intellectual abilities are a plus. If you have relevant prior experience — such as extensive language training, publications, or other certifications — let us know. The Admissions Committee reviews all of this information to make sure that you're prepared to do the level of academic work required in a graduate program.

Remember that each program has slightly different admissions requirements, so be sure to review those carefully. For example, if you're applying to the Certificate in Shin Buddhist Studies or the M.Div. with aspirations to be a Buddhist Chaplain, a letter from a supervising minister or Buddhist teacher may be helpful. If you've taken the GRE, feel free to submit your test scores; but we know that not everyone performs well on standardized tests, so GRE scores are not required for IBS's programs.

Institutional support: just like the Admissions Committee wants to make sure you're prepared to do graduate-level work, we also need to make sure we can support you and your professional or personal goals. Does the IBS offer courses, programs, or have faculty or research resources in your chosen area of

study? To answer that question, spend some time reviewing our catalog, looking at our faculty pages, and the degree and certificate program descriptions. And then write your statement of purpose with this information in mind.

Your statement of purpose is crucial; this is how we find out what your goals are and decide whether or not we're able to support you. Again, each program is different — if you're interested in pursuing a career in Buddhist Studies (going on to get a doctorate and become a university professor, for example) and are applying to the M.A.B.S. program, your statement should have a clearly defined research area and you should reference the faculty and resources here at IBS that can support you. If you're planning on becoming a Buddhist chaplain, discussing the type of work you want to do or your prior service or connection to a Buddhist community is helpful.

Remember, our goal at IBS is to support and encourage our students through their program and beyond by preparing them to be effective scholars, ministers, and chaplains. The application process is intended to make sure we're the right place to serve your needs and that you're prepared to take this next step in your education. Whatever information you can provide helps us ensure we're the right place for your academic success.

Stackable Curriculum

Our stackable curriculum is flexible to meet the diverse needs of our students and their various paths into and from the Institute of Buddhist Studies. Students may benefit from completing a certificate and applying those units toward the completion of a degree program, or they may elect to enroll in a degree program from the start. Our programs are ready to support students and their personal and professional needs. See related policies regarding advancement through the program.

Stackable Curriculum leading to Master of Divinity

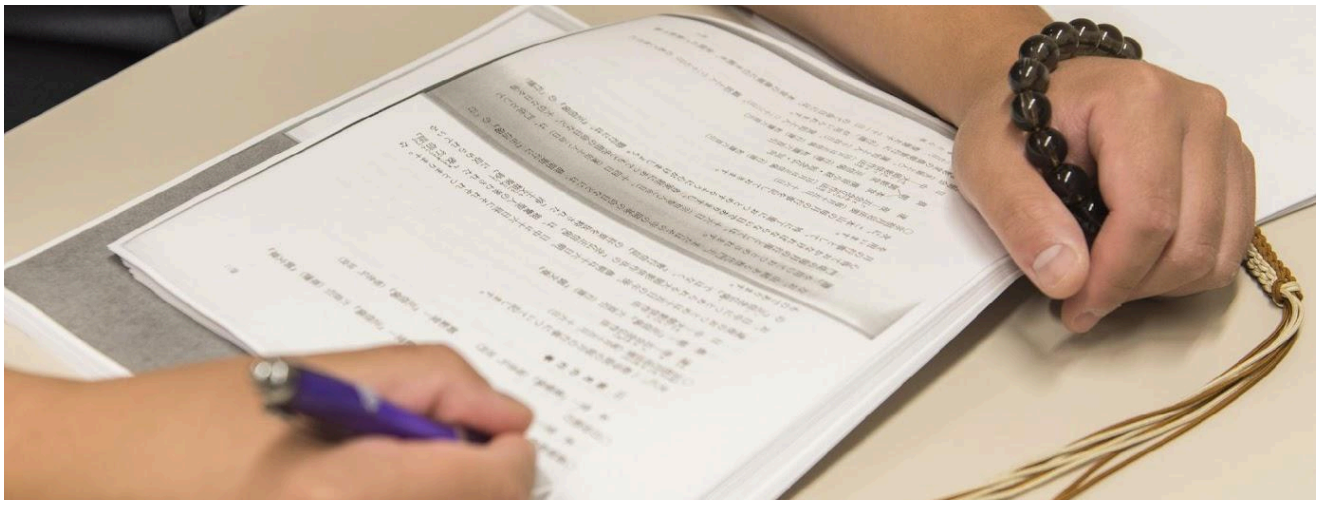
Year one: Certificate program (online or in person) in Shin Buddhist Studies, Sōtō Zen, Buddhist Studies, Theravada Studies, or Buddhist chaplaincy

Years two and three: Master of Divinity (in person)

Stackable Curriculum leading to Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies

Year one: Certificate program (online or in person) in Shin Buddhist Studies, Sōtō Zen, Buddhist Studies, Theravada Studies, or Buddhist chaplaincy

Year two: Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (online or in person)



Certificate Programs

The Institute of Buddhist Studies' certificate programs may be completed (1) as stand-alone programs; (2) as the first part of a longer program of study as per our stackable curriculum; or (3) concurrently within a degree program. Certificate program students who wish to continue on to a degree must petition for advancement. Students admitted into a degree program who wish to complete a concurrent certificate need to inform the IBS Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment in writing of their intention to complete a concurrent certificate.

Admissions requirements for all certificate programs are:

1. Evidence (transcripts) of relevant prior study or coursework such as previous Buddhist Studies courses or a Bachelor's degree (B.A.).

2. Two letters of recommendation attesting to the applicant's ability to do graduate-level work, familiarity with Buddhist thought and/or practice, and relevant prior study or experience. For the Shin Buddhist Studies Certificate, one letter from a supervising minister is recommended.

3. Statement of purpose (approx. 300-500 words) that includes (a) your reasons for pursuing graduate studies at IBS; (b) your specific academic interests and how they fit with the faculty and courses at IBS; (c) your personal or professional goals and how you see this certificate supporting them; (d) how your relevant academic background or prior experience prepares you for your proposed course of study at IBS.

4. Non-refundable application fee: $15

Applicants for all certificate programs can submit all application materials online at our website www.shin-ibs.edu/apply. An application will not be reviewed until all materials have been submitted, including the application fee. See the academic calendar for deadlines.

Online Certificate in Buddhist Studies



The Certificate in Buddhist Studies introduces students both to the history of the Buddhist tradition as well as the academic field of Buddhist Studies.

This program is intended for those seeking a systematic introduction to the Buddhist tradition, especially lay Buddhist leaders and ministers or priests seeking continuing education opportunities. Curriculum includes courses on Buddhist history, practice, ethics, and modern expressions.

This fully online program may be completed in as little as one semester; most students enroll part-time, taking as few as one course per semester.

Program faculty advisor: Dr. Courtney Bruntz.

Program Requirements

Students must complete a total of four (4) three-unit courses chosen in consultation with their advisor.

There is one required course, offered every fall semester:

- HR-8107: Introduction to Buddhism and Buddhist Studies

Online Certificate in Shin Buddhist Studies

The purpose of this certificate program is to enable its participants to develop an increased ability to understand and transmit the significance of the Shin Buddhist teachings in the contemporary world.

Moreover, the Certificate in Shin Buddhist Studies program provides persons with an educational grounding in areas specified by the Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha as requisite for receiving *kyōshi* certification.

Since 1949 one of the primary missions of the Institute of Buddhist Studies has been to provide a comprehensive program of education and training for persons aspiring to enter the Shin Buddhist ministry in the West. The significance and effectiveness of that effort has long been recognized by the Buddhist Churches of America and the Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan. As a result, over the years scores of IBS graduates have been able to receive *tokudo* ordination, *kyōshi* certification and *kaikyōshi* status as overseas Shin ministers from the Hongwanji.

The BCA has recognized the importance of expanding the scope and availability of the Shin Buddhist ministry in order to meet the changing needs of its temples. The minister's assistant program (MAP) represents the BCA's response to that situation. Persons who wish to receive *tokudo* or *kyōshi* ordination or serve as ministers in BCA temples should contact the minister at their local temple or the Office of the Bishop of BCA. The IBS Certificate in Shin Buddhist Studies has been developed in order to provide an educational foundation for those on this path.

Program faculty advisor: Rev. Harry Bridge.

This program may be completed as part of an on-site degree program. Please contact the program faculty advisor for more information.

Certificate in Shin Buddhist Studies Program Requirements

Students must complete a total of eight (8) three-unit courses for a total of 24 units. All courses must be taken for credit and passed with a B- or better. Audited courses may not count toward fulfillment of the certificate requirements. Please see the IBS catalog for further information regarding course credit, audited classes, and related policies.

The program's eight required IBS courses (with the corresponding Hongwanji requirement) are:

- HRPH-8140: Introduction to Shin Buddhist Thought (**真宗教義** 1)
- SA-3017/8317: Readings in Mahayana Texts: The Three Pure Land Sutras (**仏教教義**1)
- HRHS-3250: The Seven Pure Land Masters: History of the Pure Land Tradition (**仏教教義** 2)
- HRHS-3075: History of the Shin Buddhist Tradition: Premodern (**真宗史**)
- HRHS-8151: Buddhist Traditions of South Asia (**仏教史** 1)
- HRHS-8152: Buddhist Traditions of East Asia (**仏教史** 2)
- SA-4566: Works of Shinran I (or Works II or III with permission of the Dean) (**真宗教義** 2)
- HRIR-8200: Buddhism and World Religions (**宗教概説**)

Online Certificate in Sōtō Zen Buddhist Studies



The Certificate in Sōtō Zen Buddhist Studies is intended for two types of students: (1) IBS degree program students who wish to demonstrate substantive knowledge of Sōtō Zen history, teachings and practice; and (2) students from outside the IBS, particularly Sōtō Zen priests, lay and monastic teachers and students, who wish to enhance their engagement with the tradition and their communities through systemic graduate level study. Students will develop the ability to place critical scholarship in relationship to received teachings, mutually benefiting both the study and practice of Sōtō Zen Buddhism.

Students who complete this program will:

- Locate Sōtō Zen Buddhism within the larger history of Buddhism as a whole
- Be able to articulate Sōtō Zen teachings, texts and practices, and texts in relationship to other Ch'an and Zen traditions both historically and in the contemporary world.
- Be able to articulate the relevance of Sōtō Zen teachings and practices for and in contemporary settings.
- Develop and apply critical reasoning and academic writing skills within a practice-based community

Program faculty advisor: Dr. Paula Arai.

This program may be completed as part of an on-site degree program. Please contact the program director for more information.

Program Requirements

Students must complete a total of six (6) three-unit courses within three years to complete the certificate. (In-degree program students may complete the course requirements within the timeframe of their degree program.)

Required courses include:

- HRHS-8151: Buddhist traditions of South Asia
- HRHS-8152: Buddhist traditions of East Asia
- HR-3040: Zen Buddhism
- Readings in Mahayana Texts (HR 3017 or HR 8317) when subject is a Zen Text
- HRHS 4560: Topics in Buddhist Women

Plus one elective course selected in consultation with the program director. Final papers should be on a topic related to Sōtō Zen Buddhist studies.

Online Certificate in Buddhist Chaplaincy



This program is available as a stand-alone certificate supplementing significant previous academic and/or clinical studies. This certificate is appropriate for students wishing to pursue a chaplaincy career in hospice or health care, prison outreach, or the armed services. The certificate indicates that the student has completed a course of study focusing on the application of Buddhist thought and practice in pastoral care and chaplaincy.

Program faculty advisor: Dr. Nancy Lin.

Program requirements

Students must complete a total of eight (8) three-unit courses within three years to complete the certificate.

Required courses include:

- HR-8151: Buddhist Traditions of South Asia
- HR-8152: Buddhist Traditions of East Asia
- PSHR-3076: Buddhist Spiritual Care I
- HRIR-8200: Buddhism and World Religions
- Buddhist literature/text or a ritual/practice course (from list of MDiv requirements)

Plus three elective courses selected in consultation with the program director to meet individual students' specific needs.

Certificate in Theravāda Buddhist Studies



The Certificate in Theravāda Buddhist Studies is intended for two types of students: (1) IBS degree program students who wish to demonstrate a knowledge of Theravāda Buddhist studies, history, and practice; and (2) students from outside the IBS, particularly Theravāda practitioners, who wish to enhance their engagement with the tradition and their communities by obtaining a systematic graduate level education in Theravāda Buddhist studies.

Students who complete this program will:

- Locate Theravāda Buddhism within the larger history of Buddhism as a whole
- Study Theravāda Buddhist texts and practices using critical methodologies
- Develop critical reasoning and writing skills through academic writing and reflection

Program faculty advisor: Dr. Natalie Quli.

Program Requirements

Students must complete a total of six (6) three-unit courses within three years to complete the certificate. (In-degree program students may complete the course requirements within the timeframe of their degree program.)

Required courses:

- HRHS-8151: Buddhist traditions of South Asia
- HRHS-8152: Buddhist traditions of East Asia
- HR-1596/8159: Introduction to the Study of Theravāda Buddhist Traditions
- HRRS-4551: Topics in Theravāda Buddhist Thought: Women in Theravāda Traditions
- Buddhist Literature/Texts (SA or a textual studies course with Dean's approval)

Plus one elective course selected in consultation with the program director. Final papers should be on a topic related to Theravāda Buddhist studies.



Degree Programs

The Institute of Buddhist Studies offers two graduate degree programs:

- Master of Divinity (M.Div.)
- Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (M.A.B.S.)

Application deadlines for both degree programs are:

- November 1, 2026 for spring 2027 admission
- March 1, 2027 for fall 2027 admission (priority application deadline)

** Students are encouraged to apply by the March 1st deadline to receive consideration for some institutional grants.*

Applicants for the M.A.B.S. and M.Div. degrees can submit all application materials online at our website www.shin-ibs.edu/apply. An application will not be reviewed until it is complete, including all letters of recommendation, transcripts, application fee, and other required documents. Please see individual degree program descriptions for full application requirements.

Be sure to read about the admissions process to get a good understanding of what a successful application looks like.

Degree Program Comparison

	Degree Program	
	MDIV	MABS
Length of program	72 units/3 years	48 units/2 years
Modality (1)	On-site	On-site or Online
Foundational Education (required courses)	HRHS-8151: Buddhist Traditions of South Asia	
	HRHS-8152: Buddhist Traditions of East Asia	
	HRPH-8140: Introduction to Shin Buddhist Thought	
Methodology course (2)	HR-1630	HR-1630
Language requirement	Optional	Suggested (3)
Program specialization (4)	Other breadth requirements; electives coursework; degree program tracks; and/or concurrent certificate	
Practical education (5)	Field education CPE Units Minister's Assistant Program Public Speaking	Publication Teaching Colloquia Public Speaking
Thesis/capstone project	Thesis proposal	
	Thesis	

Notes:

(1) Currently, IBS has an approved fully online M.A.B.S. degree program, but the institution does *not* have an approved online M.Div. program.

(2) Students in the M.Div. and M.A.B.S. are required to complete HR-1630, Methods in the Study of Buddhism.

(3) Formal language study is strongly encouraged for the M.A.B.S. program. Students may apply some units of language study to the degree's unit requirement.

