
INSTITUTE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES

Seminary & Graduate School Established 1949



Academic Program Review

2018

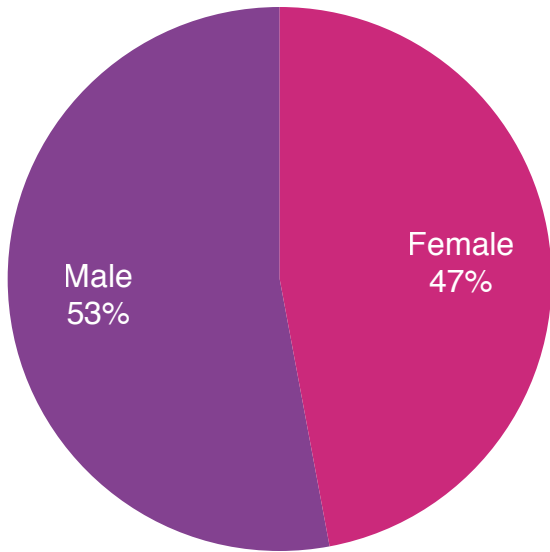
Institute of Buddhist Studies: At a Glance

Educational Programs: 3 degree and 5 certificate programs

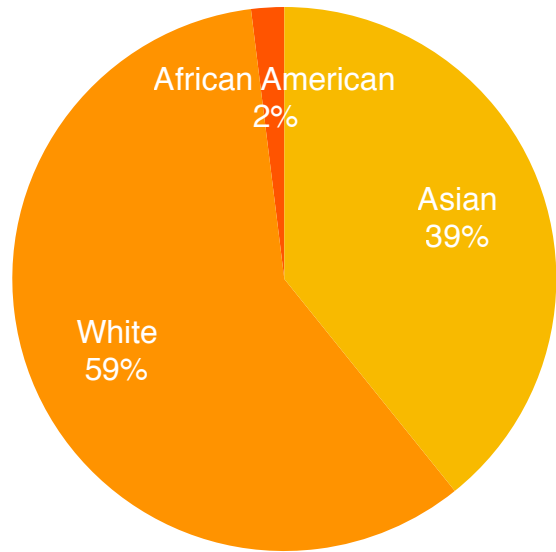
Total Students, 2013-2018: 98

Total Faculty: 17

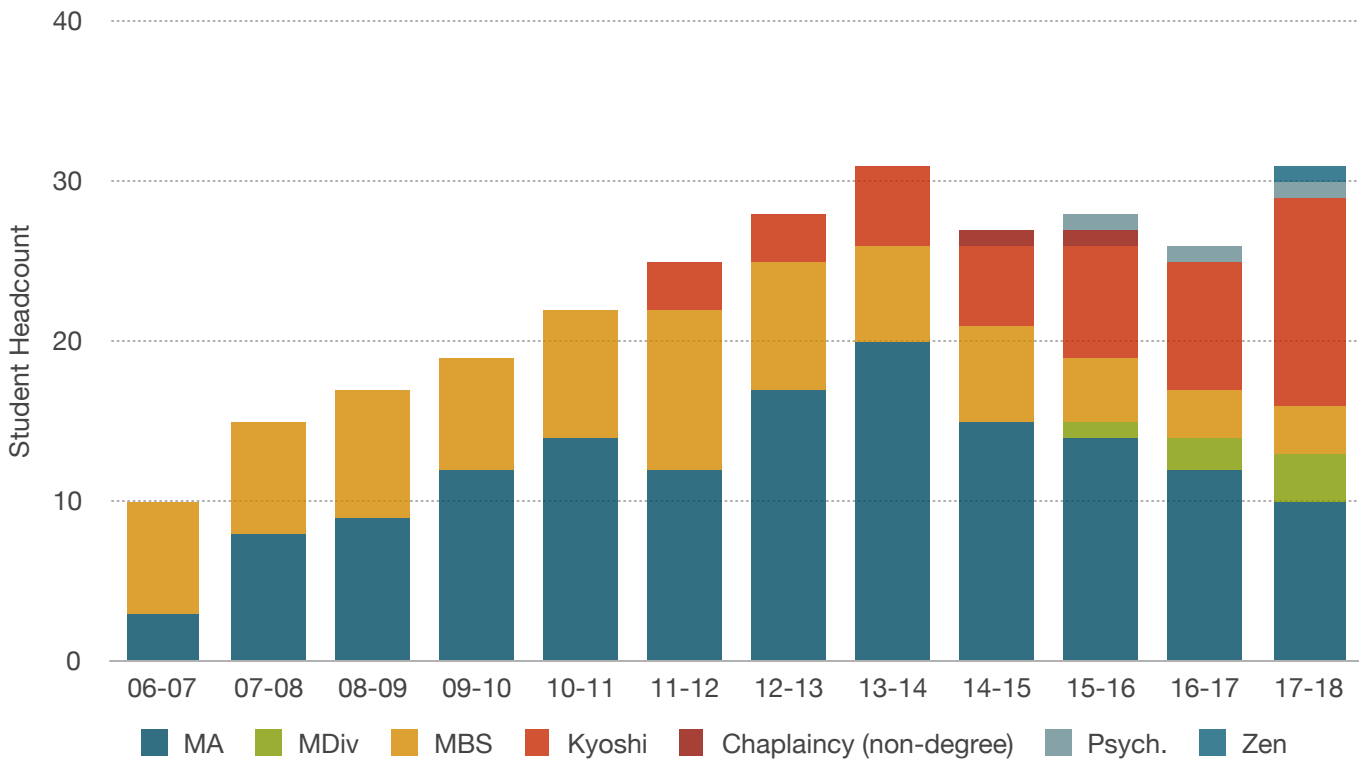
Student Gender



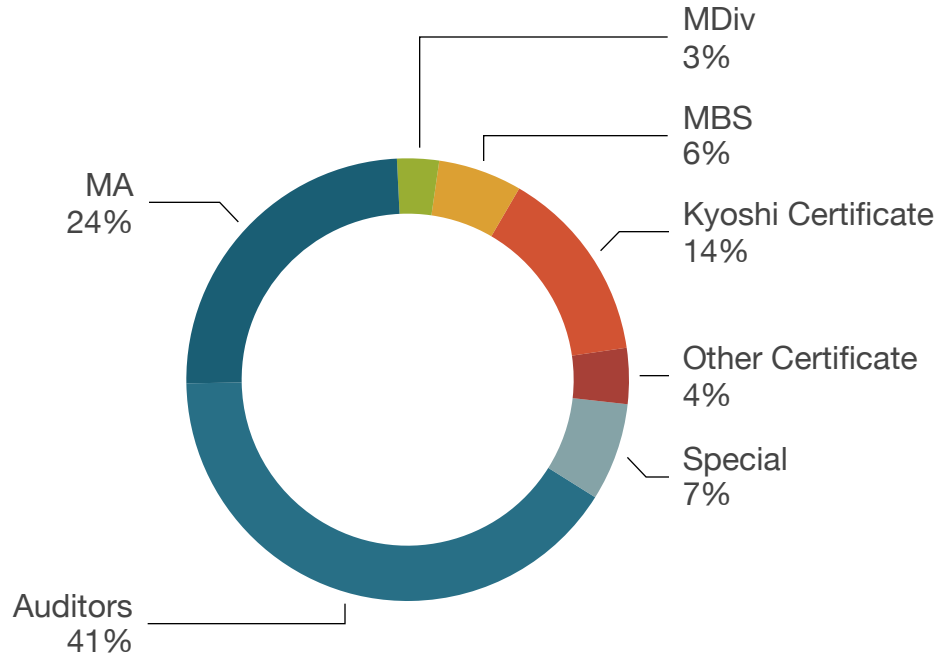
Student Ethnicity



Enrollment by program, AY2006-07 through AY2017-18



Total Students by Degree or Certificate, 2013-2018



Total Students by Program Emphasis, 2013-2018

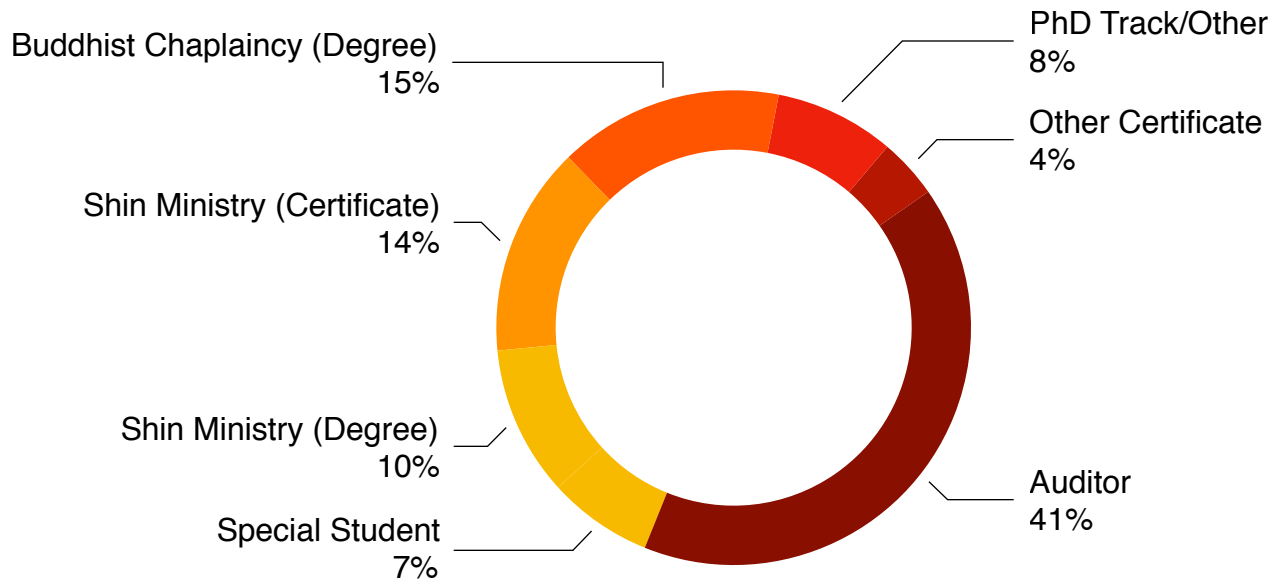


Table of Contents

Introduction.....	7
Overview.....	8
About the Institute of Buddhist Studies	9
Mission and vision statements.....	10
Faculty, Research, and Publication	11
Institutional Contexts	15
Berkeley and the Bay Area.....	16
Seminary and Graduate Education in the US	17
Buddhist Higher Education and Peer Schools.....	18
The GTU MA and Changing Context	23
Discussion	24
Educational Effectiveness & Student Demographics	25
Educational effectiveness	26
Student Demographics and Enrollment	29
Enrollment History	31
Discussion	31
Learning Objectives.....	33
Overview.....	34
Institutional Learning Outcomes	34
Program Learning Outcomes	35
Discussion	38
Student Support	39
Overview.....	40
Student Surveys.....	41
Discussion	43
Online Education	44
Overview.....	45
Current Online Offerings.....	46
Current Proposals for Online Certificate Program.....	47
Discussion	48
Summary & Conclusions	49
Enrollment: increasing FTE and diversity	50

Outcomes and benchmarks50
Student support services51
Online and distance education.....51
Appendix A: Student Demographics52
Appendix B: Student Support Survey Results55
Appendix C: Online Certificate Proposal60

Figures and Tables

Table 1: Buddhist Studies, Master of Divinity, and/or Chaplaincy Programs at Peer Institutions	19
Table 2: MBS Graduation Rates	26
Table 3: MBS Average Time to Degree.....	27
Table 4: MBS Placements Rates.....	27
Table 5: MDiv Graduation Rates	27
Table 6: Graduates with Concurrent Certificates.....	28
Table 7: Certificate Completion Rates	28
Figure 1: Student Gender	29
Figure 2: Student Ethnicity.....	29
Figure 3: Average Age at Entry	29
Table 8: Student Demographics AY2013-14 through AY2017-18	30
