

# Strategic Plan for the Center for Buddhist Studies

College of Humanities, The University of Arizona

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## Mission and Vision

The Center for Buddhist Studies at the University of Arizona (UACBS), founded in 2017, is a research, education, and outreach institute in the College of Humanities (COH) that organizes academic studies, educational programs, and community events to enhance the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of individuals and the community. Taking a humanistic approach, the Center collaborates with departments and communities within and outside the University of Arizona to promote academic research on the Buddhist tradition and its related religious, intellectual, social, cultural, and artistic aspects in all geographical regions in the world. The Center aims to become recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally as a leader in the field and an innovator of new research, education and outreach activities.

## Strategic Priorities and Action Plans

To align itself with the COH and University Strategic Plans, UACBS has identified the following strategic priorities and action plans through consultation with its faculty members and advisory board members, and approved by the College of Humanities.

### Research:

- Strengthen current research projects such as the Hangzhou Buddhist Culture (HBC), Buddhist Geographic Information System (BGIS), Regional Religious System (RRS), Buddhist Canon Studies, and Collection of Rare Buddhist Sources by developing a content management system and other digital platforms to disseminate results and to mobilize knowledge;
- In line with UArizona Strategic Plan Pillar II, address human challenges facing society and advance human potential in the Fourth Industrial Revolution through promoting creative inquiry and innovative scholarship in areas such as tradition and culture, mental and spiritual health, human wellbeing, digital humanities, and digital society and technology;
- Working with the Center's stakeholders in the university, community, and the region, continue to advance and leverage the existing research strength in Chinese Buddhist Studies and expand to research areas such as Japanese and Korean Buddhism and Indo-Tibetan traditions;
- Share and disseminate research results with the broader community by organizing conferences and symposia, lectures, workshops, publications, performances, and other presentations;
- Broaden existing cross-disciplinary engagement with all units within and outside the COH to involve more community members in the Center's research activities and

projects; increase the number of affiliated faculty; identify common research interests and themes that are consistent with the COH and university strategic plans in order to build teams to pursue larger research grants and funding opportunities collaboratively.

#### Education:

- Help COH and UArizona academic units such as the Department of East Asian Studies and the Department of Classics and Religious Studies to develop a sustainable and high-quality Buddhist studies curriculum at the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- For undergraduates, promote the Buddhist minor program and the value of compassion and cultural/multilingual competence as a shared Wildcat experience; help to increase course offerings in a newly designed General Education program through 100% engagement with students;
- Partner with UArizona Global and facilitate student participation in study-abroad programs and micro-campus initiatives to educate students as global citizens;
- At the graduate level, assist academic units to enhance students' advanced linguistic abilities by developing special language courses for Buddhist studies such as Tibetan, Sanskrit, and advanced Japanese for Buddhist studies to facilitate thesis writing and job placement;
- For outreach education, offer community courses and certificate programs such as Humanistic Buddhism, Buddhist English, Buddhist Translation, Buddhist Leadership, and Buddhist Wellbeing in collaboration with units such as the Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine, the Center for Compassion Studies, the Center for English as a Second Language, and the National Center for Interpretation.

#### Outreach:

- Emphasize and communicate the public benefits of Buddhist studies to society; increase the Center's visibility locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally; build the Center's identity as one of the humanities destinations in the Sonoran desert to foster a unique Wildcat experience as articulated in UA Strategic Plan Pillar I;
- Increase community involvement in Center activities through volunteer programs, lecture series, fellowship and visiting scholars programs, and community events such as meditation, mindful walking, environmental initiatives, and recycling education to enhance the Wildcat experience;
- Promote Buddhist studies in underrepresented populations such as Hispanic, African American, and Native American tribal communities; translate research and educational materials into related languages;
- In response to UArizona's new identity as a Hispanic Serving Institution, utilize the rich Hispanic resources on campus as a unique Arizona advantage to develop Buddhist studies programs in Spanish.

### **Operational Effectiveness and Sustainable Funding Strategies**

The Center is working with the COH Dean's office, faculty, its advisory board, and other units to ensure its operational effectiveness and sustainability with institutional excellence as stated in UArizona Strategic Plan Pillar V in the following areas:

- Identify staffing needs and skills requirement to advance strategic priorities and enhance training and resource building for staff working efficiencies;
- Develop communication and marketing strategies to disseminate Center activities, recent successes, and future events through multiple media in multiple languages;
- Identify and actively pursue grants and other funding opportunities to make the Center self-sustainable;
- Reintroduce and communicate the Center's mission and strategic priorities to our stakeholders and all its constituents more effectively.

Building on our previous success in community fundraising, we will continue to launch fundraising campaigns by increasing the donor base. We intend to develop the following funding strategies and action plans:

- Develop sustainable funding strategies by securing funds that will eventually replace the current support from the COH and University;
- Align the Center's needs with the COH and University fundraising priorities; work with the Office of Research Discovery and Innovation, COH Dean's office, and the UA Foundation to match Center research and outreach themes with existing and potential funding sources regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- Work closely with the COH Dean's Office and Development Office to raise funds for the Center's office space in the planned Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine.
- Identify key donors' expectations and cultivate existing and new donor relationships.
- Raise funds to create a research grant program for UA faculty and students if their research has a significant dimension in Buddhist Studies.
- Continue to support the existing fellowship programs, lecture series, and awards.

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