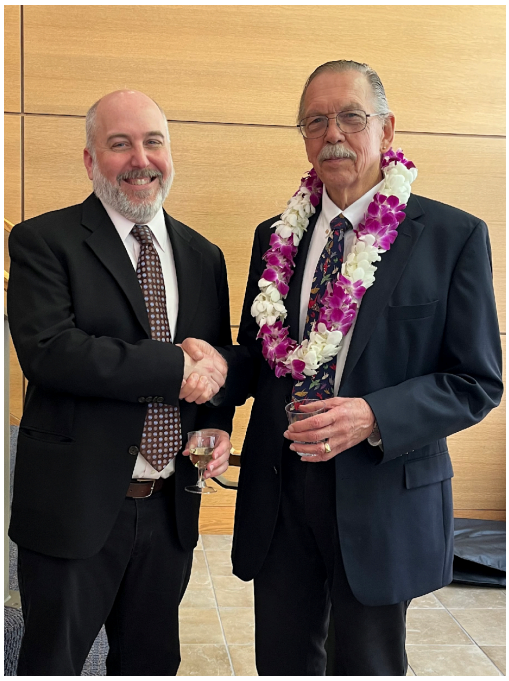
(4) Students focus their studies in a variety of ways, based on specialization or a concurrent certificate program.

(5) IBS is committed to providing extracurricular professional development opportunities for its students; items listed here are suggestions and not a guarantee of specific programs. Please consult with your Academic Advisor or the Dean's Office for more information.

Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies

What made my experience at the Institute of Buddhist Studies special was how the faculty create a space where critical engagement is paired with profound respect, a space where novelty and tradition can be considered equally and deeply.

Thomas Calobrisi, Class of 2016



Available as an online or on-site program, the Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies (M.A.B.S.) provides students an opportunity to deeply engage Buddhist history, thought, texts, and practices as a foundation for further academic study at the doctoral level or professional service in a religious community, the nonprofit sector, or other areas. The program is built on a foundation of academic Buddhist studies in a practitioner-friendly environment, allowing for intellectual growth connected to communities of practice and vocation. As part of our stackable curriculum, students who have already completed an IBS certificate program may continue their studies in the M.A.B.S. either as a precursor to further study or for their own intellectual growth. The program may be completed in two years of full-time study. Students may also enroll part-time and complete the program at their own pace. Institutional scholarships are available for all eligible students.

M.A.B.S. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

In completing the M.A.B.S., students will evidence the ability to:

- Articulate and analyze Buddhism's complexity, including historical developments, gender dynamics, traditions, texts, practices, and doctrines;
- Apply and critically evaluate specialized knowledge of Buddhism, including its history, gender dynamics, traditions, texts, practices, and doctrines, across diverse areas and disciplines of Buddhist Studies;
- Create and defend an independent research project or thesis that integrates appropriate theories and research methods to analyze and evaluate a chosen topic in relation to professional or academic goals.

All students are required to complete 48 units for completion of the degree, maintain a 3.0 GPA and receive a B or better in all required courses, and write and defend a research-based thesis.

Admissions Requirements



The admissions process is meant to determine that an applicant is prepared to successfully complete a graduate-level course of study and that the Institute can support the applicant's academic goals. Successful applicants may demonstrate their preparedness to do graduate-level work in a variety of ways including a strong statement of purpose; letters of recommendation that speak directly to an applicant's academic skills; prior academic study, prior language study, or other relevant experience; and, optionally, standardized test scores such as the GRE. Specific admissions requirements are:

1. A Bachelor's degree (B.A.) or its equivalent from an accredited college or university; coursework in Buddhist Studies, religious studies, or other relevant prior coursework is strongly recommended.

2. Three letters of recommendation attesting to the applicant's ability to do graduate-level work and familiarity with Buddhist thought and/or practice. Choose people who can speak knowledgeably and articulately about your academic and intellectual potential and will write specific letters. Academic references are not general character references.

3. A statement of purpose of approximately 500 words that includes (a) your reasons for pursuing graduate studies at IBS; (b) your specific academic interests and how they fit with the faculty and courses at IBS; (c) your professional goals and how you see the M.A.B.S. supporting your professional goals or further academic study; (d) how your academic background prepares you for your proposed course of study at IBS.

4. Non-refundable application fee: $40

Optionally, applicants may submit GRE scores from the past five years. GRE verbal score should be at least 150 and writing score of 4 or above. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to have some prior formal language study in any of the Buddhist canonical or vernacular languages.

Graduation Requirements



Unit Requirement

All students are required to complete 48 units for completion of the degree, including 6 units of "in thesis." Up to 24 units from a certificate program may be used in support of this requirement as per IBS's stackable curriculum.

All students must maintain a 3.0 GPA and receive a B or better in all required courses.

All students must complete a research-based thesis project. Six units of "in thesis" must be completed as part of this requirement as time to write the thesis and work with the student's advisor.

Required Courses

All students must complete the following 4 courses (some of these courses may be completed as part of a certificate program):

- HRHS-8151: Buddhist Traditions of South Asia
- HRHS-8152: Buddhist Traditions of East Asia
- HRPH-8140: Introduction to Shin Buddhist Thought
- HR-1630: Methods in the Study of Buddhism

Master's Thesis

The M.A.B.S. program culminates in a Master's Thesis, defended no later than the middle of the student's last semester in residence. For more information, please review "Movement Through the Program" below and the "Thesis Handbook" available on the IBS website.

Note: All students intending to integrate research with human consociates (subjects) in IBS master's theses must follow the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Human Consociates Review Protocol and receive approval by the faculty prior to submitting the thesis proposal. Students are encouraged to review the Thesis Handbook, available on the IBS website, and consult with their advisor early in the thesis research process.

Satisfactory GPA

Students must maintain an overall grade point average of B or better and receive Bs or better in all required courses to complete the program.

Languages, Texts, and Translations

Students who intend to pursue further academic study or apply to a PhD program are strongly encouraged to begin formal language training in any of the Buddhist canonical languages (i.e., Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, Tibetan) and related research languages of Buddhist Studies (i.e., Japanese, French, German). With the Dean's permission, students may take up to 12 graduate-level (or graduate-level equivalent) units of language study which may count toward the 48 units for graduation. Please consult with your advisor within the first semester of study to determine which language(s) may be appropriate.

Student's Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themself with all requirements and policies pertaining toward the completion of the M.A.B.S. program. Students are encouraged to review the catalog, handbooks and checklists available on the IBS website, and to consult with their academic advisor early and often to ensure that they meet all graduation requirements in a timely fashion.

Program Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Students in the M.A.B.S. program will:

	Outcome	Assessed in part through
PLO1	Articulate and analyze Buddhism's complexity, including historical developments, gender dynamics, traditions, texts, practices, and doctrines;	Final research papers, or equivalent, in two-semester survey courses: Buddhism in South Asia Buddhism in East Asia
PLO2	Apply and critically evaluate specialized knowledge of Buddhism, including its history, gender dynamics, traditions, texts, practices, and doctrines, across diverse areas and disciplines of Buddhist Studies;	Final paper or project, or equivalent, in specialized courses: History of Shin Buddhist Tradition Topics in Buddhist Women Readings in Early Buddhist Texts Works of Shinran I Topics in Shin Buddhist Thought Buddhism and the West Topics in Buddhist Practice Engaged Buddhism
PLO3	Create and defend an independent research project or thesis that integrates appropriate theories and research methods to analyze and evaluate a chosen topic in relation to professional or academic goals.	Degree program final project – the thesis

Movement Through the Program

The M.A.B.S. program is designed so that students can complete their studies in two years of full-time (12 units per semester) coursework. A normative timeline to completion of the degree follows. Students who enroll part time or participate in the Exchange Programs will need to adjust their timeline accordingly. And some program requirements may be completed as per the stackable curriculum model. Please work with your Academic Advisor closely to ensure that all deadlines are met and that you progress toward graduation.

Semester 1
Enroll in four (4) three-unit courses, including Buddhist Traditions of South Asia and Introduction to Shin Buddhist Thought.
Meet with Academic Advisor to map out program, discuss possible thesis/research projects, and interest in language study.

Semester 2
Enroll in four (4) three-unit courses, including Buddhist Traditions of East Asia and HR-1630.
Begin the process of identifying members for the thesis committee

Semester 3
Enroll in three (3) three-unit courses, including HR-1630 (if not taken previously), and three units of "in thesis"
Formalize thesis committee and write thesis proposal
Begin writing thesis by end of term and expect to continue writing and getting feedback on drafts

Semester 4
Enroll in three (3) three-unit courses and three units of "in thesis"
Finish "defense draft" of thesis early in the term; schedule thesis defense with Committee and Office of the Registrar
Defend and file thesis no later than the deadline listed in the GTU Extended Calendar—*note: these deadlines are not negotiable.*

Master of Divinity

The chaplaincy program at IBS not only gave me a quality educational experience, it also provided me with an opportunity to participate in an ecumenical Buddhist community journeying together in spiritual formation. Even after graduating, I continue to regard the IBS sangha as among my most enriching and enlightening communities. I'm so grateful for the life-long spiritual friendships I formed at IBS!

Trent Thornley, class of 2014

Available as an on-site program, the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Degree is a 72-unit graduate professional degree which prepares students to engage fully and with confidence in ministry, chaplaincy, and related professions as well as further academic work. The M.Div. program provides a unique opportunity for students to build a rich and nuanced understanding of Buddhist traditions at a Buddhist seminary, and, through its relationship to the GTU and its member schools, a well informed understanding of other faith traditions and the dynamic religious and spiritual landscape of contemporary society. Diversity and dialogue are an essential part of the program and support its aim — to develop skilled, thoughtful and effective leaders grounded in the Buddhist tradition, able to think critically and respond constructively to the needs of a changing world.

Students from all Buddhist traditions are welcome in the IBS M.Div. program. Those seeking ministerial ordination in a specific tradition should consult with their community to ensure course work meets ordination requirements. For those students wishing to prepare for Jōdo Shinshū ministry and/or professional chaplaincy, specialized tracks of study provide additional structure to the M.Div. program. Additionally, students may consider completing a concurrent certificate program to guide and focus their studies.

M.Div. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Students in the M.Div. program will:

- demonstrate foundational knowledge of Buddhist history, literature, thought, practice, and ethics as the basis for effective ministry, chaplaincy, or religious leadership;
- identify and articulate ministerial skills appropriate to their professional goals, using a range of Buddhist and non-Buddhist sources, and demonstrate how these skills apply to their ministry;
- gain specific, in-depth, knowledge of the teachings and practices of their own Buddhist tradition and express a well-articulated understanding of how that knowledge serves as a guide and resource for their ministry;

- relate their own tradition to multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-Buddhist contexts to support effective engagement with diverse communities; and
- produce research projects and demonstrate communication skills through writing, public speaking, and/or dharma talks.

Admissions Requirements

The admissions process is meant to determine that an applicant is prepared to successfully complete a graduate-level professional degree program and that the Institute can support the applicant's academic goals. Successful applicants may demonstrate their preparedness to do graduate-level work in a variety of ways including a strong statement of purpose; letters of recommendation that speak directly to an applicant's academic skills; prior academic study, prior language study, or other relevant experience; and, optionally, standardized test scores such as the GRE. Specific admissions requirements are:

1. A Bachelor's degree (B.A.) or its equivalent from an accredited college or university; or evidence of having completed equivalent studies under a different educational system.

2. Three letters of recommendation attesting to the applicant's ability to do graduate level work, prior academic experience, and/or prior Buddhist training or experience (such as service to a temple), as appropriate. Choose people who can speak knowledgeably and articulately about your prior academic or other relevant experience as well as your potential professional goals.

3. A statement of purpose of approximately 500 words that includes (a) your reasons for pursuing graduate studies at IBS; (b) your specific academic interests and how they fit with the faculty and courses at IBS; (c) your professional goals and how you see the M.Div. supporting you; (d) how your academic background or relevant prior experience prepares you for your proposed course of study at IBS.

4. Non-refundable application fee: $40

Optionally, applicants may submit GRE scores from the past five years. GRE verbal score should be at least 150 and writing score of 4 or above. Applicants may also provide evidence of relevant prior professional or academic experience or prior language study.



Graduation Requirements

All students are required to complete a range of courses across four subject areas to provide a foundational basis for Buddhist ministry, chaplaincy, and religious leadership in an increasingly interfaith and intercultural world.

Unit Requirement

A total of 72 units is required to complete the M.Div. degree program, usually divided between 22 three-unit courses plus 6 required "in thesis" units, usually taken the last two semesters of study.

Required and Elective Courses

All students are required to complete the following seven courses with a B or better:

- HRHS-8151: Buddhist Traditions of South Asia
- HRHS-8152: Buddhist Traditions of East Asia
- HRPH-8140: Introduction to Shin Buddhist Thought
- HR-1630: Methods in the Study of Buddhism
- HRIR-2000: Buddhism and World Religions (or another IR course with Dean's approval)
- PSHR-3076: Buddhist Spiritual Care I
- HRCE-3014: Issues in Buddhist Ministry

Additionally, students must complete one course from each of the following four (4) subject areas:

1. Buddhist history (course codes HR, HS)
2. Buddhist ethics (CE, RS)
3. Buddhist literature/texts ((any course whose primary focus is the study of a Buddhist text)
4. Buddhist practice/ritual (choose course with advisor's approval)

Field Education

Students are also required to complete six credits of Field Education courses – FE 2401 Introduction to Field Education and FE 2421 Spiritual Reflection in Context. Please refer to the "Field Education Handbook" on the IBS website for additional information. Students should meet with the Field Education Director early and regularly during their program.

Program Tracks

Upon entrance into the program, students should be prepared to meet with their academic advisor, and if they choose, declare a track of study, and complete courses required for their respective tracks. Additional requirements for the tracks of study are as follows.

Jōdo Shinshū Ministerial Studies

Students pursuing ordination as Shin Buddhist ministers are also required to complete the "Works of Shinran" sequence of courses. Consult with your academic advisor and/or the Shin Buddhist Ministerial Program Coordinator for more information.

Buddhist Chaplaincy Studies

Students in the Buddhist Chaplaincy program are also required to complete PSHR-5160: Topics in Buddhist Spiritual Care; and one additional course in pastoral care either at IBS or one of the GTU member schools. Consult with your academic advisor and/or the Field Education Director for more information.



Research-based thesis or project

The M.Div. program culminates in a Master's Thesis, defended no later than the middle of the student's last semester in residence. For more information, please review "Movement Through the Program" below and the Thesis Handbook" available on the IBS website.

Note: All students intending to integrate research with human consociates (subjects) in IBS master's theses must follow the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Human Consociates Review Protocol and receive approval by the faculty prior to submitting the thesis proposal. Students are encouraged to review the Thesis Handbook, available on the IBS website, and consult with their advisor early in the thesis research process.

M.Div. Foreign Language Policy

Whereas no language competency is explicitly required for M.Div. students, an understanding and appreciation of the textual history of the Buddhist tradition is a central aim across all our degree programs. Students are thus strongly encouraged to take the "Texts, Terms, and Translations" course, offered biennially.

Additionally, IBS recognizes the practical necessity of language study for our ministerial and chaplaincy students. Ministerial students are therefore strongly encouraged to engage in Japanese language study while in residence. Chaplaincy students are strongly encouraged to develop language skills relevant to their career goals. Students should consult with their Academic Advisor within the first semester of study to determine which language(s) may be appropriate.