Table 9: Enrollment History AY2006-07 - AY2017-18 by headcount.....	30
Figure 4: Gender by Program	32
Figure 5: Ethnicity by Program.....	32
Figure 6: Responses to Workshop Choices.....	42
Figure 7: Requests for Information	45
Table 10: Student Demographic Raw Data.....	52
Table 11: Student Survey Responses, Strengths	55
Table 12: Student Survey Responses, Weaknesses.....	57
Table 13: Responses to Student Workshop Survey	59

Introduction



In this section:

Overview	8
About the Institute of Buddhist Studies	9
Mission and vision statements.....	10
Faculty, Research, and Publication	11
Faculty	11
Research Centers and Institutional Collaboration.....	12
Publications	13
Library Resources	14

Overview

The purpose of this report is to review and assess the Institute of Buddhist Studies' educational programs and student success over the past five academic years, and identify points of strengths and areas for improvement. In AY2015-16, the faculty reviewed and updated the degree requirements and program learning outcomes of IBS's two degree programs (MBS and MDiv), and subsequently the Institute completed its first seeking accreditation site visit for WSCUC. These two reviews serve as the foundation for the present report which seeks to build on data previously collected and offer suggestions for improvement.

The report will be shared with a team of outside peer reviewers who will offer suggestions for improvement and general comments. The completed report will then be presented to the faculty who will be responsible for offering specific recommendations on how to improve IBS's educational programs as well as targets for said goals which will then be presented to the IBS Board of Trustees. The Board will be responsible for supporting the work of the faculty, and approving any necessary policy changes and budget requests, where appropriate. Decisions based on this report will go into effect beginning with the 2019-20 academic year.

Data for this report was collected during spring 2018 and covers students enrolled in IBS programs between academic years 2013-14 and 2017-18. Owing to changes in student information systems at both the IBS and GTU, and owing to the small population of students covered by this report, some findings presented can only be treated as suggestive of larger trends.