In some cases, up to 12 units of graduate level language courses may be used toward the unit requirement for the M.Div. program, with prior approval of the Dean.

Satisfactory GPA

Students must maintain an overall grade point average of B or better and receive Bs or better in the above required courses to complete the program.

Student's Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themself with all requirements and policies pertaining toward the completion of the M.Div. program. Students are encouraged to review the catalog, handbooks and checklists available on the IBS website, and to consult with their academic advisor early and often to ensure that they meet all graduation requirements in a timely fashion.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Curriculum Map

The program learning outcomes (PLOs) of IBS's M.Div. program are best understood as a set of inter-nesting goals, not steps in a linear progression through the program. Students come to IBS with a variety of life experiences, enroll as both full- and part-time students, and thus proceed through the program at their own pace. Knowledge and skills acquired at one phase of the program are sharpened and refined in later stages, and students thus have the opportunity to return to areas of study for further engagement and refinement.

Students in IBS's Master of Divinity program will:

	Outcome	**Assessed in part through**
PLO1	Articulate and analyze Buddhism's complexity, including historical developments, gender dynamics, traditions, texts, practices, and doctrines.	Final research papers, or equivalent, in two-semester survey courses: Buddhism in South Asia Buddhism in East Asia
PLO2	Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of Buddhist teachings and practices, and explain how this knowledge informs and guides their ministry.	Final paper or project, or equivalent, in: Buddhist Spiritual Care I Works of Shinran II Topics in Buddhist Spiritual Care Issues in Buddhist Ministry
PLO3	Analyze how elements of their own religious/spiritual tradition relate to particular components of at least one other religious/spiritual tradition.	Final paper or project, or equivalent, in: Buddhism and World Religions Spiritual Reflection in Context
PLO4	Apply ministerial skills grounded in Buddhist principles and professional competencies, and evaluate how these skills influence effective ministry.	Final paper or project, or equivalent, in: Spiritual Reflection in Context Works of Shinran III
PLO5	Create a culminating project that integrates and applies Buddhist teachings and/or practices to a focused topic in Buddhist ministry.	Degree program capstone project

Movement Through the Program

The M.Div. program is designed so that students can complete their studies in three years of full-time (12 units per semester) coursework. A normative timeline to completion of the degree follows. Students who enroll part time or participate in the Exchange Programs will need to adjust their timeline accordingly. And some program requirements may be completed as per the stackable curriculum model. Please work with your Academic Advisor closely to ensure that all deadlines are met and that you progress toward graduation.

Semester 1
Enroll in four (4) three-unit courses, including Buddhist Traditions of South Asia
Meet with Academic Advisor to map out course of study, possible avenues of research for the thesis.

Semester 2
Enroll in four (4) three-unit courses, ideally including Buddhist Traditions of East Asia.

Semester 3
Enroll in four (4) three-unit courses, being attentive to program requirements.
Apply to field education site/CPE program.

Semester 4
Enroll in four (4) three-unit courses, being attentive to program requirements.
Complete FE requirement.
By end of the academic year, student should begin conceptualizing thesis project

Semester 5
Enroll in three (3) three-unit courses, including Methods course (if not taken previously), and three units of "in thesis"
Begin writing thesis/project, expect to continue writing and getting feedback on drafts

Semester 6
Enroll in three (3) three-unit courses and three units of "in thesis"
Finish "defense draft" early in the semester; schedule defense with Committee and Office of the Registrar
Defend and file final project no later than deadline listed in the GTU Extended Calendar—*note: these deadlines are not negotiable.*

Expectations for Online Learning

In order to succeed in IBS's online courses, certificate programs, and M.A.B.S. online degree program, students are expected to join class with cameras on, in a space without distraction to the learning for the class. Students are also expected to be computer literate and have access to the following technology:

1. Regular access to a computer and a reliable internet connection.
2. An email account which will be used to verify a student's identity when logging into the Moodle learning platform. (You will be assigned an IBS email account when you are admitted to a program.)
3. A modern web browser to access the Moodle platform (Chrome and Firefox are more reliable on PCs; the most recent version of Apple Safari on Macs) as well as to do online research. Mobile app versions of Moodle (such as for tablets or the iPad) generally have limited features; we recommend students access Moodle via a laptop or desktop computer.
4. A PDF reader such as Adobe Acrobat or Apple Preview.
5. A word processing program such as Microsoft Office.
6. The ability to listen to and watch audio and video files on your computer.
7. Many online courses combine synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous modalities. Synchronous courses will require you to make time in your schedule to meet with your instructor and classmates similar to an on-site course. Synchronous meetings are usually conducted via Zoom or other video conferencing software.

Course Delivery Modalities and Definitions

In-Person Instruction – Courses are delivered face-to-face in a traditional classroom setting. Students and instructors meet in a physical classroom on the IBS campus, during a designated day/time. All students are expected to attend in-person.

Online Synchronous – This course includes required live meetings via Zoom, at a designated day/time, for lectures, discussions, and/or other instructor-led interaction. No asynchronous option available.

Concurrent Hybrid – This course is taught synchronously, during a designated day/time, with the option for students to participate either in person or via Zoom. No asynchronous option available.

Online Asynchronous – Delivery of instruction for this course is 100% online asynchronous, with weekly assignments such as tests, readings, essays, discussion boards, etc.

Students should always contact the instructor of record first with questions about course delivery modality.

IBS's programs are never self-paced. IBS's pedagogical model assumes that students learn best in conversation with both their instructors and peers. Students therefore should expect weekly assignments and discussion regardless of course modality.

Synchronous courses will almost always be scheduled during Pacific Time. Students at a distance taking a course with real time meetings should plan their schedules accordingly.

Technical support

IBS utilizes the Moodle learning platform administered by the Graduate Theological Union. The GTU offers ample technical support for students and faculty. Once logged into your Moodle account, you will find both resource pages as well as a chat box to speak to a staff person for assistance. The chat feature is also included on the GTU library webpage.

Plagiarism and A.I. Tools

Unless noted and specifically permitted by the instructor, all assignments in IBS courses are individual assignments, and students should not use artificial intelligence tools. Written assignments, projects, discussion posts, etc., should be the student's own, original work. The Institute of Buddhist Studies is committed to training students to become effective and engaged scholars, teachers, ministers, and chaplains. AI platforms rely on language patterns to predict answers, struggle with accuracy, have bias, and depersonalize one's writing. It is for these reasons that, unless an instructor specifically allows the use of AI tools, AI platforms are not permitted for IBS coursework. For more on institutional plagiarism policies see here.

Exchange Programs & Affiliated Institutions

Exchange Program, Ryukoku University

IBS is not participating in the student exchange program for the 2026-2027 academic year. Please contact the Dean's office for more information.



Ryukoku University, Kyoto, Japan

Each year two students from IBS are able to study Buddhism at Ryukoku University in Kyoto, Japan. This program is open to degree program students only.

Up to twelve units of credit may be earned in this program. Grounding in conversational and basic reading Japanese is required. Opportunities to study Japanese language are available through this program, but for all other coursework the language of instruction is Japanese. Tuition and fees for this program are the same as for regular IBS classes, and are payable directly to IBS. Housing is provided by Ryukoku University. Transportation, food and other incidentals are at student's own expense

Affiliated Institutions

Graduate Theological Union

Founded by ecumenical pioneers in 1962, the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California, is the largest and most diverse partnership of seminaries and graduate schools in the United States. The interfaith approach attracts leading theologians, scholars of religion, and students from around the world who are pursuing new models for inter-religious collaboration in teaching, research, ministry, and service.

Study at the GTU is intellectually challenging and rich in resources. As a consortium, we have the largest theological faculty in one location in the United States. Students pursuing a Ph.D., D.Min., or M.A. share a world-class library, access to more than 700 courses across member schools and academic disciplines, and a strong sense of community. Here, honest exchanges arise, world views expand, understanding deepens.

GTU Member Schools

There are currently seven member schools of the Graduate Theological Union:

- Berkeley School of Theology
- Dominican School of Theology
- Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University
- Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
- Pacific School of Religion
- San Francisco Theological Seminary
- Institute of Buddhist Studies

The Institute of Buddhist Studies became a member school of the GTU in 2021. IBS is the first non-Christian seminary to join the consortium bringing true religious diversity to the GTU community at all levels, from the Board of Trustees to faculty and students.

The GTU is both a graduate school and a consortium of schools, as well as an agency for a variety of special programs and services. In its educational programs, the GTU draws upon its founding theological communities and works cooperatively with the University of California, Berkeley. Structurally, the GTU is a distinct entity, governed by an independent Board of Trustees, which includes members nominated by the participating seminaries. It is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior College and University Commission. It is also a member of the Council on Graduate Studies in Religion.

The GTU is fully committed to the principles of academic freedom as set forth by those associations and by the American Association of University Professors. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religious affiliation, age, sex, or handicap in its employment policies or in the administration of its educational programs, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school administrative programs. For the degree programs administered by the GTU, faculty members of the schools constitute a single graduate faculty.

University of California, Berkeley



Through a cross-registration arrangement between GTU and UCB, IBS degree program students are able to take courses for credit (one course per semester) at UCB. The Department of Asian Languages, Department of South and Southeast Asian Languages and the Religious Studies groups, in particular, offer a wide range of courses in religion, Asian thought and languages that complement the GTU and IBS course offerings.

Center for Buddhist Education

Inspired by Shinran Shonin's legacy, the mission of the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) is to provide diverse learning opportunities to deepen the understanding and appreciation of Buddha's wisdom and compassion among Sangha leaders and the broader community.

CBE organizes a number of educational programs throughout the year and across North America. CBE is primarily responsible for the Minister's Assistant Program which prepares women and men for Buddhist leadership in their sanghas and ordination from Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan.

IBS cooperates with CBE to host academic and educational programs (such as the Pacific Seminar) as well as the Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) and other practicum series for Shin Buddhist ministerial aspirants.

Sati Center for Buddhist Studies

The Sati Center for Theravada Studies, located in Redwood City, California, balances scholarly inquiry with serious meditation practice. The Institute of Buddhist Studies has partnered with the Sati Center to provide academic credit for the Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy Training (BCT) program.

Please contact IBS's Field Education Director for more information.

International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies

The International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies (IASBS) was founded in 1982 with the objective of developing Shin and Pure Land Buddhist Studies and facilitating exchange of views and information among its members. It is the only worldwide organization focused on Jōdo Shinshū and Pure Land Buddhist studies.

Members are scholars and academics, priests and laypersons affiliated with the Jōdo, Jōdo Shinshū, and other Pure Land Buddhist traditions as well as scholars with an interest in Buddhist studies and religious studies more generally. The IASBS welcomes participation of those with wide range of interests and specialization within and beyond Pure Land Buddhism.

The Institute of Buddhist Studies has long been a supporter and partner of the IASBS; many of our faculty have been long-time members of the Association, and IBS assists the IASBS in the production of the Association's journal, *The Pure Land*.

IBS students, especially those studying Shin Buddhism or preparing for careers in the ministry, are encouraged to become members of the Association.

Ryukoku and Ohtani Universities

Representing the Nishi and Higashi branches of Jōdo Shinshū, Ryukoku and Ohtani Universities are among the top Buddhist universities in Japan.

IBS has strong institutional connections to both universities allowing for scholarly exchanges and collaborative research projects, and a student exchange program with Ryukoku University.

The Faculty of IBS

Core Faculty

The Core Faculty is responsible for the Institute's academic program, program review and assessment, and serve as faculty advisors for degree and certificate program students.



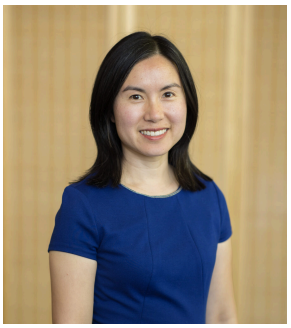
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Dr. Scott A. Mitchell

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President, and Rev. Yoshitaka Tamai Professor of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist Studies
Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union
M.A., Institute of Buddhist Studies
B.A., San Francisco State University
Buddhism in the West, Buddhist modernism, Critical Race Theory



Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji

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H.E. Kosho Ohtani Professor of Shin Buddhist Studies
Ph.D. and M.A., Ryukoku University
M.A., Institute of Buddhist Studies
B.A., University of California, Berkeley,
Shin Buddhist doctrine, hermeneutics, and exegesis; contemporary Shin Buddhism



Dr. Natalie Fisk Quli

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Associate Professor of Theravāda Buddhist Studies
Senior Editor, *Pacific World Journal*
Ph.D. and M.A., Graduate Theological Union
B.A., Humboldt State University
Buddhist modernism, Theravāda Buddhism, race in American Buddhism

Other Faculty and Teaching Staff



Rev. Harry Bridge

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Shin Buddhist Ministerial Program Coordinator
Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist Studies
M.A., Institute of Buddhist Buddhist Studies
M.A., Ryukoku University, Kyoto

Research Fellows

Research Fellows have an ongoing relationship with the Institute, provide additional scholarly expertise, and are able to serve on thesis committees.



Dr. Thomas Calobrisi

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Ph.D. and M.A., Graduate Theological Union
B.A., University of North Texas



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B.A., Kyoto Women's University



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Ph.D., M.Phil., and MDiv., Union Theological Seminary
Master of International Affairs, Columbia University
B.A., University of Iowa
Buddhist Ethics, Buddhism and Race, Buddhism and Caste, Socially Engaged Buddhism, Buddhism and Social Movements, Moral and Political Philosophy, Critical Race Theory, Sociology of Punishment

Emeritus Faculty



Rev. Dr. Daijaku Judith Kinst

Professor Emerita awarded 2023
Ph.D., California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA
M.A., California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA
B.A. (cum laude), Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA
Kokusaifukyoshi (international Teacher) Soto Shu, Tokyo Japan
California Marriage and Family Therapist



Rev. Dr. David Ryoe Matsumoto

President Emeritus awarded 2024
Ph.D., Ryukoku University, Kyoto
M.A., Ryukoku University, Kyoto
M.A., Institute of Buddhist Studies
B.A. and J.D., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis



Dr. Richard K. Payne

Professor Emeritus awarded 2023
Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union
M.A., Nyingma Institute
B.A. and M.A., San Jose State University
Ajari, Shingon Buddhist priest, Mt. Kōya

In Memoriam



Rev. Dr. Seigen H. Yamaoka, 1934-2023

Buddhist Churches of America Bishop and IBS President, 1981-1996
IBS Core Faculty, 2009-2021
IBS Vice President of Development, 2013-2021
Professor Emeritus awarded 2021
M.A. and Litt.D., Ryukoku University, Kyoto
M.R.E. and D.Min., Pacific School of Religion
B.A., California State University, Fresno

Read more about Rev. Yamaoka's legacy and contributions to the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

Course Catalog

The following is the master IBS Course Catalog representing all courses IBS has historically offered. Please consult the IBS website for courses being offered in the 2024-2025 academic year.

IBS and GTU courses are grouped by fields of study identified by the following list of course codes. Course numbers refer to the level of the course and whether the course is offered in an online modality.

Course Codes	
RA	Art and Religion
HR	Cultural & Historical Studies of Religions
CE	Ethics and Social Theory
FE	Field Education
HS	History
HM	Homiletics
IR	Interreligious Studies
LS	Liturgical Studies
PH	Philosophy & Philosophy of Religion
PS	Religion and Psychology
RS	Religion and Society
SA	Sacred Texts
SC	Spiritual Care
ED	Theology & Education

Course Numbers	
1000	Introductory level courses
2000-3000	Intermediate level courses
4000	Advanced level courses
5000-6000	Doctoral level courses
8000	Online courses (second number represents course level)

Courses required for most of our degree and certificate programs are offered on a rotating basis according to the following schedule. Consult the IBS website and your academic advisor prior to registration to ensure you are meeting program requirements.

Course	Offered every…
HRHS-8151Buddhist Traditions of South Asia	fall semester
HRHS-8152 Buddhist Traditions of East Asia	spring semester
HR-8107 Intro to Buddhism and Buddhist Studies	fall semester
HRPH-8140 Intro to Shin Buddhist Thought	fall semester
HR-3040 Intro to Zen Buddhism	every spring
HR-1630 Methods in the Study of Buddhism	spring semester
HRHS-3250 Seven Masters	every other spring, alternating with HR-3017
SA-3017 Three Pure Land Sutras	every other spring, alternating with HRPS-3250
HRIR-2000 Buddhism and World Religions	usually every fall
HRHS-8307 History of the Shin Tradition	usually every fall
SA-4566 Works of Shinran I	usually every spring
PSHR-3076 Buddhist Spiritual Care	usually every fall
HRCE-3014 Issues in Buddhist Ministry	usually every spring

Introductory Courses

No background expected. These courses provide basic introductions to the area of study.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM AND BUDDHIST STUDIES

HR 1501, HR 8107

This course introduces the student to the Buddhist tradition and the academic study of Buddhism. The course covers the development of Buddhism across Asia, its history, major texts, lineages, practices and doctrines. Secondarily, we will discuss the academic discipline of Buddhist studies, its own historical development, methodologies, orientations and assumptions. It is required for the Certificate in Buddhist Studies.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST MEDITATION

HRSP 1508

An examination of samatha and vipassana methods of Buddhist meditation.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST THOUGHT

HR 1510

Introduces the major ideas of Buddhist thought in the context of contemporary religious and philosophical discussions. Recommended for introductory study.

BUDDHIST JAPANESE I

HR 1512, HR 8145

Introduces basics of Japanese grammar, vocabulary, kana and kanji, and dictionary work, including both Buddhist vocabulary and dictionaries. Work with paragraph length selections from modern popular Japanese publications on Buddhism.

BUDDHIST JAPANESE II

HR 1513, HR 8146

Continues to develop technical Buddhist vocabulary in modern Japanese. As well as referencing classical Japanese, the Buddhist terms in Sanskrit and Chinese related to key technical terms will also be introduced. More complex grammar and longer selections will be worked with.

BUDDHIST TRADITIONS OF SOUTH ASIA

HRHS 1515, HRHS 8151

Introduces the Buddhist traditions as they originate in India and developed throughout south and southeast Asia. First half of the required yearlong introductory survey of the entire Buddhist tradition. Usually offered each fall semester.

BUDDHIST TRADITIONS OF EAST ASIA

HRHS 1518, HRHS 8152

Introduces the Buddhist traditions transmitted to East Asia and the development of new traditions. Second half of the required yearlong introductory survey of the entire Buddhist tradition. Usually offered each spring semester.

BUDDHIST TEXTS: PALI I

HR 1525

An introduction to the language of the Pāli Tipikaka. Grammar lessons are based on the language of the early nikayas (sutta collections). By the end of the first semester, students can expect to have a firm grasp of basic Pāli grammar, a working vocabulary of roughly 600 words, and competency in reading standard prose passages of nikaya material with minimal assistance.

BUDDHIST TEXTS: PALI II

HR 1511

Intermediate level Pāli grammar and extensive readings drawn from the early nikayas (sutta collections). By the end of the second semester, students can expect to have a firm grasp of Pāli grammar and competence in reading complex passages of prose and verse nikaya material. Pre-requisite: Pāli I or equivalent. Auditors with faculty permission.

LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

HR 1550

Course examines the life and fundamental teachings of Śākyamuni Buddha, providing an understanding of the Buddha's time and world. It then follows the developments in the story of the Buddha as the popularity of Buddhism increases and it spreads throughout Asia. Recommended for introductory study.

LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THERAVADA BUDDHIST MASTERS

HR 1551

Course examines the life and fundamental teachings of Buddhist Masters in the Theravada traditions, providing an understanding of how the teachings have been practiced and passed down by the Buddhist Masters in Southeast Asia. It then examines contemporary Buddhist Masters in Asia and in the West. Recommended for introductory study.

RITUAL, PRACTICE AND CEREMONY IN BUDDHISM

HR 1570

This course will examine ritual and practice in the Buddhist tradition, as well as a practicum session devoted specifically to chanting. Topics will include the relationship between practice, doctrine, and ritual, ritual architecture, and historical and modern examples of ritual practice. Offered every other semester.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THERAVADA BUDDHIST TRADITIONS

HR 1596

This course will survey the traditions of Buddhism commonly referred to as Theravada, with reference to their doctrine, development, and concrete localizations throughout South and Southeast Asia, as well as the contemporary West. We will also interrogate the shifting representations of these traditions that emerge in their interface with modernity. The course will incorporate both foundational primary texts and representative secondary scholarship in an attempt to broadly chart the living and historical dimensions of these traditions and the terms of their contemporary study.

INTRODUCTION TO SHIN BUDDHIST THOUGHT

HRPH 1614, HR 8140

Introduces the major ideas of Shin thought in the context of contemporary religious and philosophic discussions. Required course. One of the following is needed as prerequisite: HR 1510 Introduction to Buddhist thought, HR 1550 Life and Teachings of the Buddha, or instructor's permission.

READINGS IN EARLY BUDDHIST TEXTS

SA 1615, SA 8160 [was HR 1615/8160]

Texts selected by instructor from the early Buddhist tradition. May include Pāli and early Mahayana texts, read in English translation. May be repeated for credit when a different text is chosen for study.

METHODS IN THE STUDY OF BUDDHISM

HR 1630

A survey of different approaches to the study of Buddhism, including textual, anthropological, sociological, historical, and bibliographic. Particular attention will be given to contemporary critical studies, appropriate historical and social contextualization of doctrinal claims, and relations between Buddhism and other religions in the modern world.

SHIN BUDDHIST SERVICES AND CEREMONIES

FE 1810

Teaches chanting and ceremonial required for ministerial service in the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha tradition. Ministerial aspirants are required to take this course, offered every other semester.

Intermediate Courses

More specialized, some background expected. Primarily for M.A. level students.

BUDDHISM AND WORLD RELIGIONS
HRIR 2000
Contextualizes the history, thought, and practice of Buddhism within the broad sweep of world religions, historically and contemporarily.

CONCURRENT FIELD STUDY – SELF PLACEMENT
FE-2400
For special situations in field education placement, this course may be taken with permission from the student's advisor and the Dean. To enroll, student must have approved their field site with the Field Education Director. Student is responsible for application costs and on-boarding requirements related to field site. Learning and assessment will be overseen by the Field Education Director.

INTRODUCTION TO FIELD EDUCATION
FE-2401
This course integrates volunteering at a field site placement with in-class lecture topics and discussion. Evaluation includes class participation, reflection papers, and case study reports. Prerequisites: field site placement approved by the Field Education Director. Student is responsible for any application costs and on-boarding requirements related to field site. This course counts towards fulfilling the field education requirement for M.Div. students.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION IN CONTEXT
FE-2421
This course integrates clinical experience at a field site or CPE program with in-class topics and discussion. Major themes include meaning-making, interreligious engagement, and leadership. Prerequisites: FE-2401 or Clinical Pastoral Education.

BUDDHISM AND THE WEST
HR 2849, HR 2850, HR 8344
This course surveys the history of Buddhist traditions in the West. Beginning with 19th century colonial contact and Asian immigration through 21st century global exchanges, we will explore the various ways that Buddhists, Buddhist communities, and Buddhist ideas have come to and developed in Western contexts. Previous Buddhist studies courses helpful but not required.

MEDITATION IN THE THERAVADA TRADITION
HR 2990

Meditation practice is important to the path of liberation taught in Theravada Buddhism. The core meditation practices of Theravada Buddhism have their origin in the teachings of the Buddha. This seminar will present core principles, teachings, and practices of meditation that are found in the early Pāli discourses as well as in later Theravada Buddhism, including the West. Meditation techniques will be assigned for regular home practice. Grading will be based on a mid-term take home essay, and a final research paper; short reflective essays and a meditation journal are required for completing the class. The class is suitable for M.A. and M.Div. students.

READINGS IN THERAVADA TEXTS

SA 2992 [was HR 2992]

Introduces and closely examines major Theravada sutras in English translation. May be augmented with work on text in canonic language(s). HRHS 1515 Buddhist Traditions of South Asia and HRHS 1518 Buddhist Traditions of East Asia are recommended as background. Fulfills the textual studies (Biblical Studies or Sacred Texts) requirement for the GTU MA.

HISTORY OF THE PURE LAND TRADITION

HRHS 8350

Devotion to Amitabha and Amitayus Buddhas originates in medieval India, and is an integral part of Mahayana religious culture. Today, such devotional practice forms one of the most popular forms of Buddhism, and is found in Tibet, China, Korea, Vietnam, Japan and the West. [Note: this course was retired in 2010; Shin Buddhist ministerial students are now required to complete HRHS 3250.]

SHIN BUDDHIST THEOLOGY

HR 8457

An examination of a range of theological issues raised by a contemporary consideration of Shin Buddhist thought, focusing on questions of ethics, human nature, faith and salvation. Lecture and seminar format. Required preparation: HR 1614 Introduction to Shin Buddhist thought, or faculty permission.

BUDDHIST ETHICS

HRCE 3002, HRCE 8340

A survey of the role of ethical teachings in Buddhism. Together with meditation (samādhi) and wisdom (prajñā), ethics (sila) is considered to be one of the foundations of awakening.

CHINESE BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

HRPH 3006

Study of one of the schools of Chinese Buddhist thought, such as Huayan, Tiantai, Sanlun, Chan, and Mijiao. While reading primary sources in translation will be central, attention will also be given to textual, doctrinal, historical, and social aspects of the different philosophical traditions. May be repeated when a different school is being studied.

JAPANESE BUDDHISM

HRHS 3009
This seminar will focus on Japanese Buddhism in the modern period. Format: seminar. Evaluation: Participation and term paper.

INDIAN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY
HRPH 3011
Study of one of the schools of Indian Buddhist thought, such as abhidharma/abhidhamma, Madhyamaka, Yogācara, and tathāgatagarbha. While reading primary sources in translation will be central, attention will also be given to the textual, doctrinal, historical, and social aspects of the different philosophic traditions. May be repeated for credit when a different school is being studied.

BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY
PSHR 3013
The Sati Center for Buddhist Studies in Redwood City, CA, offers a year-long Buddhist Chaplaincy Training program. Some Students participating in the in-person training may be eligible to receive academic credit for completion of this program. Students are responsible for all application materials and fees related to the Sati Center program. Please see the Sati Center website and the IBS academic catalog for relevant policies prior to registering.

ISSUES IN BUDDHIST MINISTRY
HRCE 3014
Explore the difficulties and direction in Buddhist Ministry within the Western context. Also, through a person-centered educational process, explore ways and means to develop one's personal ministry for the west. Course is for MA or MDiv students with an emphasis on ministry.

TIBETAN BUDDHISM
HRHS 3014, HRHS 8301
A survey of the history, teachings, doctrines, practices, and textual traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. Attention will also be given to basic introduction to the traditions of Indian thought that form the basis for the polemical nature of Tibetan scholasticism.

READINGS IN VAJRAYANA TEXTS
SA 8318
Introduces a major Vajrayana (tantric or esoteric Buddhist) tantra, commentary, ancillary text, or set of texts in English translation. Different texts may be selected depending on their significance for various Buddhist traditions of Asia. May be augmented with work on text in canonic language(s). HRHS 1515 Buddhist Traditions of South Asia and HRHS 1518 Buddhist Traditions of East Asia are recommended as background. Fulfills the textual studies requirement for the degree programs. May be repeated for credit when a different text is chosen for study.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF BUDDHISM I: FOUNDATIONS IN BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGICAL THOUGHT

HRPS 8320

An examination of the development of psychological theories in the abhidharma, Yogācara and tathāgatagarbha systems of thought, particularly through the reading of primary sources in translation. May be repeated for credit when different primary texts are being studied.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF BUDDHISM II: INTERFACING WITH WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY

HRPS 3016

Explores the similarities and difference between classical Indian Buddhist psychological thought (abhidharma, and Yogācara) and Western psychologies. Of particular concern is the question of whether the two kinds of systems have the same fundamental ideas about human existence, conceptions of the self, our relations with others, and the structure of the mind.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF BUDDHISM III

HRPS 8322

This course presents Buddhist psychologies as they evolved over the centuries, and Psychology in its several forms in the Anglophone literature. Many of the topics of particular importance in the Buddhist traditions find parallels, resonances, or denials in modern American psychology. The developments of Buddhist psychology found in Yogacara, Tathagatagarbha, Madhyamaka, and subsequent traditions are considered.

READINGS IN MAHAYANA TEXTS

SA 3017, SA 8317 [was HR 3017/8317]

Introduces a major Mahāyāna sūtra or śastra in English translation. May be augmented with work on text in canonic language(s). Usually alternates annually between the three Pure Land sūtras (required of ministerial aspirants) and other Mahāyāna texts. HRHS 1515 Buddhist Traditions of South Asia and HRHS 1518 Buddhist Traditions of East Asia are recommended as background. Fulfills the textual studies (Biblical Studies or Sacred Texts) requirement for the GTU MA.

ZEN BUDDHISM

HR 3040, HR 8150

A survey of the history, teachings, doctrines, practices and textual traditions of Zen Buddhism as this tradition developed in China, Korea, Japan, and its contemporary transmission to the West. Socio-historical aspects of the tradition's development and history will also be considered.

ISSUES IN SHIN BUDDHIST MINISTRY

HRFE 3076

Explores the difficulties and direction of Shin Buddhist Ministry within the Western context.

BUDDHIST JAPANESE III

HR 3060

This course introduces high intermediate Japanese grammar. It is focused on understanding compound and complex sentences. We also analyze why subjects and phrases are omitted in typical Japanese sentences. Students will acquire the knowledge of multiple language equivalents (Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan) and the corresponding concepts within Buddhist thought. Students will continue to build upon knowledge of Buddhist terminology and kanji.

BUDDHIST JAPANESE IV

HR 3061, HR 8359

Students will be required to read extended text selections in Japanese. Discourse level grammar and sentence analysis will be studied in depth. Students will continue to build upon knowledge of Buddhist terminology and kanji. This course also introduces basics of classical Japanese.