The report is divided into the following sections:

1. IBS's institutional contexts, including both our location in the San Francisco Bay Area and information on peer schools and programs;
2. Educational effectiveness, student demographic, and enrollment data;
3. A review of institutional and program learning outcomes;
4. Student support services;
5. Opportunities for online learning; and
6. Appendices and other supplemental information.

Additional reports and supplemental materials are available on the [IBS website](#).¹

¹ See: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/2018ProgReview/>

About the Institute of Buddhist Studies

The Institute of Buddhist Studies is a Buddhist seminary and graduate school, founded by the members of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and incorporated in 1966. The original mission of IBS was the education of American-born ministerial aspirants seeking ordination in the Nishi Hongwanji school of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism. The educational model has always been to ground this lineage-specific education within the broader context of the Buddhist tradition as a whole.

IBS's programs were further expanded by becoming an affiliate of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in 1985. This affiliation has allowed our students to engage in inter-religious conversation with non-Buddhists and further strengthened the quality of our academic programs and educational model. For a time in the 1990s, IBS's administrative offices were located outside of Berkeley resulting in a decline in enrollment. Following the opening of the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC) in 2007, IBS relocated back to Berkeley, expanded its programs, initiated a program in Buddhist chaplaincy, and saw enrollment grow substantially (see Table 9, page 37).

Currently, IBS offers three degree programs and five certificate programs. The five certificate programs can be completed either as stand-alone programs or concurrently within a degree program. Of its degree programs, one is the MA program housed at the GTU. Independent of our affiliation with GTU, IBS also offers:

- Master in Buddhist Studies (MBS)
- Master of Divinity (MDiv)
- Kyōshi Certificate Program
- Certificate in Buddhist Chaplaincy
- Certificate in Buddhism and Contemporary Psychology
- Certificate in Theravada Buddhist Studies
- Certificate in Sōtō Zen Buddhist Studies



Mission and vision statements

The mission of IBS is:

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

The vision of IBS is:

IBS will be a center for graduate-level study of Buddhism in the United States, featuring a vision of specialization that is based upon a broad foundation. Grounded in the entirety of the Buddhist tradition, it will offer specialized study of Pure Land and contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies, as well as other Buddhist traditions and perspectives.

As the leading institution for the study of Shin Buddhism in the English-speaking world, IBS will offer an integrated educational environment that will enable its students to become successful Jōdo Shinshū ministers, Buddhist chaplains, and scholars. IBS will nurture its graduates to be persons who are deeply engaged in meeting a wide range of challenges raised in contemporary society.

In order to accomplish its goals and embrace its vision fully, IBS will seek expansion in a range of areas that will include growth in student enrollment and diversity of the student body, growth and diversity of faculty and academic disciplines, attainment of full academic accreditation, greater alliances with educational, religious and service institutions, and fiscal growth and sustainability. A longer-term vision may include the establishment of satellite campuses in other locales and the development of a doctoral program.

The faculty understands² the IBS to be providing Buddhist education in a Western higher education context, blending the unique approach to Buddhist studies and practice from within the tradition with the academic standards and insights of the Western religious studies tradition. Whereas our roots in the Jōdo Shinshū community remain of central importance, contextualizing this work within the grand sweep of Buddhist history has become increasingly important both financially (through increased and diverse student enrollment) and pedagogically (through opportunities for intra-Buddhist dialogue and cooperative learning).

² In spring 2018, IBS faculty participated in a series of pedagogy workshops, the first of which was devoted to an open discussion on IBS's mission, educational context, and what the faculty understand as Buddhist higher education both generally and within our specific institution.

Faculty, Research, and Publication

The Institute's educational programs are made possible by the work of its faculty. Collectively known as the Faculty Assembly, this body includes Core Faculty members (full time faculty members of IBS who advise students and may serve on the GTU doctoral faculty), Research Fellows, and adjunct faculty. Faculty and/or faculty committees are responsible for various research and publication projects, institutional collaborations, and public events, symposia, and conferences.

Collectively, these projects mark IBS as a graduate and research center, support faculty research and student learning, represent opportunities for professional development, and are a draw for visiting scholars, faculty, and students.

Faculty

Core Faculty:

- Rev. Daijaku Judith Kinst, Buddhism and Psychology
- Rev. David Matsumoto, Contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies
- Scott A. Mitchell, Buddhism in the West, Buddhist Modernity, Pure Land Buddhism
- Richard K. Payne, Japanese Buddhist Studies, ritual studies
- Rev. Seigen Haruo Yamaoka, Shin Buddhist Thought, Buddhist Ministry



Research Fellows:

- Gil Fronsdal, Buddhist Chaplaincy Training Program, Theravada Buddhist Studies
- Natalie Quli, South Asian Buddhism

Adjunct Faculty:

- Galen Amstutz, Shin Buddhist Tradition
- Paula Arai, Zen Buddhism, Buddhism and Women
- Gordon Bermant, Buddhism and Psychology
- Harry Bridge, Buddhist Ritual and Liturgy
- Bruno Galasek-Hul, Buddhism, Indology
- Diana Clark, Theravada Buddhism
- Lisa Grumbach, Buddhist Studies and Japanese Religion
- Kiyonobu Kuwahara, Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Studies
- Taigen Leighton, Zen Buddhism
- Charlie Pokorny, Buddhist Philosophy

Research Centers and Institutional Collaboration

Originally established in 1995, the Center for Contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies (CCSBS) coordinates Shin Buddhist research projects housed at the Institute as well as manages institutional alliances which support the Center's work.³

The Center's work includes publications and public events, drawing in scholars from other universities both in the US and Japan. For example, coordinated primarily through Ryukoku University's Center for Global Buddhist Culture, David Matsumoto has been working with a team of international scholars on a theological "dialogue" bringing into conversation Shin Buddhist, Christian, and Islamic scholars.

Projects leading toward publication include three working groups focused on the Larger Pure Land Sutra as read through Shinran; a research project focused on Shinran and continental philosophy headed by Dennis Hirota (Ryukoku University *emeritus*); and a translation working group focused on the Shin Buddhist classic *Tannisho* headed by Mark Blum (UC Berkeley). Each of these projects has included working groups hosted by the Institute, and IBS faculty and students have participated in the work.

Also coordinated through the CCSBS is an annual lecture by a visiting Ryukoku University professor. These public lectures are a draw not only for students and local scholars but for local Buddhist leaders and ministers looking for opportunities for continuing education. Moreover, these lectures have been paired with either full-semester courses or special reading courses giving our students the opportunity to earn course credit for participating in the lecture series.

The IBS has long had an institutional relationship with Ryukoku University, Kyoto, which has helped to fund and create programs at IBS. Other institutional relationships are either in development or under consideration. A less formal, but no less important, relationship exists between the International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies (IASBS) and IBS. The IASBS is the largest professional society devoted to the study of Pure Land Buddhism, publishes an annual journal, hosts a biennial international conference, and is a related scholarly organization of the American Academy of Religion where it hosts an annual symposium. IBS faculty are directly involved in the work of the IASBS through service on committees or coordinating the conferences and symposia as well as production of the Association's journal, *The Pure Land*. The 2015 biennial meeting was hosted by IBS, and both faculty and students had opportunities to present their work, representing a significant opportunity for professional development.

Beginning in 2011, and revived in 2017, IBS has hosted an annual Graduate Student Symposium. The goal of the event has been to provide professional development opportunities to IBS students both through presenting their work as well as networking opportunities. The symposia are open to graduate students at other institutions, and the event is capped by a keynote address by a senior scholar. Beginning in 2017, funds that had supported an annual Numata Lecture have been used to support the keynote speakers, and a proposal is underway to formalize the use of the Numata funds for the symposium generally. A similar proposal is in the works to develop another student-centered annual event focused on ministry and chaplaincy.

³ The Center is, technically, funded by a small endowment.

Publications

IBS produces a number of scholarly publications; the centerpiece of these being the *Pacific World Journal*.

The *Pacific World* has existed in one form or another since the 1920s. Originally established by Yehan Numata, it was revived in the 1980s as IBS's academic journal. The Numata Foundation and/or BDK America has generously funded the publication, allowing it to be freely distributed. Currently an annual publication, the journal is listed on ATLA, and since 2016 has moved to an entirely online format, and, beginning with the 2019 issue, has moved to a blind peer review format. The publication is overseen by a faculty-level publications committee, and Richard Payne serves as the editorial chair. Faculty are encouraged to submit articles to the journal, the journal regularly publishes scholarly work that has been presented at IBS conferences, and students have also had their work published including both essays culled from the first few years of the graduate student symposium as well as book reviews. To facilitate open access to the journal, all of the back issues of *Pacific World* from its reinstatement with the 1982 issue were scanned, corrected and made available online.

Along with the online archive of the Institute's *Pacific World*, the IBS has actively sought to provide an online archive of professional journals in Buddhist studies that have gone out of print. Currently these include:

- [The Buddhist Forum](#)
- [The Journal of Buddhist Literature](#)
- [Studies in Central and East Asian Religions](#)

IBS has also historically published its own titles in a variety of forms, from essays and reports related to the CCSBS published as PDFs on its website to full monographs. More recently, IBS published the Issues in Contemporary Buddhist Studies series. Titles in this series include:

- *Pure Land Buddhism in China: A Doctrinal History*, by Mochizuki Shinkō, two vols., edited by Richard K. Payne and Natalie E.F. Quli (2016)
- *Wading into the Stream of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Leslie Kawamura*, edited by Sarah F. Haynes and Michelle J. Sorensen (2013)
- *A Collection of Important Odes of the Law: The Chinese Udānavarga*, by Charles Willemen (2013)
- *Shin Buddhist Education: a new perspective*, by Seigen H. Yamaoka (2017)



Titles include not only work by IBS faculty but edited volumes and *estschriften* which are becoming increasingly difficult to publish via traditional academic presses. The series was, for a time, underwritten by the Japan Fund and BDK America. Both of these funds have recently become unreliable and the future of the series is uncertain.

A second book series, Pure Land Buddhist Studies, is jointly published by the University of Hawai'i Press and IBS. The series publishes scholarly works on all aspects of the Pure Land Buddhist tradition. Historically this includes studies of the origins of the tradition in India, its transmission into a variety of religious cultures, and its continuity into the present. A committee of scholars oversees the project and approves proposals that are sent to peer reviewers. The series was supported by the FBA Legacy Fund. Recent titles in the series include:

- *Genshin's Ōjōyōshū and the Construction of Pure Land Discourse in Heian Japan*, by Robert F. Rhodes (2017)
- *Pure Land, Real World: Modern Buddhism, Japanese Leftists, and the Utopian Imagination*, by Melissa Anne-Marie Curley (2017)
- *Tracing the Itinerant Path: Jisshu Nuns of Medieval Japan*, Caitlin J. Griffiths (2016)
- *Luminous Bliss: A Religious History of Pure Land Literature in Tibet*, Georgios T. Halkias (2012)

Library Resources

IBS has a small library collection which includes rare titles and other archival material. All told, the collection has approximately 12,000 titles. Roughly 8000 titles are in the areas of Buddhist studies, religious studies, and Japanese studies; half of these titles are in English and the other in Japanese. In addition to these titles, IBS is in possession of an archive of materials from the late Rev. Haruyoshi Kusada, former Director of IBS; this archive contains at least 2500 items including books and other materials. Finally, in 2008, IBS was gifted the collection of the late Masatoshi Nagatomi, a noted Buddhist Studies scholar. Nagatomi's collection includes rare materials as well as original copies of doctoral dissertations of his students, including Jan Nattier, John McRae, Siddiq Wahid and Paula Arai.

An annual donation from Ryukoku University allows IBS to purchase new titles, and over the past several years, selection of new materials has focused on work that supports existing IBS programs or difficult to find Japanese titles. In 2017, a faculty-level library committee was established to oversee the collection; decisions about its future and direction are still under consideration.

Over the past decade, IBS has made several attempts to catalog the collection and enter the materials into WorldCat, which has been suspended temporarily due to limitations on funding for a staff position to continue this work. Moreover, undoubtedly there exist duplicate titles and overlaps between this collection and resources available to the IBS community via GTU or UC Berkeley. Culling these titles, along with general cataloging, has been slow owing in large part to staff resources. Discussions have also been had with GTU about the possibility of some of the collection being moved to GTU or GTU staff assisting in the cataloging process.

Institutional Contexts



In this section:

Berkeley and the Bay Area	16
Seminary and Graduate Education in the US	17
Buddhist Higher Education and Peer Schools.....	18
Claremont School of Theology.....	20
Harvard Divinity School	20
Maitripa College	21
Naropa University	21
University of the West	22
The GTU MA and Changing Context	23
Discussion.....	24

Berkeley and the Bay Area

The Institute of Buddhist Studies is located in Berkeley, California, offering both tremendous opportunities and challenges.

Our affiliation with the GTU and close proximity to the University of California, Berkeley, gives our students access to a wealth of scholarly resources. The library holdings of the GTU include more than 500,000 titles as well as electronic access to key religious studies journals via EBSCO, ATLA, and JSTOR. This affiliation also grants our students access to the library holdings of UC Berkeley, including substantial holdings in South and East Asian languages.

More than mere library resources, UC Berkeley's Group in Buddhist Studies is a world-renowned center for Buddhist Studies. IBS faculty have professional and personal relationships with scholars in that program, and IBS students can take advantage of faculty resources, course offerings, and dozens of public symposia, lectures, and conferences held throughout the year.

The consortium of seminaries that make up the GTU are an additional resource for our students, particularly for those on the ministerial and chaplaincy tracks. Effective religious leaders and caregivers necessarily work in religiously diverse contexts, and cross registration privileges at GTU give students an opportunity to learn from and with students of other religious traditions. Students also regularly take advantage of pastoral care, ethics, and inter-religious studies courses at GTU and its member schools.