HISTORY OF THE SHIN BUDDHIST TRADITION: PRE- MODERN

HRHS 3075, HRHS 8307

This course examines the history of the Shin Buddhist tradition focusing on the formation of the tradition by Shinran and its revitalization by Rennyo, as well as further developments into the Tokugawa era. Required of ministerial aspirants. HRHS 3250 History of the Pure Land Tradition: Seven Masters recommended as background.

HISTORY OF THE SHIN BUDDHIST TRADITION: MODERN

HRHS 3074, HRHS 8309

This course takes the history of the Shin Buddhist tradition forward from the seven masters. Required of ministerial aspirants. HRHS 3250 History of the Pure Land Tradition: Seven Masters recommended as background.

BUDDHIST SPIRITUAL CARE I

PSHR 3076

Examines the application of Buddhist thought in the context of a pastoral counseling relationship. Just as the Buddha adjusted his teaching to the needs of his audiences, attention will be given to individual situations as the frame for counseling, in contrast to the imposition of doctrinal views. Ethical and legal limitations on the counseling relation will be covered.

SCIENCE AND BUDDHISM

HR 3100

Examination of the relation between modern science (as method, as accepted theories, as institution), and Buddhist thought. The development of scientific thought within Buddhism itself will also be considered. For example, cosmologies, engineering, embryology, and logic, all form important contextualizing elements of the Buddhist path to awakening.

ESOTERIC BUDDHISM

HR 3101

A survey of the history, teachings, doctrines, practices, and textual traditions of esoteric, or tantric, Buddhism. Particular focus may be given to Indian, Tibetan, Chinese, or Japanese forms of esoteric Buddhism. As appropriate attention will also be given to basic introduction to the traditions of Indian tantra that provided the religious context for the development of the Buddhist tantric tradition.

TOPICS IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITIONS OF EAST ASIA

HRPH 3242

Specialized topic related to the history of Buddhist thought and practice as it developed in East Asia is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different. HRHS 1518 Buddhist Traditions of East Asia recommended as background.

TOPICS IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITIONS OF SOUTH ASIA

HRPH 3243

Specialized topic related to the history of Buddhist thought and practice as it developed in South Asia is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different. HRHS 1515 Buddhist Traditions of South Asia recommended as background.

TOPICS IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITIONS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

NEW COURSE

Specialized topic related to the history of Buddhist thought and practice as it developed in Southeast Asia is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different. HRHS 1515/ HRHS 8151 Buddhist Traditions of South Asia recommended as background.

TOPICS IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITIONS OF CENTRAL ASIA

NEW COURSE

Specialized topic related to the history of Buddhist thought and practice as it developed in Central Asia, selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different. HRHS 1518/HRHS 8152 Buddhist Traditions of East Asia recommended as background.

SEVEN MASTERS/HISTORY OF THE PURE LAND TRADITION

HRHS 3250

The Shin Buddhist tradition traces its origins to the works of Nagārjuna, Vasubandhu, Tanluan, Daochuo, Shandao, Genshin and Hōnen. This course examines their contributions to the development of Shin Buddhism. Required of ministerial aspirants. HRPH 1614 Introduction to Shin Buddhist thought recommended as background.

TERMS, TEXTS, AND TRANSLATIONS

HR 3300, HR 8330

A study of the key terminology of Buddhist studies across the tradition, the ways in which texts are studied, and issues of translation. These issues have all been central for the understanding of Buddhism as it has moved from one society to another, and this course examines how they affect the interpretation of Buddhism in the present.

ADVANCED FIELD STUDY – CPE (3 UNITS)

FE-3400

CPE placement in a student chosen site in coordination with the Field Education Director is required. Students are responsible for all application materials and fees related to the CPE program. Students must submit their final CPE self evaluation and supervisor evaluation to earn credit. Counts towards fulfilling the Field Education requirement for M.Div. students.

Advanced Courses

Very specialized. Background study definitely expected. May be taken by both M.A. and Ph.D. level students.

BUDDHIST MINISTRY: FORMATION, CAREGIVING, AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
SCCE-4000
This course will navigate the challenges and opportunities facing Buddhist Ministry within the setting of the United States. We will navigate issues of politics, power, and institutions alongside deeper personal understandings of social location, privilege, and marginalization within the framework of the Buddhadharma. In addition to considering these concepts as Buddhist teachers and ministers, we will practice dharmalogical reflection on the trajectory of our own lives, supporting one another together in this class, in order to cultivate critical and intentional foundations for our own ministerial contexts. Meets the ministerial subject area requirement for the IBS M.Div.

ENGAGED BUDDHISM
HRRS 4530
This seminar investigates the history, principles, and practice of what has been or could be called "engaged Buddhism" or "socially engaged Buddhism" from early Buddhist sources up to the present. Sources include the Pali canon, Mahayana sutras, writings by and about medieval and contemporary Buddhist authors including Taixu, B.R. Ambedkar, Sulak Sivaraksa, Thich Nhat Hanh, and the Fourteenth Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, along with secondary scholarship. We consider Buddhist views on renunciation, worldly affairs, and right action; the role of Buddhist sangha (community) members in politics and governance; and Buddhist-led movements around the globe that address forms of social, economic, political and environmental injustice, inequity, violence, and hardship.

TOPICS IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITIONS OF JAPAN
HRHS 4540, HRHS 8454
Specialized topic related to the history of Buddhist thought and practice as it developed in Japan is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different. HRHS 1518 Buddhist Tradition of East Asia recommended as background.

TOPICS IN JAPANESE RELIGIONS
HRPH 4543, HRHS 8450
Specialized topic related to the history or thought of Japanese religions is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different. HRHS 1518 Buddhist Traditions of East Asia recommended as background.

ISSUES IN THE SHINSHU TRADITION
HR 4547

Examination of an issue of instructor's choice from the historical study of the Shinshū tradition. May be repeated for credit when topic is different.

TOPICS IN SHIN BUDDHIST THOUGHT

HR 4548

Examination of a topic of instructor's choice drawing from the interactions between Shin thought and contemporary thought and society. May be repeated for credit when topic is different.

TOPICS IN ZEN BUDDHIST THOUGHT

HRPH 8488

Examination of a topic of instructor's choice drawing from the interactions between Zen (Chan) Buddhist thought and contemporary thought and society. May be repeated for credit when topic is different.

TOPICS IN THERAVADA BUDDHIST THOUGHT

HRRS 4551

Examination of a topic of instructor's choice drawing from the interactions between Theravada thought and contemporary thought and society. May be repeated for credit when topic is different.

THERAVADA BUDDHISM

HRHS 4550

This survey course provides students with a solid foundation in the history, doctrines, and practices of Theravada Buddhism. In addition to sampling authoritative texts and reviewing the historical development of Theravada, we will discuss contemporary practices, particularly in terms of lay-monastic relationships. Special attention will be paid to Sri Lanka, particularly the legacy of British occupation and the development of "Protestant Buddhism" or "Buddhist modernism."

NEMBUTSU: SHIN PRACTICE

HR 4551

An examination of the issue of practice in Shin Buddhist thought, culture and life. Will examine historical and doctrinal developments of the notion of practice in Pure Land thought, Shinran's unique perspective on the nembutsu of Other Power, and contemporary approaches to Shin Buddhist practice in Asia and the West. Prerequisites: HR 1614 or instructor's permission.

TOPICS IN BUDDHIST THOUGHT

HRPH 4556, HRPH 8455

Examination of a topic of instructor's choice from the history of Buddhist thought, such as philosophy, psychology or social thought. As appropriate, primary source materials will be employed in the study of the topic. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different.

TOPICS IN BUDDHIST PRACTICE

HRPH 4558

Examination of a topic of instructor's choice from the history of Buddhist thought, such as meditation, ritual, or debate. Where appropriate, primary source materials will be employed in the study of the topic. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different.

CRITICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY OF BUDDHISM

HRPH 8465

The West has been interacting with Buddhism for many centuries, but it is only in the past couple of decades that a truly sophisticated (postmodernist, post colonialist) sense of intercultural hermeneutics has been applied to this history. Having a deep critical awareness of the selected, constructed nature of perceptions of "Buddhism" is essential to having any understanding of what Buddhism has meant and can mean in the West.

WORKS OF SHINRAN, I: SHORTER WRITINGS

SA 4566, SA 8453 [was HRPH 4566/8453]

Introduction to the teachings of Shinran through a study of his shorter writings. Course will utilize the English translations of Shinran's works to support the study of the original texts. HRPH 1614 Introduction to Shin Buddhist thought, and at least one year of college level Japanese language study (minimal level: ability to use character dictionary), or instructor's permission are prerequisites. Course required for ministerial aspirants.

WORKS OF SHINRAN, II: TEACHING, PRACTICE, AND REALIZATION

SA 4567, SA 8454 [was HRPH 4567/8454]

Introduction to the teachings of Shinran through a study of his major treatise. Course will focus on the doctrinal content of the text, making use of the English translation. HRPH 1614 Introduction to Shin Buddhist thought, and at least one year of college-level Japanese language study (minimal level: ability to use character dictionary), or instructor's permission is prerequisite to enrollment. Course is required for ministerial aspirants.

WORKS OF SHINRAN, III: TEACHING, PRACTICE, AND REALIZATION, CONTINUED

SA 4568 [was HRPH 4568]

Continuation of the study of Shinran's major treatise focusing on the Japanese original. SA 4567 Works of Shinran, II or equivalent as determined by instructor is prerequisite to enrollment. Course is required for ministerial aspirants.

WORKS OF SHINRAN, IV: TANNISHO

SA 4569, SA 8456 [was HRPH 4569/8456]

Introduction to the teachings of Shinran through a study of a key summary of his thought. Course will utilize the English translation to support the study of the original text. HRPH 1614 Introduction to Shin Buddhist thought, and at least one year of college-level Japanese language study (minimal level: ability to use character dictionary), or instructor's permission is prerequisite to enrollment. Course is recommended for ministerial aspirants.

RYUKOKU LECTURE SERIES
HRPH 4576
Featuring a visiting professor from Ryukoku University, these lectures focus on different topics each year. Usually offered in the spring semester. Course may be repeated for credit.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS: EFFICACIOUS BUDDHIST PRACTICES IN COMMUNITIES AND GROUPS
PS 4390
Working with social groups of any kind — temple sanghas, meditation groups, hospitals, jails — requires specialized knowledge and skills. Buddhism began as a group, the sangha, and has a 2,500-year history to draw on for efficacious practices in relation to groups. In addition, contemporary society creates additional responsibilities for any religious leader, whether identified as a minister, priest or chaplain. This course is designed to provide knowledge regarding contemporary legal requirements, working with group dynamics, basics of organizational procedures, understanding finances, and related issues. This will be set in the context of the long tradition of Buddhist practices for creating effective institutions.

EXCHANGE STUDY PROGRAM
MA 5020; UP TO 12 UNITS
For study at IBS affiliates at Ryukoku University in Kyoto, Japan, or at Dharma Drum Buddhist College in New Taipei, Taiwan; open to IBS and GTU degree program students only. In order for exchange programs to be recorded on the permanent academic record, students must be registered for this course. Registration is necessary for students who wish to receive academic credit for their work in the exchange program or who wish to be eligible for financial aid or deferment while they participate in the exchange program. (Written permission of IBS administration required.)

MAHAYANA BUDDHIST TEXTS
SA 5510 [was HR 5510]
Textual study and analysis of a Mahayana Buddhist text, selected by instructor. May be repeated for credit when text is different.

TOPICS IN BUDDHISM IN THE WEST
HRHS 5526
Specialized topic related to the introduction of Buddhist thought and practice is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different.

TOPICS IN BUDDHIST SPIRITUAL CARE
PSHR 5160
Specialized topic on the relation between pastoral counseling and Buddhist thought and practice is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different.

TOPICS IN BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY

NEW COURSE

Specialized topic on the relation between chaplaincy and Buddhist thought and practice is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different.

THEORY AND METHOD IN THE STUDY OF BUDDHISM

NEW COURSE

Examines selected example/s of different approaches to the study of the Buddhist tradition. Provides critical background to such approaches so as to allow the student to understand the presuppositions inherent in each. May focus on one or more approach for in-depth study, at instructor's discretion.

TOPICS IN BUDDHISM AND PSYCHOLOGY

NEW COURSE

Specialized topic on the relation between psychology or psychotherapy and Buddhist thought and practice is selected by instructor. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different.

ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

HR 6006

Seminar examining six contemporary books in the study of religions. Participants critique each book, and then discuss its implications for their own work.

TOPICS IN BUDDHIST STUDIES

HRPH 6016

Advanced seminar focusing on a topic of instructor's choice. Course may be repeated for credit, if topic is different.

SPECIAL READING COURSE

SRC 9999

Individual students may select a topic to explore on their own. Bibliography and study is overseen by a member of the IBS core faculty, who is responsible for evaluating work produced. Independent study may be taken only with the approval of the student's advisor and the Dean. Independent study courses are to be used only to augment the regularly offered curriculum with study required by the student's preparation for thesis. A maximum of one directed studies course per year may be taken (i.e., 3 units per 24 units of program requirements).

TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN PRESENCE

CERS 4875

New technologies are broadly reshaping human relationships—the ways in which people are or are not present with each other. In this seminar, we will engage resources available across the academic study of religion and theology to examine, critique, and productively address these impacts. In doing so, we will explore the important roles that religion scholars and theologians might play both in shaping public

understandings of technologies' impacts on presence and in shaping the technologies themselves. [Note: the seminar was part of Public Theologies of Technology and Presence, program and research initiative funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and hosted at the Institute of Buddhist Studies from 2018-2021 and has since been retired.]

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Academic Support & Student Life

Offices of the Dean and Registrar (Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment)

The Dean and Chief Academic Officer oversees the IBS's academic programs. Together with the Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment and other staff, the Dean manages the course schedule, tracks student progress through degree and certificate programs, and reviews requests for special accommodation.

Students must familiarize themselves with this catalog which contains all relevant academic polices. Students should also familiarize themselves with resources on the IBS website, including the annual academic calendar and the Registrar's page. The Registrar's page includes program checklists, handbooks, forms, and more information. Between this catalog and the Registrar's page, most student questions can be answered.

Communication and Registration

All degree and certificate program students will be issued an IBS email account. **This is the primary way that the Institute communicates with students.** Be sure to set up and check your IBS email account for important information.

All students will have access to IBS's student information system, Populi, where they can register for courses and track their progress through their program. Students will also have access to the learning management system Moodle as well as the GTU library. Once admitted into a program, students will receive important information from the Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment on how to access these resources.

Non-program (or special) students and auditors do no receive an IBS email account or library access.

Library and Research Resources

IBS students have the use of the GTU Library. The Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment will ensure degree and certificate program students have online access to the GTU library. And the GTU librarians are always available to help students with research-related questions.



The Graduate Theological Union Library was created in 1969 when each of the nine member schools contributed its collection to form a common library. The combined collections of the Flora Lamson Hewlett Library in Berkeley and the Branch Library at the San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS) in San Anselmo number more than 695,000 items. The Library also holds 188 archival collections.

The Flora Lamson Hewlett Library, acclaimed for its architectural design, provides a light and pleasant study space for students and faculty. Tables, carrels, and comfortable arm chairs offer a variety of quiet

environments for scholarly work. Art shows and informative exhibits add to the attractiveness of the study areas.