Several members of the IBS faculty are also members of the GTU's doctoral faculty. The GTU's doctoral program has a Buddhist Studies concentration, and students pursuing careers in academic Buddhist Studies have continued their studies in that program. Whereas it is a vision for IBS to offer its own PhD program, to the extent that IBS faculty participate in the existing GTU PhD program, student access to an existing doctoral program that emphasizes Buddhist Studies is being met by our continued stake in the success of that program (although this does not preclude the possibility of a DMin).

In addition to scholarly and academic resources, Berkeley and the San Francisco Bay Area generally also provide our students with a wealth of Buddhist and religious resources. Within Berkeley itself, there are at least a dozen different Buddhist temples, meditation, and study centers representing a wide diversity of



Buddhist lineages and traditions. The San Francisco Bay Area is home to major American Buddhist lineages in addition to the BCA such as the San Francisco Zen Center, Spirit Rock Meditation Center, and the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association.

Despite (or because of) these benefits, Berkeley and the Bay Area offer significant challenges. Chief among these challenges is the high cost of living and housing shortages. The cost of living in the San Francisco Bay Area is twice the national average and has increased 3.9% in 2018.⁴ Average rent in Berkeley is estimated to be \$3800 per month.⁵ Both the GTU and UC Berkeley estimate that students will spend approximately \$1200 per month on housing alone.⁶

It is not unreasonable to assume that for many potential students, housing is a determinative factor in deciding to study at IBS.

IBS owns a dormitory in Berkeley; however, there are only nine rooms potentially available. Whereas rents have been kept well below market value (rooms currently rent for between \$675 and \$900), IBS will need to keep housing in mind as our on-campus student population continues to grow.

Seminary and Graduate Education in the US

IBS's educational programs and model are unique. In many ways, IBS is a seminary, and it is therefore worthwhile to compare our programs to other North American seminaries or divinity schools. According to the Association of Theological Schools' 2017 report, whereas enrollment across its member schools has stabilized, this comes at the end of a decade of declining enrollment.⁷ Over that same period, IBS has seen an overall increase in enrollment. Perhaps more important, whereas one of IBS's foci is seminary education, we are not providing Christian seminary education, nor are we seeking accreditation with ATS. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to place our programs into conversation with other Buddhist Studies programs and schools.

In addition to being a seminary, IBS is also a graduate school with aspirations to train students for careers in the academy. According to the Council of Graduate Schools' 2016 Enrollment and Degrees report, total applications for graduate programs in the Arts and Humanities decreased by 6.2% between 2015 and 2016.⁸ It's worth noting that the Council's report excludes MDiv programs and includes "religious studies" within the category of "other fields" which has seen an overall decrease in enrollment, especially at the doctoral level, over the past five years. Applications for the Buddhist Studies track in the GTU PhD program reflect this overall downward trend; and the increase in enrollment in IBS's masters-level

⁴ See: https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/consumerpriceindex_sanfrancisco.htm

⁵ See: <https://www.berkeleyside.com/2017/02/10/average-rent-berkeley-3800-get>

⁶ See: https://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/paragraphs/files/2018-19_gtu_student_budget_1.pdf and <https://financialaid.berkeley.edu/cost-attendance>

⁷ See: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/2018ProgReview/2017-Annual-Report.pdf>

⁸ See: http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/2018ProgReview/CGS_GED16_Report_Final.pdf

programs has been almost exclusively from the ministerial and chaplaincy programs. However, the Council's report notes an increase in enrollment in graduate-level certificate programs, and, again, we see an enrollment increase in IBS's certificate programs.

In sum, IBS's programs stand at the intersection of both graduate and seminary education necessitating an awareness of larger trends in both these worlds. At the same time, as a center of Buddhist higher education, significant attention must be paid to other Buddhist Studies programs and schools in North America.

Buddhist Higher Education and Peer Schools

Buddhist higher education in North America can be provisionally placed in two categories: (1) academic/secular Buddhist Studies programs which are generally religious studies focused and prepare students for careers in the academy; and (2) sectarian Buddhist seminaries and Master of Divinity programs which prepare students for careers in chaplaincy and ministry. However, it should be noted that there are significant overlaps in these categories, and indeed this is one of IBS's strengths as a program that draws both from the religious studies/academic tradition and the praxis/seminary tradition.⁹

Since 2014, beginning with a grant from the Ho Family Foundation, Harvard Divinity School has been hosting an annual working group of Buddhist ministerial and chaplaincy programs. These events have helped IBS faculty clarify what Buddhist higher education, graduate study, and seminary education means both in American Buddhist culture at large and for IBS. These connections have also helped us identify programs with which we are most similar — our peer institutions and competitors.

See Table 1 for a list of schools offering advanced degrees in Buddhist Studies. Of note, the majority of these programs are strictly academic in nature, leading students to PhDs in Buddhist Studies. Some programs are non-degree granting but have a presence in the field of Buddhist ministerial or chaplaincy training. Other programs are either new and developing or are beginning to expand into Buddhist chaplaincy; while not immediately a direct competitor, IBS would do well to track these schools and programs and their impact on the field.

Of these programs, for the purposes of this report, we have identified five schools that serve as IBS's closest peers and competitors. These schools offer degrees or programs most similar to the IBS, have similar missions, and/or have been identified as alternate schools for potential students.

Neither Claremont nor Harvard Divinity have a sectarian Buddhist affiliation; neither do they have formal institutional ties with any Buddhist organization or community. Both Maitripa and Naropa are affiliated with Tibetan schools of Buddhism; and University of West is affiliated with a Taiwan-based Chan lineage.

⁹ Broadly defined, IBS's "seminary" function is focused on theological education; however, following Payne, I have chosen the term "praxis" which is more specific to the Buddhist tradition. See Richard Payne, 2012, "Why 'Buddhist Theology' Is Not a Good Idea: Keynote Address for the Fifteenth Biennial Conference of the International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies, Kyoto, August 2011." *The Pure Land* n.s. 27.

Table 1: Buddhist Studies, Master of Divinity, and/or Chaplaincy Programs at peer institutions

	MDiv	MA	PhD	Chaplaincy
Chicago Divinity	X	X	X	
Claremont School of Theology*	X	X	X	X*
Columbia University			X	
Dharma Realm Buddhist University		X		
Florida State University		X	X	
Harvard Divinity	X		X	X
Harvard University			X	
Maitripa College	X	X		X
Michigan State University		***	X	
Naropa University	X	X		X
Princeton University		***	X	
Rigpa**				
Stanford University		***	X	
Emmanuel College (Toronto)*	X			X*
University of the West	X	X	X	X
University of Pennsylvania			X	
UC Berkeley			X	
UC Los Angeles		X	X	
UC Santa Barbara		X	X	
University of Arizona		X	X	
Union Theological*	X	X	X	X*
Upaya**				
University of Virginia		X	X	
Won Institute		X		
Yale University			X	

- * Offers “interfaith” or other chaplaincy program but not a program in “Buddhist chaplaincy” as such.
- ** Not a degree-granting institution but offers practical training in Buddhist chaplaincy.
- *** Has a terminal MA but not a separate degree as such.

Claremont School of Theology

Originally a seminary for the United Methodist Church, since 2008 Claremont School of Theology (CST) has had an explicitly ecumenical and inter-religious mission. CST offers masters and doctoral degrees including an MDiv in Interfaith Chaplaincy. CST has been listed as an alternate program for students applying both to the IBS's and the GTU's programs.

According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), CST had 351 students enrolled in 2017 with 17 full-time faculty. Average tuition was \$22,000. Approximately 60% of its students were enrolled part-time. More than half its students are male and 43% are white. A third of its students were enrolled exclusively in an online program.¹⁰



	CST	IBS
Tuition	\$22,000	\$17592
% Women	42%	47%
% of Color	47%	37%
Total students	351	31

Harvard Divinity School

One of the nation's oldest and most respected divinity schools, Harvard Divinity offers masters and doctoral degrees and, since 2014, has been offering a program explicitly in Buddhist ministry as part of its MDiv. Students applying to both IBS and GTU programs have also applied to Harvard (both the divinity school and the university), and generally speaking the school is better able to offer student funding.

According to Harvard Divinity's [website](#), there are currently 132 students enrolled in its MDiv program. A small majority of these students are women, and 22% identify as persons of color. Tuition is approximate \$28,000 per year. A generous grant from the Ho Family Foundation has supported both the Buddhist Ministry Initiative as well as student scholarships.



	Harvard	IBS
Tuition	\$28,000	\$17592
% Women	52%	47%
% of Color	22%	37%
Total students	132	31

¹⁰ See <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?id=124283>

Maitripa College

Maitripa College, located in Portland, Oregon, was founded by the Tibetan Buddhist Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition. It has been licensed by the State of Oregon and is pursuing regional accreditation. It currently offers an MA and MDiv degree which prepares students for Buddhist ministry and chaplaincy.

Maitripa's website does not include any information on student demographics or enrollment. Tuition is currently listed as \$375 per credit (assuming 2 semesters at 12 units a



semester, this is \$9,000 annually). Given Maitripa's participation in the Harvard-lead Buddhist ministry working group, it is reasonable to expect that they are on track to expand and become more of a direct competitor to the IBS, despite the lack of current comparable information.

Naropa University

Naropa University, established by the Shambhala International community in Boulder, Colorado, offers a large number of masters and doctoral degrees. Naropa offers programs in inter-religious studies and Buddhist ministry and chaplaincy with a focus on Tibetan Buddhist Studies. There has been no direct evidence that applicants to IBS's programs have also considered Naropa; however, Tibetan studies are lacking in our own curriculum at present.

According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) there were 549 students enrolled in all

of Naropa's graduate programs. Information on their religious studies and Buddhist studies programs was not available. Of that population, 32% were enrolled part-time. Demographic information for graduate students was not reported; however, 67% of undergraduates were female, and 64% of undergraduates were white. Naropa does offer some online graduate programs, but none in Buddhist studies. 90% of its graduate students were not enrolled in any online or distance education programs. Naropa reports its annual tuition to be approximately \$27,000.¹¹



	Naropa	IBS
Tuition	\$27,000	\$17592
% Women	*67%	47%
% of Color	*36%	37%
Total students	549	31

¹¹ See <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?q=naropa&cs=all&id=127653>

University of the West

University of the West, located in Rosemead, California, was established by the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist community based in Taiwan. The University offers both undergraduate and graduate programs including both masters and doctoral level programs in Buddhist Studies. Its MDiv in Buddhist chaplaincy has been a direct competitor for IBS's programs both for chaplains looking to serve in hospitals or other health care areas as well as the military.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics there were 166 students enrolled in the University's graduate programs in 2017. The University does not have any online graduate programs and reports that 33% of graduate students are part-time. According to the University's own institutional research, there is gender parity among graduate students, and about 20% of students are white. Tuition is currently \$589 per unit (assuming 2 semesters at 12 units per semester this is \$14,136 annually).¹²

	U-West	IBS
Tuition	\$14136	\$17592
% Women	50%	47%
% of Color	80%	37%
Total students	166	31



¹² See: <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?q=university+of+the+west&s=all&id=449870>; and <http://www.uwest.edu/about-uwest/institutional-research/>

The GTU MA and Changing Context

The GTU MA (with a concentration in Buddhist Studies) has, historically, been viewed as a “joint” program between the two schools. However, the GTU has always been the degree-granting institution and students have the option of “affiliating” with one of the members schools or affiliates, including IBS. The GTU Dean’s Office and the GTU Council of Deans are ultimately responsible for administering and assessing the MA program. Whereas the GTU Dean has always closely consulted the IBS Dean on curricular decisions regarding the



Buddhist Studies concentration, the IBS, as an affiliate, has no formal governance role over the GTU MA program. Curricular and policy decisions can be made without IBS’s involvement.

To date, this arrangement has not been of issue; the IBS and GTU have always had positive working relationships and mutually support one another’s work. However, beginning two years ago, the GTU made a decision to discontinue “shared services” — the services the GTU provided to member schools — including a consortium-wide student information system (SIS) and common registrar. As a consequence of this decision, it became incumbent upon GTU to take greater “ownership” of GTU MA students, student records, and oversight of their progress through the degree.

One consequence of this decision was that all member schools and affiliates have had to move to their own independent SISs. For IBS, this has largely been a positive development. Because a majority of our students, historically, have been in the GTU MA program, and because we relied on the GTU student record system, our own internal student record system was out of date; moving to a new SIS has allowed us to create better systems for tracking students and keeping student records.

At the same time, as student information was separated out and moved into new systems, data for this report was necessarily culled from several places revealing inconsistencies and data gaps (i.e., IBS has not been regularly tracking demographic information on certificate students). Moreover, IBS will no longer be keeping “duplicate” records in-house for GTU MA students in the Buddhist Studies concentration. Information on that population of students will need to be requested from GTU.

Thus, for the purposes of this report, and moving forward in future program reviews, GTU MA student information is given to provide a full picture of IBS’s student body and provide insight into our educational program as a whole. However, this data is presented informationally only as IBS has no mean of directly assessing the success of the MA program.

Discussion

IBS is in a unique position *vis-a-vis* other Buddhist studies, chaplaincy, and ministerial programs. In many ways, what we offer is unique. We sit at the intersection of academic Buddhist studies and a practice tradition. We are the only center for Jōdo Shinshū and Pure Land Buddhist studies in North America. We can legitimately represent ourselves as focused on the Japanese Buddhist tradition in distinction to other schools with roots in the Chinese or Tibetan traditions. Theravada is also underrepresented in our peer institutions, and, combined with our Sōtō Zen program and our affiliation with GTU, IBS can legitimately claim a special emphasis on intra-Buddhist and inter-religious learning. And, finally, being located in the Bay Area provides our students with a diverse array of both scholarly and Buddhist/religious resources and opportunities.