The collections of the library reflect the ecumenical spectrum of the GTU and the diversity found within Christian religious groups as well as within world-wide Christianity. Judaism is an area of emerging collection strength. Of the other great religions, Buddhism has general coverage, and Hinduism and Islam are represented within the collections as well.

Areas of the collection receiving special attention include spirituality, interfaith dialogue, women and religion, racial-ethnic minorities, inculturation, theology and the arts, and theology and the natural sciences. The Archives provide primary research materials on religion in the West and Pacific Rim with interest in ecumenism, inter-religious activity, ethnic plurality, and women in religion. The collection also includes GTU institutional records. The composite collection of the Library has not only the breadth to support the full range of theological programs, but also an impressive depth in many areas of religious studies and theology.

Free borrowing privileges at the University of California, Berkeley assure excellent support in disciplines such as philosophy, history, sociology of religion, art and art history, music, classics, literature, education, and psychology. The C. V. Starr East Asian Library, part of the UC Berkeley library system, contains one of the most comprehensive collections of materials in East Asian languages in the United States. Its combined holdings, totaling over one million volumes in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and other East Asian languages, make it one of the top two such collections.

The Green Library at Stanford University also opens the doors of its rich collection to GTU students and faculty. Even with about eight million library volumes freely at their disposal, students and faculty will require materials not owned by the libraries of the GTU or UCB. In those cases the Library will seek to borrow items from other libraries through interlibrary loan.

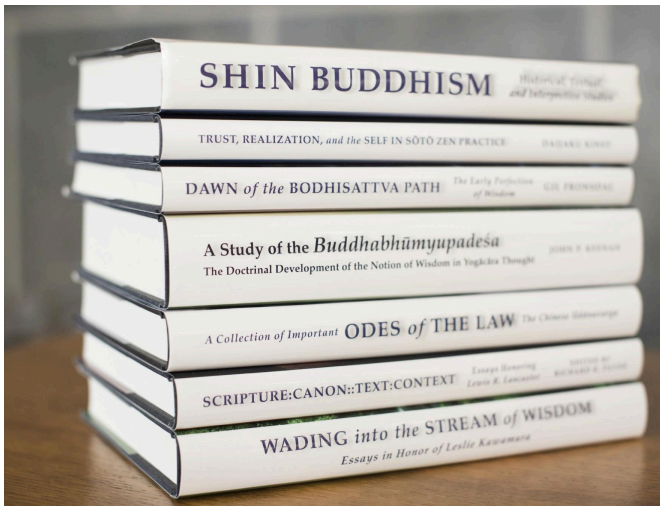
In addition to its printed, microform, and audio-visual resources, the Library offers access to a wide array of online resources. GRACE, the Library's online library catalog provides information regarding the Library's holdings. Students may access GRACE via the internet (http://grace.gtu.edu/). Bibliographic databases in religion and related disciplines, such as psychology and education, aid in the searching of journal literature. Convenient access to UCB's online library catalog speeds up the process of locating materials. GRACE, UCB's online catalog, and an organized selection of other electronic resources related to religion and theology are accessible through the Library's website (http://www.gtu.edu/library).

The Reference staff provide a number of services to students and faculty. Assistance with research and use of library materials is offered at the Reference Desk in the Library, by telephone, email, and regular mail. Reference Librarians teach workshops on such topics as the research process and the critical evaluation of resources and prepare specialized instruction for classes and informal groups. Individuals may also use the Paper and Thesis Help (PATH) service to work closely with a Reference Librarian in planning their research.

Rare Book Room and Masatoshi Nagatomi Collection

The Institute of Buddhist Studies' Rare Book Room contains an extensive collection of Buddhist materials and resources for the academic study of Buddhism and religion.

In 2008, IBS received a generous gift on behalf of the family of the late Prof. Masatoshi Nagatomi which adds greatly to our collection.



The Rare Book Room is not currently open to the public as we are in the midst of reorganization and cataloging the materials. Please check our website for updates.

Research Projects and Publications

In addition to our graduate degree and certificate programs, the Institute of Buddhist Studies produces excellent and innovative scholarship via institutional publications, faculty research, and collaborative programs and projects. Of particular note are:

Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies

A peer-reviewed and open-source journal

Pure Land Buddhist Studies Series

A book series published in partnership with the University of Hawai'i Press focusing on Pure Land Buddhist studies scholarship

Contemporary Issues in Buddhist Studies

A book series focusing on Buddhist studies broadly defined

Ten Thousand Things Blog

A blog featuring writings by current and past students, faculty, and guest scholars

Our website has many resources and information on current and past projects.

Many of our public lectures are recorded and available for viewing via the Institute's Vimeo channel.

Housing and The Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka Memorial Dormitory



The IBS Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka Memorial Dormitory has been renovated and is open for residents.

Room rates: Single Occupancy Rooms: $1250/month; Apartment: $2200/month

Please contact the Dean's office with any questions.

The Berkeley area has many housing options with rents typically ranging from $1500 to $3000 per month for a shared room, studio, or one-bedroom apartment. Students are encouraged to consult the GTU website for house resources in the Bay Area.

Transportation

The IBS is located south of the University of California, Berkeley, and is accessible from the Downtown Berkeley BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) station and several AC Transit bus lines.

See Campus Location for a detailed map of the IBS, GTU, and the downtown Berkeley area.

Academic Policies

Note: unless otherwise noted, all academic and institutional policies are applicable to both degree and certificate program students.

Academic Freedom Policy

The Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) affirms that academic freedom is essential for institutions of higher education, and that it is the policy of the IBS that both faculty and students be free to express their views on academic matters freely, though within the confines of common courtesy. In other words, the views of others are to be treated with respect, and disagreements are to be addressed with reason and information. At IBS academic freedom means that faculty and students may engage in research, scholarship, or other creative work in order to expand knowledge, to publish research findings, to teach and to learn in an atmosphere of free inquiry and free expression.

Academic freedom, however, entails certain duties and responsibilities. Faculty members are free to conduct research, write, and engage in other creative work, and then to publish or otherwise make the results of their work public. Faculty are also entitled to teach and discuss topics relevant to their faculty assignments with the goal of educating their students. In the same way, students are free to conduct research, write and engage in other creative work in pursuit of their studies. Freedom in research, writing, publishing and teaching requires a commitment to accuracy and integrity on the part of both faculty and students.

Faculty and students are members of the public, members of a learned profession, and members of an educational institution. When a faculty member or student speaks or writes as a citizen, he or she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline. Both faculty members and students should remember, however, that the public may judge the profession and institution by their utterances. Both faculty and students should always seek to be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and be clear that he or she is not speaking for the institution.

Residential and Online Unit Policies

The WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) defines an online program as one which is offered 50% or more in a remote modality. As of the 2026-2027 academic year, the following IBS Certificate and Degree programs have been approved for online or remote learning modalities:

- Certificate in Buddhist Studies
- Certificate in Shin Buddhist Studies
- Certificate in Soto Zen Buddhist Studies
- Certificate in Buddhist Chaplaincy
- Certificate in Theravada Buddhist Studies
- Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies

Please see the section on State Authorization for additional regulatory requirements.

At this time, IBS does not offer a fully online Master of Divinity degree program. Students must complete at least half of their studies in residence in Berkeley. In order to differentiate between online and in-person courses, online courses will be numbered in the 8000s in both course listings and transcripts.

Master of Divinity students may take no more than eleven (11) 8000-level courses.

State Authorization

State authorization is a regulation of the Department of Education that requires institutions offering online or distance learning programs to be authorized by each state in which the institution enrolls students (if such authorization is required by the state).

The Institute of Buddhist Studies is in the process of complying with regulations pursuant to state authorization, applying for or maintaining approval for authorization, or exempt from authorization in certain states. Whereas IBS would like to make our programs available to all students across the country, some states have enacted regulations that make it prohibitive for us to do so.

As of the 2026-2027 academic year, the Institute of Buddhist Studies is in compliance with or exempt from authorization in the following states

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Florida
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Texas
- Tennessee
- Utah
- Vermont
- Washington

Students residing outside of these states should contact our Admissions Director before applying for an online certificate program.

California's Relationship to SARA

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) were established in 2013 by higher education stakeholders including state regulators and education leaders, accreditors, the U.S. Department of Education, and institutions. SARA is intended to streamline regulations around distance education programs.

However, California is not a member of SARA, which means that California-based institutions are not eligible to participate in the reciprocity agreements and instead must comply with individual applicable state laws in which they would like to enroll students.

Continuing Registration

If a M.A.B.S. student has completed 48 units, and if a M.Div. student has completed 72 units, and has not yet completed their program, they automatically enter "continuing registration" status. The student should meet with their advisor and the Dean to create a plan to degree completion.

Transfer Credits

Courses that were not used toward a previous degree may be petitioned for transfer of credit. Transferred courses are entered on the student's transcript and become part of the permanent record.

Transfer of credit is limited to 12 units from a school outside the GTU/IBS, and up to 36 units from a school within the GTU or a IBS certificate program, at the discretion of the dean. The maximum number of transfer units is 36. Students must submit a petition to transfer units before completing their second semester of coursework. Petitions will not be reviewed until after a student has matriculated.

Courses eligible for transfer credit generally fall into three categories: 1) courses taken as a IBS special student or non-degree student; 2) courses taken above and beyond any degree requirements; 3) courses taken for a degree program which the student did not and will not complete. Whereas courses may meet the degree program unit requirement, they may or may not be used to meet any specific course requirements.

See the Stackable Curriculum section for related policies and options for students.

Stackable Curriculum Petition to Advance

The stackable curriculum gives students the choice to apply directly to a degree program or to start with a certificate program and apply those units toward a degree. Students who wish to continue their studies from a certificate program to a degree program must petition for advancement.

Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor or the certificate program director (this is usually the same person) to discern their personal or professional goals and how the M.A.B.S. or M.Div. degree might support those goals.

Students have one year from the completion of their certificate to decide to continue on in another program. After one year, students will need to formally apply to the degree program and petition to have their certificate units count toward the degree as per IBS's transfer of credit policy.

If a student wants to continue their studies at IBS, they must Petition to Advance. The petition includes a form available at the IBS website, a letter of support (email is sufficient) from the student's advisor to the Dean, and a statement by the student clearly expressing their reasons for continuing their studies. The

petition will be reviewed by the faculty Admissions Committee, and the Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment will inform the student of the Committee's decision.

Credit Units/Hours Policy

IBS follows the GTU credit units/hours policy which, in turn, follows federal guidelines regarding credit units and credit hours. Federal Policy 34 CFRR 600.2 defines a credit hour as follows:

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

2. At least an equivalent amount of work as in paragraph 1 of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Grading of Courses

For degree and certificate students, all courses for credit except the thesis must be taken for a letter grade. An overall B average is required for satisfactory completion of the program. All students in a course are expected to be judged according to the same standards of performance.

A grade is assigned by the supervising faculty member with the following numerical equivalent and interpretation:

A, 4.0	100-93%	Above average graduate-level work
A-, 3.7	92-90%	
B+, 3.3	89-87%	
B, 3.0	86-83%	Good, sound graduate-level work
B-, 2.7	82-80%	
C+, 2.3	79-77%	
C, 2.0	76-73%	Below acceptable graduate-level, assignments completed
C-, 1.7	72-70%	
D+, 1.3	69-67%	
D, 1.0	66-60%	Work unacceptably below graduate level
F, 0.0		

The following notations in the transcript are used when credit is not earned:

I Incomplete: Course work was not completed (see incomplete policy below).

IP In Progress: work assigned by the instructor extends beyond end of term. Not a substitute for Incomplete. Usually only issued when instructor has made prior arrangements with the Dean's Office for a special situation in which course work for all students must for some reason extend beyond the normal semester schedule. Will count as a zero in calculating grade point average until grade is reported by instructor.

W Withdrawal: student withdrew before end of course. Will not count towards calculating grade point average, but does count toward units attempted.

NR No Report: Instructor is unable to provide final evaluation. Written explanation from instructor will be expected. Is not considered a permanent grade, and therefore will not count either towards calculating grade point average, or units attempted.

Incomplete

Permission to take an incomplete in a course is by petition only. Petitions must be made no later than the last day of instruction. Failure to file an incomplete form by this time will result in a failing grade for the course. An Incomplete (I) grade must be made up within three weeks of the end of the current semester. Faculty must turn in the grade three weeks after the submission of the student's work. If no grade is turned in by the end of the sixth week after the semester ends, the "I" will automatically change to a grade of "F" and will not count toward graduation requirements (i.e., no credit is earned for the course, it counts as a 0 for GPA). This becomes the student's permanent grade for the course. The course can be repeated when it is offered at a later time; however, the failing grade remains on the student's transcript.

One Paper for Two Classes

Any student wishing to submit one paper in fulfillment of the writing requirements of two classes must first obtain the written consent of both instructors. Second, the paper must meet the cumulative requirements for the writing assignment required in both classes. This applies not only to such items as total page length and stylistic requirements, but also to topics and kinds of treatments. For example, if one class requires 15 pages and the other 20, the student will need to complete a 35 page paper. Similarly, if one requires examination of a particular individual's thought, and the other a report on an historical era, the final paper must both report on an historical era and examine the thought of a particular individual. Students are advised that actually fulfilling the requirements for two classes is more difficult than writing two separate papers. Failure to follow the guidelines of this policy will be considered an instance of academic dishonesty, and will be dealt with accordingly. This could result in failing both classes, being reported to the Office of the Dean, and dismissal from the program for academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism Policy

Students are expected to avoid plagiarism, which is defined as the presentation of another's ideas, methods, research or words without proper acknowledgment. This includes the use of substantial text from one's own work from another paper ("self-plagiarism"). Students are expected to be familiar with proper citation methods (Turabian's Manual of Style is required), and therefore ignorance of such

methods is not justification for plagiarism. Plagiarism is a case of academic dishonesty, and depending upon the severity will be dealt with accordingly. This may be simply advising by the student's Academic Advisor, or extend up to dismissal from the educational program. The transcript of a dismissed student will indicate dismissal and the rationale for such action.

Leave of Absence

Leaves of absence may be taken for a maximum of four academic semesters, no more than two consecutively. All outstanding debts must be paid before the approval is granted. Request for a leave of absence must be made in writing to the IBS Dean. This request must be made no later than the end of the registration period (usually the second Friday) of the semester in which the student intends to take a leave of absence; otherwise late registration fees will apply. Requests for a leave of absence will not be accepted after the "deadline for registered students to change enrollment without special permission" (see GTU Extended Calendar for specific date in each semester); after that date the student will be required to take Incompletes for courses, and finish work according to requirements for Incompletes.

Failure to file a leave of absence request by the end of the late registration period will be considered a withdrawal without notification. Leaves are for one semester only and must be renewed each semester as needed. When a student takes a Leave of Absence, they will be charged a records maintenance fee upon re-entry into the program for every semester of leave.

Withdrawal from a Degree or Certificate Program

Students who wish to leave their program of study are required to submit to the Dean a letter of explanation and request for honorable withdrawal, and to arrange with the Business Office for payment of any outstanding debts. The Institute must be informed of a student's intent to withdraw in writing to the IBS Dean by the final day for late registration of the semester in which the student intends to withdraw (see GTU Extended Calendar for specific date in each semester). Failure to request withdrawal or requests made after the final day for late registration will be considered withdrawal without notification. Petition for reinstatement may be made within two years. However, there is no presumption of a right to re-enter. All records of students who withdraw are destroyed after seven years. If a student withdraws from a program and is reinstated, they will be charged a reinstatement fee to reactivate their student record.

Failure to Register

Students who do not register or request a leave of absence before the end of the registration period will be considered to have withdrawn from the program without notification. It is the student's responsibility to inform the Institute of changes in their plans. Withdrawal without notification follows from the student's actions, and therefore the Institute is not obliged to inform the student of the change in the student's status. As with students who have notified the Institute of their intent to withdraw, petition for reinstatement may be made within two years; however, there is no presumption of a right to re-enter. All records of students who withdraw are destroyed after seven years.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all meetings of on-site classes, or participate in each weekly component of online classes. Limited exceptions may be made at the instructor's discretion for illness or family emergency, in the event of which students will be expected to demonstrate comparable participation. If the illness or family emergency is such that the student will not be able to complete the work assigned for the course, the student is directed to policies regarding **withdrawal from program** or **leave of absence.**

Academic Probation

Students whose cumulative grade point average falls below the minimum standard for graduation — 3.0 or B — are placed on academic probation until the minimum level is restored. (See **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy** below.) Students have one semester in which to restore their grade point average or risk dismissal from the program.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

The Higher Education Act of 1965 (amended in 2010 and 2020) requires that institutions of higher education establish a reasonable Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy to determine whether an otherwise eligible student is making SAP in their educational program. The SAP policy must include a qualitative and a quantitative measure of the completion of work within a maximum timeframe. Students must meet both measures to maintain their eligibility during all periods of enrollment. The SAP policy must apply to all students in the program including those who are not receiving financial aid. Initial and continuing eligibility for all sources of student funding or support, such as grant-in-aid, other GTU-sponsored merit and/or need-based awards, scholarships, or fellowships and federal aid such as federal work-study and direct loans, require GTU verification of satisfactory academic progress.

Qualitative Measure: Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) or above. If the student's GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be notified that it must be brought back up by the end of the following semester. If the overall GPA has not been raised to a 3.0 by the end of the next semester, the student will not be eligible for any additional financial aid.

Quantitative Measure: Students must make acceptable progress toward completion of the degree within the maximum time periods (excluding leaves of absence) outlined below:

M.A.B.S.:	Complete the program within 5 years.
M.Div.:	Complete the program within 6 years.

In addition to completing their degree program within the length of time outlined above, students should complete at minimum 75% percent of their attempted credits. The successful completion of a course is to obtain a B- or greater. Unsuccessful completion occurs when a student earns a C+ or below.

Full-time students are expected to enroll in at least 12 units each term or a total of 24 units in one academic year. Part-time students generally take a minimum of 6 units per term, with a minimum total of 12 units in an academic year.

Should a student need to extend their program length, and/or register in fewer course units than the minimum amount listed above, they should reach out to the Dean for approval.

Incompletes (I), Failures (F), and Withdrawals (W): An Incomplete (I) grade must be made up within three weeks of the end of the current semester. Faculty must turn in the grade three weeks after the submission of the student's work. If no grade is turned in by the end of the sixth week after the semester ends, the "I" will automatically change to a grade of "F" and will not count toward graduation requirements. Only academic courses of 3 units or more with a B- or above are counted toward the degree. Courses with a C+ or below cannot be counted towards a degree or certificate program. Students can choose to retake the course or take another course that fulfills the same requirement.

Transfer Credits: Students are eligible to transfer units into their program, ranging from 18-36 units, depending on the transfer. These units count toward the overall unit requirement and the student's pace in the program.

Failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress may result in loss of eligibility for financial aid and/or scholarships and other academic disciplinary measures.

Grievances and Disciplinary Procedures

Students found guilty of unethical, criminal or disruptive conduct while enrolled at IBS may be temporarily suspended or permanently dismissed if they do not respond satisfactorily to the counsel of the faculty and administration. Disciplinary decisions are made by the Dean in consultation with the President, Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment, the student's Academic Advisor, and the Core Faculty.

Appeal of disciplinary procedures and decisions (or grievances by a student against other students, faculty or staff for any reason) may be brought to the Dean. If the parties in the dispute are not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, further appeals may be made to the President or the Chairperson of the IBS Board of Trustees who will appoint a representative committee of Trustees, Administration, Faculty and students to hear and decide the case.

Transcripts and Retention of Student Records

Transcripts will be available upon request. For current fees for transcripts, please see the section on **Tuition and Fees**. Note that these fees are subject to change. It is the policy of the Institute of Buddhist Studies to maintain permanent records of: student names; contact information (address, telephone, email); the degree or certificate awarded and date the degree or certificate was granted; all courses and units upon which the degree or certificate was based; and the grades earned by the student in each of those courses.

Transcripts for the GTU M.A. degree may be requested via the GTU Registrar's Office.

End of Semester Course Evaluations

During the last 2-3 weeks of each semester, students will be invited to complete course evaluations which are aimed at obtaining feedback for improving teaching and learning. Course evaluations close on the last day of instruction, and this intentional length of time provides enough time for flexibility for completion while closing on the last day of instruction to avoid grade-anxiety bias.



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Tuition, Fees, & Related Policies

The cost of full-time enrollment before scholarships (12 units per semester) for the 2026-27 academic year is approximately $22,000, inclusive of tuition, fees, and books. The actual cost to the student will be determined by several factors, including whether they attend full- or part-time, live on- or off-campus, are a resident of California, and other factors. Review the information below for more details on tuition and fees.

All students who apply for a scholarship may expect to see up to a 50% reduction in tuition.

Direct Tuition and Fees for Degree and Certificate Programs

		Per course	½ time	Full time	Annual
Tuition (CA residents)	$900/unit	$2,700	$5,400	$10,800	$21,600
Tuition (non-CA) [1]	$950/unit	$2,850	$5,700	$11,400	$22,800
Technology and Library Fee [2]	$150/semester				$300

Other Enrollment Fees

Practicum courses [3]	$1350 per course
Special (non-program, for credit) student	$2,000 per course
Auditor (non-program, not credit awarded)	$900 per course
Senior Auditor (65+)	$500 per course

Other Fees

Degree & Certificate Program Application Fee	$50
Special Student & Auditor Application Fee	$25
Petition to Advance Fee [4]	$25
Reinstatement Fee [5]	$100
Program Completion Fee	$100
Thesis Binding Fee (MABS and M.Div.)	$100
Transcript Fee	$15
Diploma Replacement Fee	$15
Late Registration Fee	$100

Indirect Costs

Books and materials [6]	On average, $40 per course
Housing, on campus	$1250/month for single occupancy
Housing, off campus	Varies, see the IBS website for more information

1. As per state authorization laws, IBS's online programs need to be approved by the individual states in which our students live. In some cases, IBS may qualify for an exemption; in other cases, states charge significant fees. In order for IBS to continue serving students across the United States, non-California residents are assessed a different tuition rate.
2. IBS strives to offer an exceptional educational experience for all students, both on-site and online. This includes maintaining a robust online learning management system (LMS), both on-site and remote access to the library resources of the Graduate Theological Union, and on-site access to the libraries of UC Berkeley. All degree and certificate program students have remote access to the GTU library's extensive digital resources and support as well as borrowing privileges at dozens of academic libraries across the United States.
3. Students completing a chaplaincy training program at one of our partner institutions may petition to receive academic credit at IBS for this training. Please review the Field Education Handbook and contact the Field Education Director for more information.
4. As per IBS's stackable curriculum, students who complete a certificate program may petition to advance into a degree program. See the relevant policies for more information.
5. When a student takes a Leave of Absence (see policy), they will be charged a reinstatement fee upon re-entry into the program for every semester of leave. If a student withdraws from a program and is reinstated (see policy), they will be charged a reinstatement fee to reactivate their student record.
6. Generally speaking, IBS faculty help reduce educational costs by providing course materials and books that are either free of charge, freely available via the GTU library, or are otherwise accessible.

Funding, Scholarships, and Financial Aid

Institutional Scholarships

The Priority Deadline to apply for a scholarship is March 1 for the following academic year. All students – new and returning – must apply by this deadline to be considered for a scholarship.

Degree and certificate program students are eligible for scholarships which may reduce tuition by up to 50%.[1] To be eligible for a scholarship, a student must:

- be a US resident;
- be enrolled in a degree or certificate program (auditors and special students are not eligible for scholarships); and
- maintain satisfactory academic progress.

Scholarships are awarded annually. That is, the award is made for a full academic year (both fall and spring terms), and students must reapply for scholarships every spring. See the academic calendar for specific deadlines.

[1] Scholarships at IBS are neither need based nor merit based but based on the availability of funding which fluctuates year over year.

When applying for admissions into a degree or certificate program, applicants will have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship. Annually, returning students will be notified that they need to reapply for a scholarship for the following year.

The priority deadline for admissions and scholarship awards is March 1 for the following academic year. Students who apply for admission to a certificate program by the June deadline may not be eligible for scholarships.

Scholarships are not need-based but based on the availability of funding. Members of the Buddhist Churches of America, the Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha, and other organizations and individual donors have generously raised funds in support of IBS student scholarships which are available to all students enrolled in our degree and certificate programs.

Federal Student Aid

The Institute of Buddhist Studies does not participate in the US Department of Education's Title IV funding programs. This means that IBS students are not eligible for federal student loans.

Rather than investing in the resources necessary to secure loans, IBS has committed to raising scholarship funds to best support students' education. Please contact the admissions staff with any questions or concerns about IBS's participation in federal aid, VA benefits, or related programs.

Travel Grants

The Institute of Buddhist Studies encourages and supports students to present work at academic or scholarly conferences. A limited number of travel grants may be available to those students who are presenting at conferences. Generally, IBS awards up to $500 for domestic and $1000 for international travel, depending on availability of funding.

To be eligible, students must be (1) enrolled in any degree or certificate program, (2) maintain satisfactory academic progress, and (3) provide documentation that their paper has been accepted and that they have registered for the conference.

Please contact the Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment for the appropriate form; applications must be submitted by September 15 for conferences scheduled from September through January, and January 15 for conferences scheduled from January through August.

Takashima Scholarship Fund for the Ryukoku Student Exchange Program

The Institute of Buddhist Studies encourages and supports students who wish to study Buddhism in Japan. The Takashima Scholarship Fund has been created to support BCA ministerial aspirants participating in the Ryukoku University student exchange program. IBS may award up to $2,500 for either a single semester or $5,000 for a full academic year of study, depending on the availability of funding.

To be eligible, students must (1) be enrolled in a degree program; (2) maintain satisfactory academic progress; (3) be accepted into the exchange program; and (4) have demonstrated progress in nearing the completion of their thesis project.

Please contact the Registrar for the appropriate form; applications must be submitted by May 1 for students planning to begin the exchange program in the US fall semester and November 1 for students planning to begin the exchange program in the US spring semester.

Student's Right to Cancel and Refund Policy

The student has a right to cancel enrollment and obtain a refund of tuition. To cancel enrollment, the student must submit a written notice to the Dean and Coordinator of Student Services and Enrollment.

If the notice to cancel enrollment is received before the first day of the semester, a full refund will be issued.

If the notice to cancel enrollment is received by end of day Friday of the second week of the semester, the student will receive a full refund less the withdrawal (leave of absence) fee.

If the notice to cancel enrollment or withdrawal from a program is received by end of day Friday of the fifth week of the semester, the student will receive a refund of 50% of tuition paid.

If the notice is received after the end of the fifth week of the semester, no refund will be issued.

Deferred Payment Policy

Students wishing to request a payment plan may email Student Billing and make the request. The payment plan consists of two payments - 50% of the outstanding balance due Friday of the second week of the semester and 50% of the outstanding balance due one month later.

The term of deferral will only extend to the end of "Reading Week" as per the academic calendar for that semester. Any deferred payments must be completed prior to enrolling in a subsequent semester. Failure to complete payments in the time agreed upon will result in a block on registering for the following semester and library privileges.

Delinquent Accounts

Students whose accounts are not current may not register for the next term.

Field Education Policy

Students in the M.Div. program are required to complete six credits of Field Education courses – FE 2401 Introduction to Field Education and FE 2421 Spiritual Reflection in Context. IBS does not offer academic credit for CPE. In some cases, students who have completed 2 or more units of CPE and/or are currently enrolled in CPE may be eligible to waive their field education volunteer hours at the discretion of the Field Education Director. Consult the Field Education Handbook located on the IBS website for more information.

Other Policies

Policy of Non-Discrimination

Institute of Buddhist Studies admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age or physical disability to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age or physical disability in administration of its educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Institute of Buddhist Studies Anti-Harassment Policy

The Institute of Buddhist Studies is an equal employment opportunity employer and prohibits discrimination with respect to any terms or conditions of employment against qualified applicants or students on the basis of race, color, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), religion (all aspects of religious beliefs, observance or practice, including religious dress and grooming practices), creed, marital status, registered domestic partner status, age, national origin or ancestry, citizenship, physical or mental disability, history of disability, medical condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics), genetic information, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law or local ordinance. IBS also prohibits discrimination against a person who is perceived as having any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics. All such discrimination is unlawful.

IBS also prohibits sexual harassment and the harassment of any individual based on any of the protected classes listed above. For information about the types of conduct that constitute impermissible discrimination or harassment, please refer to Section B provided below.

Applicable law and IBS policy also protect employees and students who engage in protected activity – e.g., making a good-faith complaint of discrimination based on one of the above categories, participating or assisting in such a complaint, or opposing illegal conduct under this policy – from retaliation or reprisals based on such activity. IBS will investigate complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and will take prompt, remedial action whenever necessary. The procedure for making a complaint is provided in Section C below.

A. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY

To comply with applicable laws and policies ensuring equal educational opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, IBS will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or cognitive impairments of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is student, staff or faculty member, unless undue hardship would result.

Any student, staff, or faculty member who requires an accommodation in order to receive an equal educational opportunity should review the policy and procedures on the website, and contact the

Accessibility and Accommodations Coordinator to discuss the need for an accommodation. IBS will engage in a good-faith interactive process with the student or faculty member to identify any reasonable accommodations that could be made.

B. POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, AND ABUSIVE CONDUCT

IBS is committed to an educational environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work and study in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. In order to keep this commitment, IBS expressly prohibits harassment and discrimination of any kind based on a protected characteristic such as race, color, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), religion (all aspects of religious beliefs, observance or practice, including religious dress and grooming practices), creed, marital status, registered domestic partner status, age, national origin or ancestry, citizenship, physical or mental disability, history of disability, medical condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics), genetic information, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law or local ordinance.

Conduct need not rise to the level of a violation of law to violate this policy. A single act can violate this policy and provide grounds for discipline or other appropriate corrective actions.

This policy applies to all employees, including faculty, staff, supervisors, and non-supervisory employees, and to all non-employees (students, volunteers, interns, vendors, contractors, etc.) who engage in discrimination or harassment in the workplace. For the purpose of this policy only, as provided here in Section II.B, students, volunteers, interns, vendors, and contractors are considered employees.