However, being located in the Bay Area is also a significant challenge. When attracting students (especially those outside the Jōdo Shinshū community) efforts need to be made to address the high cost of living, tuition, and housing. IBS does have competitors in the world of Buddhist higher education, and these schools are often located in more affordable locations or offer more funding.

Educational Effectiveness & Student Demographics



In this section:

Educational effectiveness	26
Master of Buddhist Studies	26
Master of Divinity	27
Certificate Programs	28
Student Demographics and Enrollment	29
Enrollment History	31
Discussion.....	31

Educational effectiveness

In AY2017-18, IBS adopted the following statement of educational effectiveness and made publicly available (via its [website](#)) the following information. As you will see, over the past several academic years, the number of students in IBS degree programs (MBS and MDiv) has been negligible. The discussion following student demographics will further explain these trends. Please also refer to table 9 for enrollment data going back to 2006.

Statement of 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.

Master of Buddhist Studies

The MBS is a two-year degree program that provides a basic understanding of Buddhist Studies or religious studies for further graduate study or for general academic purposes. Some MBS students attend school part-time; some students extend their studies by participating in an international exchange program; and, prior to 2015, some students extended their studies for further ministerial education. The table below shows the graduation rates for MBS student cohorts who entered the program in the years specified.

Table 2: MBS Graduation Rates

Year Entered	Number in Cohort	Graduated within 4 Years
2010-11	3	1 (33%)
2011-12	0	n/a
2012-13	0	n/a
2013-14	0	n/a
2014-15	1	1 (100%)

The table below shows the average time to degree for MBS students who graduated in the five most recent calendar years.

Table 3: MBS Average Time to Degree

Graduation Year	Number of Graduates	Average Time to Degree
2015	2	3.5 years
2018	1	3 years

MBS graduates in the five most recent academic years prior to last year were in the following placements a year after graduation:

Table 4: MBS Placements Rates

	2014-15	2017-18
Ministry	2 (100%)	
Further study		1 (100%)

Master of Divinity

The MDiv is a three-year degree program that provides a foundation in religious studies and Buddhist studies for ministerial or chaplaincy professionalization or for general academic purposes. The program was significantly revised for the 2016-17 academic year, and only a small cohort of students has entered the program. The table below shows the graduation rates for MDiv student cohorts who entered the program in the years specified.

Table 5: MDiv Graduation Rates

Year Entered	Number in Cohort	Graduated within 4 Years
2010-11	0	n/a
2011-12	0	n/a
2012-13	0	n/a
2013-14	0	n/a
2014-15	1	0

The table below shows the average time to degree for MDiv students who graduated in the five most recent calendar years.

No MDiv students have graduated in the past 5 calendar years.

MDiv graduates in the five most recent academic years prior to last year were in the following placements a year after graduation:

No MDiv students have graduated in the past 5 calendar years.

Certificate Programs

IBS certificate programs may be taken concurrently within a degree program to demonstrate specialization in the certificate's field. The table below provides information on the number of graduates (inclusive of GTU MA students in the Buddhist Studies Concentration) who completed a concurrent certificate in the past five years.

Table 6: Graduates with Concurrent Certificates

Graduation Year	Number of Graduates	Concurrent Certificate
2014	4	3 (75%)
2015	4	1 (25%)
2016	5	4 (80%)
2017	5	4 (80%)
2018	1	0

IBS certificate programs may also be completed as stand-alone programs. Students in these programs are generally low-residence and part-time, taking as few as one course per term. The table below shows completion rates for certificate students who entered the program in the years specified.

Table 7: Certificate Completion Rates

Year Entered	Number in Cohort	Completed within 2 years
2011-12	3	0
2012-13	1	1 (100%)
2013-14	1	1 (100%)
2014-15	2	1 (50%)
2015-16	3	0

Student Demographics and Enrollment

From AY2013-14 to AY2017-18 a total of 98 students enrolled in IBS degree programs (including the GTU MA) and certificate programs as well as registered as auditors and special students. Additionally, during this period, IBS hosted a total of twelve exchange students from Ryukoku University, Kyoto, and Dharma Drum College, Taipei. More than half of degree and certificate students were white with approximately 41% self-reporting as Asian, mixed ethnicity, or African American. Roughly half our students are women. And a large majority of students (72%) spent at least a portion of their time at IBS enrolled as part-time students. See Table 8 and Appendix A for details.

Since AY2014-15, 40 students have enrolled in IBS classes as auditors, typically older members of Buddhist communities or Buddhist ministers seeking continuing education opportunities. During that same period, seven students have enrolled as special or non-degree students. Special students typically enroll to transfer coursework to another institution or as part of a discernment process for applying to an IBS degree program. Of these seven students, four have successfully applied to and matriculated into a degree program.

Self-reporting for ethnicity and age has been inconsistent with our certificate programs, and the Dean's Office is currently working on updating application materials to more effectively track this data. Average age at admittance for our three degree programs is 40.5 years old. Our Kyoshi Certificate Program (now Certificate in Shin Buddhist Studies) has, by far, the largest enrollment of all our certificate programs, and anecdotal evidence suggests that the average age of these students is comparable, if not slightly higher. A full 100% of Kyoshi Certificate Students have been enrolled part-time.

The majority of our MDiv and MBS students have some Asian ancestry; by comparison, 80% of GTU MA student self-identified as white. Whereas only nine students have enrolled in these two degrees over the past five years, the majority of them have been men (7 to 2). By comparison, the GTU MA program has gender parity. The Kyoshi Certificate Program is nearly half Asian/white and a majority of students are women.

Fig. 1: Student Gender

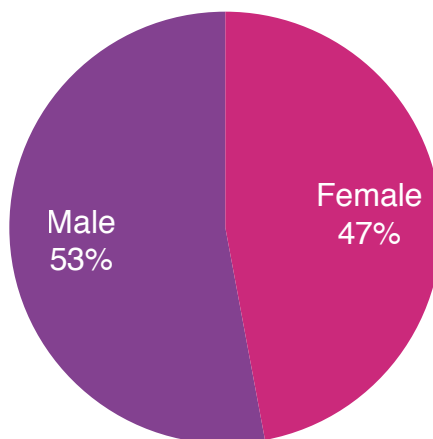


Fig. 2: Student Ethnicity

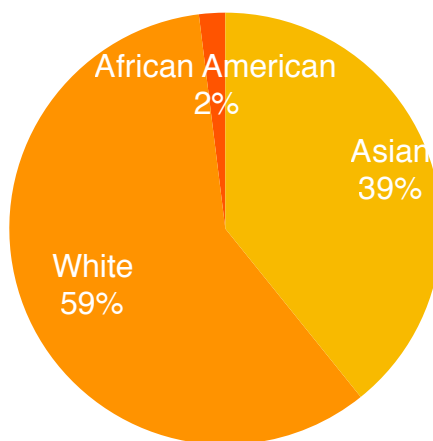
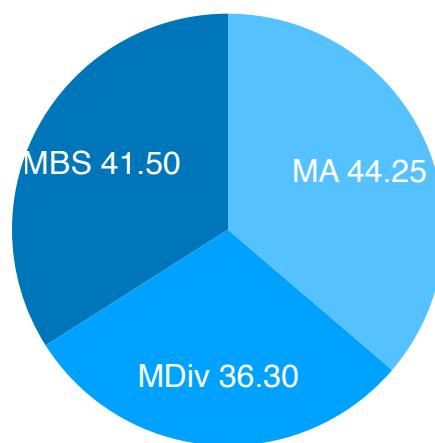


Fig. 3: Average Age at Entry



Whereas we have only just begun tracking on-site versus off-site students in preparation for expanding our online programs, anecdotally, roughly a third of our students have spent at least a portion of their studies at a distance from Berkeley.