Discrimination Prohibited

No employee may engage or assist in discrimination against job applicants or other employees. Discrimination occurs when individuals are treated differently because of their protected status (as defined above). Discrimination can occur during any job-related action, but often involves the following activities when taken on the basis of a protected characteristic:

- Refusal to hire, promote, or reinstate to a previously held position.
- Refusal to select for training that leads to advancement.
- Termination, demotion, or layoff.
- Paying lower wages.
- Giving less favorable terms and conditions of employment, such as less favorable shifts, work locations, assignments, tools, and equipment.
- Withholding assistance, cooperation, and/or information to applicants or employees in a manner that interferes with work performance or employment processes.

Harassment Prohibited

Harassment includes behavior that is subjectively and objectively offensive and is based on a person's protected status. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, acts that are:

- Verbal, such as name-calling, insults, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, and lewd propositioning, etc. because of a person's protected status (as defined above).
- Physical, such as assault, interfering with work, impeding or blocking movement, unwelcome or offensive touching, pinching, grabbing, patting, etc., or any physical interference with normal work or movement when directed at an individual because of their protected status (as defined above).
- Visual Insults, such as staring or leering; derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings; or the like because of their protected status (as defined above).

Harassment may arise from the conduct of other employees, supervisors, managers, or outside parties such as students, volunteers, and/or members of the public. In all cases, such harassment is prohibited by this policy. Even in cases where the harasser is not an employee, IBS will take the necessary steps to ensure that the offending behavior stops and that the employee is protected from further harassment.

Harassment does not necessarily have to occur in the workplace. Conduct occurring during after-hours activities, via social media or other online sites, may constitute harassment under this policy if there is a connection to the workplace.

It is no excuse that an employee may have appeared to consent to the offensive conduct. A recipient may not protest against the conduct for many reasons, including but not limited to avoiding the appearance of being insubordinate and/or avoiding possible retaliation. Harassment includes harassing acts focused on an individual who is not physically present at the time, or who was present but did not actually see or hear the acts. Harassment can also include harassing acts observed by an individual who was not the intended target.

Sexual Harassment Prohibited

This policy also prohibits sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is an illegal form of sex discrimination under federal and state law. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome or unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex, directed to persons of the same or opposite sex when:

- Submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Some examples of sexual harassment are:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments;
- Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, e-mail, faxes, or gestures;

- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work directed at an employee because of the employee's sex or other protected characteristic;
- Use of social media to conduct sexual advances and or harassment;
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests in order keep one's job or avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors;
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report unlawful harassment.

Sexually harassing conduct does not need to be motivated by sexual desire to be considered unlawful.

Abusive Conduct Prohibited

IBS does not tolerate abusive conduct. Abusive conduct is the conduct of an employer or employee in the workplace, with malice (an intent to harm), that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to an employer's legitimate business interests.

Abusive conduct may include:

- Repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults and epithets;
- Verbal or physical conduct that a reasonable person would find threatening, intimidating, or humiliating;
- The gratuitous sabotage or undermining of a person's work performance.

Employees who violate the Policy Against Harassment, Discrimination, and Abusive Conduct are subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion, and the possibility of criminal charges.

C. COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Anyone who believes that they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in violation of the law or IBS policy should promptly report the facts of the incident or incidents and the names of the individuals involved to their supervisor, any other supervisor, or in the alternative, to the President or designated Human Resources Representative. Upon receipt of a complaint, IBS will undertake a fair, timely, and thorough investigation of the harassment allegations. IBS will not assign someone named in a complaint to investigate the complaint. All complaints and investigations will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. However, IBS may disclose information on a "need to know" basis as necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation, to support the imposition of disciplinary action, or to comply with a court order.

Upon completing the investigation, the President or designated Human Resources Representative will inform the complainant of the findings in a timely manner, and where appropriate, any remedial actions to be taken. However, specific disciplinary actions against an employee shall remain confidential. If IBS determines that harassment has occurred, effective remedial action will be taken in accordance to the circumstances involved. Any employee determined by IBS to be responsible for harassment, discrimination, or abusive conduct will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination or expulsion.

1) POLICY AGAINST RETALIATION

Employees and students will not be retaliated against for filing a complaint and/or assisting in a complaint or investigation process in good faith. Further, we will not tolerate or permit retaliation by supervisors or co-workers against any complainant or anyone assisting in a harassment investigation. Any employee who intentionally makes a false complaint of discrimination or harassment and any employee who knowingly provides false, inaccurate, or incomplete information during any such investigation shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary or corrective action, including termination.

2) RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS

A "supervisor" means any individual having the authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or the responsibility to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend that action.

Supervisors shall:

- Take all complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation seriously, and report all reported or suspected misconduct to the President or designated Human Resources Representative. Do not make judgments as to whether the conduct reported is minor or severe, or as to the validity of the complaint.
- Assure the complainant or the witness that someone will follow up promptly in accordance with this policy. Inform the complainant that his or her complaint cannot be held in complete confidence, but will only be shared with those who need to know so that IBS can conduct a thorough investigation and take appropriate action as necessary.
- Immediately intervene when any inappropriate conduct is observed and take measures to protect employees from further inappropriate conduct.

3) RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

All employees are expected to assume responsibility for maintaining a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and abusive conduct. This includes refraining from conduct as outlined by this policy.

Employees are strongly encouraged to promptly report conduct that they observe or learn about that may violate this policy so that IBS has an opportunity to address and resolve any concerns. Employees are also encouraged to support their peers in reporting their concerns.

Employees shall fully cooperate in investigations when required and respect the privacy of individuals who are involved, or who employees believe may be involved in a complaint or investigation. Employees have the right to discuss concerns about their work environment or working conditions among their peers. However, employees should avoid participation in gossip or malicious rumors that could unnecessarily cause harm to those involved.

Mandatory Drug-Free Notification

The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226) requires all schools receiving federal funding of any kind (i.e. CWSP, Perkins Loans) to notify all students of the following on an annual basis:

1. The Institute of Buddhist Studies requires its campus be drug free. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance while at IBS is prohibited. Abuse of alcohol on the IBS campus is also not allowed. Violation of this policy will be considered cause for dismissal of a student.

2. IBS is required to impose sanctions, up to and including dismissal from all programs of study, of any student engaged in the abuse of alcohol (including underage drinking), or the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs while on the IBS premises. In addition, any student involved in such illegal activity is subject to legal sanctions under local, State and Federal law. Information regarding specific penalties is available from the GTU Business Office.

3. The health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and the abuse of alcohol are many. Detailed information concerning the known health hazards resulting from the abuse of drugs or alcohol may be obtained from your physician, from UCB's Health Service facility or from the GTU Business Office.

4. Several drug and alcohol counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation programs are available to you. Should you or someone you know need help in dealing with a drug or alcohol dependency problem, you may call Summit Medical Center's Chemical Dependency Department at 510/652-7000; initial consultation is free. The consultation includes assessment of the problem and the recommendation of a treatment plan. In addition, you may call 510/839-8900 for referral to an Alcoholics Anonymous program near you or 510/839-8900 for referral to a Narcotics Anonymous program near you.

Notice Concerning Transferability of Credits

The transferability of credits you earn at the Institute of Buddhist Studies is at the complete discretion of an institution to which you may seek to transfer. Acceptance of the degree (M.A.B.S., M.Div.), or certificate you earn is also at the complete discretion of the institution to which you may seek to transfer, or apply for certification, ordination, or other recognition. If the credits, degree or certification you earn at this institution are not accepted at the institution to which you seek to transfer, you may be required to repeat some or all of your coursework at that institution. For this reason you should make certain that your attendance at this institution will meet your educational goals. This may include contacting an institution to which you may seek to transfer after attending the Institute of Buddhist Studies to determine if your credits, degree or certification will transfer.

Academic Calendar 2026-27

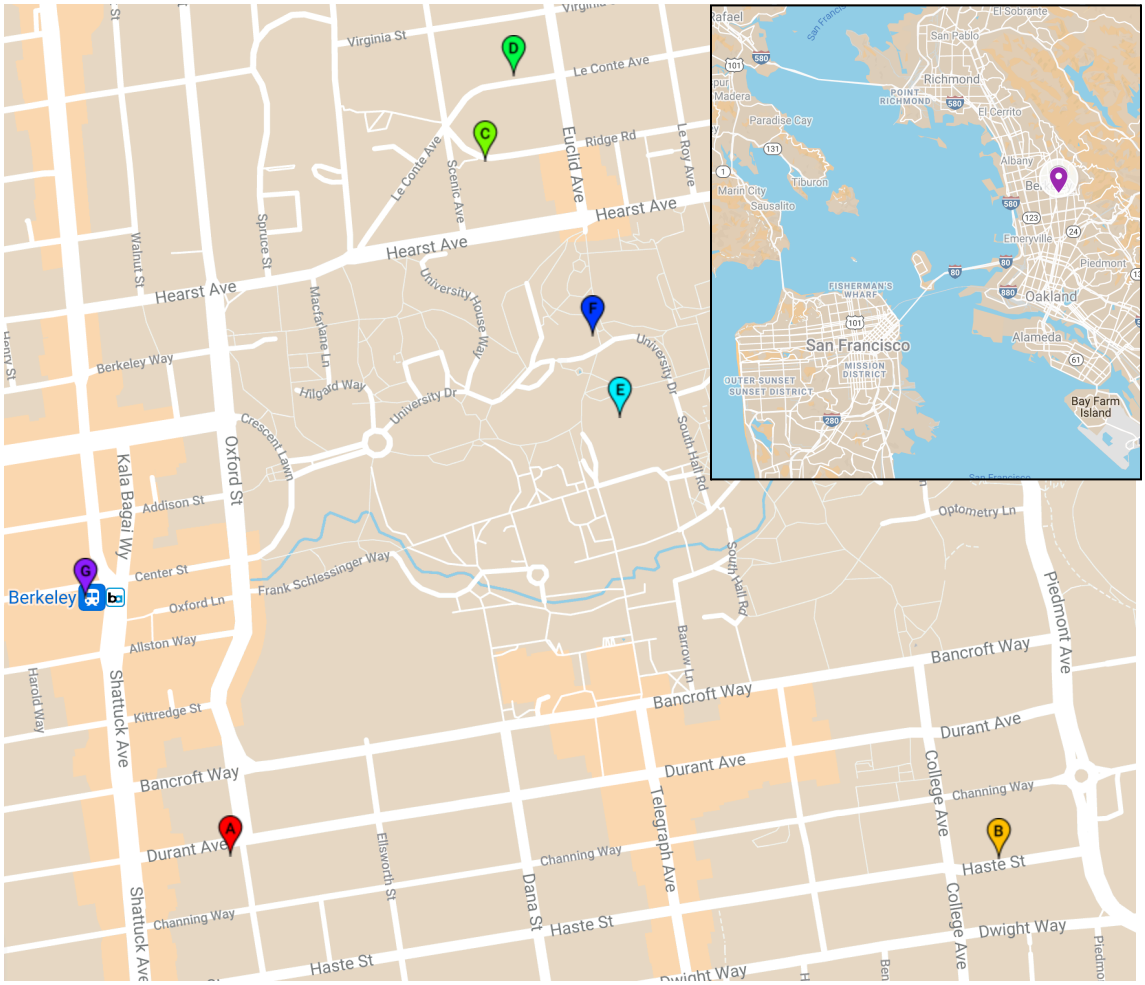
IBS follows the GTU Extended Calendar for all dates, deadlines, and most holidays. Students interested in cross-registering in classes at the University of California, Berkeley, should be advised that the UC semester starts up to two weeks before the IBS/GTU semester.

See the comprehensive IBS calendar, including special events, on the website.

Fall Semester, September 8 through December 18, 2026	
Fall certificate program applications deadline	June 1
Deadline to submit petition to advance for fall semester	June 1
Special student and auditor applications deadline	August 3
IBS new and returning student orientation	August 22
UCB instruction begins	August 26
GTU orientation period, see GTU website for details	August 24-September 4
New student registration/returning student late registration period	August 24-September 4
Labor Day (administrative offices closed, no classes)	September 7
IBS/GTU instruction begins	September 8
Add/drop period; students may add/drop courses without charge	September 7-20
Deadline to pay fall 2026 tuition	September 18
Thesis defense deadline, to avoid fall 2026 registration and tuition charge	September 18
Thesis filing deadline, for fall 2026 graduation	October 1
Reading week (no classes)	October 26-30
Spring 2027 degree and certificate programs application deadline	November 1
Deadline to submit petition to advance for spring semester	November 1
Spring 2027 scholarship application deadline	November 1
Returning student registration for Spring 2027	November 9-20
Thanksgiving Holiday (administrative offices closed, no classes)	November 26-27
Jodo-e, Rohatsu, Bodhi Day, Buddha's Enlightenment Day	December 8
UCB instruction ends	December 18
IBS/GTU semester ends; deadline to petition for incomplete	December 18
IBS Winter Holiday (administrative offices closed)	December 25-January 1
Deadline to make up an incomplete	January 8
Deadline for faculty to submit grades for fall 2026	January 8

Spring Semester, February 1 through May 21, 2027	
Returning student registration for Spring 2026	November 9-20, 20264
Special student and auditor applications deadline	January 8
Shinran Shonin Memorial Day, observed (administrative offices closed)	January 15
Martin Luther King Day (administrative offices closed)	January 18
UCB instruction begins	January 19
New student registration/returning student late registration period	January 18-29
IBS/GTU instruction begins	February 1
Add/drop period; students may add/drop courses without charge	February 1-February 12
Deadline to pay spring 2027 tuition	February 12
Thesis defense deadline, to avoid spring 2027 registration and tuition charge	February 12
Presidents Day (administrative offices closed)	February 15
Deadline for degree program applications for AY2027-28	March 1
Reading week/spring break (no classes)	March 22-26
Good Friday (administrative offices closed, no classes)	March 26
Thesis filing deadline, for spring 2027 graduation	April 1
Returning student registration for Fall 2027	April 5-16
UCB instruction ends	May 14
GTU Commencement	TBD
IBS/GTU semester ends; deadline to petition for incomplete	May 21
IBS Commencement	TBD
Memorial Day (administrative offices closed)	May 31
Certificate programs application deadline for fall 2027	June 1
Deadline to submit petition to advance	June 1
Deadline to make up an incomplete	June 11
Deadline for faculty to submit grades for spring 2027	June 11
Juneteenth (administrative offices closed)	June 18
Independence Day (administrative offices closed)	July 4

Campus Location



The Institute of Buddhist Studies is located in downtown Berkeley, a block south of the University of California. On-site classes are held in the Jodo Shinshu Center or on the campuses of other GTU member schools on "Holy Hill," north of the University.

A. Institute of Buddhist Studies, faculty and administrative offices, classrooms, 2140 Durant Avenue
B. The Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka Memorial Dormitory
C. Graduate Theological Union, Dean's Office and Library, 2400 Ridge Road
D. GTU Offices at LeConte Avenue have been relocated to the Ridge Road/Library building
E. Doe Memorial Library (UC Berkeley main library, circulation desk)
F. UC Berkeley CV Starr East Asian Library
G. Downtown Berkeley BART Station, intersection of Shattuck Avenue and Center Street

INSTITUTE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES



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For more information, visit us on the web at
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