Table 8: Student Demographics AY2013-14 through AY2017-18

	Female	Male	Av. Age	White	Asian	Af-Amer.	Prog. Total
MA	12	12	44.25	20	3	1	24
MDiv	1	2	36.3	0	3	0	3
MBS	1	5	41.5	1	5	0	6
Kyoshi	9	5		6	8	0	14
Chap.	0	2		2	0	0	2
Psych.	1	0		0	1	0	1
Zen	0	1		1	0	0	1
Special							7
Auditors							40
Total	24	27	40.683	30	20	1	98

Table 9: Enrollment History AY2006-07 - AY2017-18 by headcount

	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18
MA	3	8	9	12	14	12	17	20	15	14	12	10
MDiv							1*			1	2	3
MBS	7	7	8	7	8	10	8	6	6	4	3	3
Kyoshi						3	3	5	5	7	8	13
Chap.									1	1		
Psych.										1	1	1
Zen												1
Total	10	15	17	19	22	22	28	31	27	28	26	31

* MDiv was approved by BPPE; one student transferred from MA and completed program.

Enrollment History

Since moving to the JSC in 2006, enrollment in IBS degree programs has more than doubled (see Table 9). Beginning in 2008, IBS began expanding its programs to include a range of certificate programs, the chaplaincy program, and the MDiv. We saw increased degree and certificate enrollment for some years, and have, since about 2014 seen a “leveling off” of enrollment with new students effectively replacing graduating students.

Significant growth has been seen in the Kyoshi Certificate Program owing in large part to the efforts of the BCA making possible the status of “Minister’s Assistant,” a position which requires significant training and education.

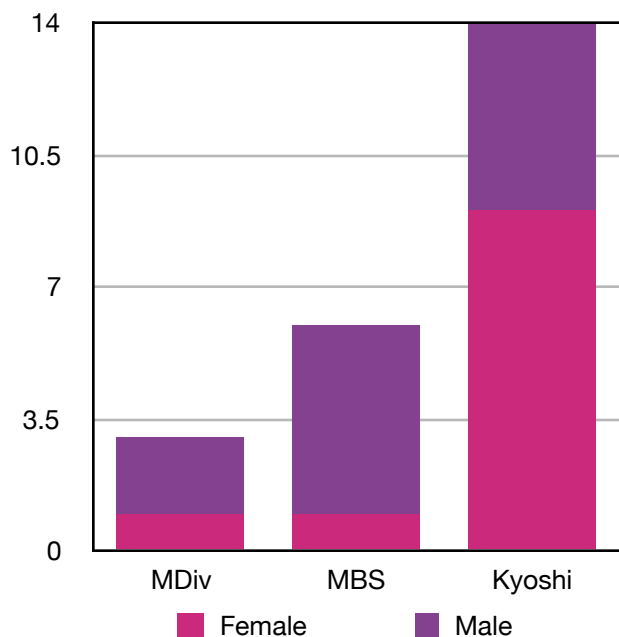
Some shifts have happened between degree programs; following our program review in 2016, some of our MBS students who were on the ministerial track switched to the MDiv degree program. Anecdotal evidence from students suggests that a majority of chaplaincy students — who are all currently enrolled in the GTU MA — would prefer to be in IBS’s MDiv program were it an accredited degree. Thus, we anticipate another swing in enrollment once we achieve initial accreditation, essentially a reduction in MA students and an increase in MDiv students.

Discussion

Generally speaking, a plurality of IBS students are in their 40s, returning to graduate school or seminary as a “second career” or a continuation of professional development for religious leadership. We have relative gender and ethnic parity; roughly half our students are women and half are persons of color. A large percentage of our students spend part of their time at IBS enrolled part-time; reasons for this are a mixture of cost, other professional obligations, and distance from Berkeley. As some of our students have full-time professional jobs, their enrollment in IBS programs is necessarily part-time. And many students are at a distance from the Institute, enrolling either in online classes or joining real-world classes via video conference. The high cost of living in the Bay Area does not seem to be as much a determining factor for these students as their other professional obligations. The Kyoshi Certificate students, for example, are by and large working professionals who have personal goals to serve their local Buddhist community but not to become full-time ministers.

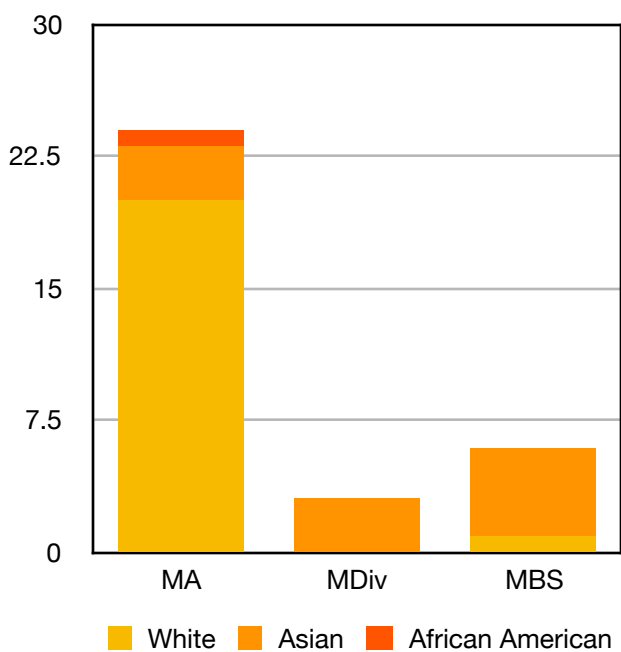
The chaplaincy program is at something at a cross-roads as the GTU transitions its student information system and as IBS nears initial accreditation. In essence, the faculty (lead by Daijaku Kinst, Director of the Chaplaincy Program) have created a curriculum for the MDiv degree and then forced it to conform to the requirements of the GTU MA plus Certificate in Buddhist Chaplaincy. This creates points of tension as students must navigate two systems of requirements or meet requirements that will likely not serve them in their professional careers (language requirements geared toward an academic degree, for example). Nevertheless, the high rates of success these students have had and the overall integrity of the curriculum will easily transfer to the MDiv once IBS achieves initial accreditation.

Fig. 4: Gender by Program



Whereas overall IBS students are diverse, individual programs reveal some nuance. For example, all of our students in the MBS and MDiv programs are, at present, on the ministerial track, have some Asian ancestry, and are overwhelmingly men. By contrast, students in the Kyoshi Certificate Program are more diverse in terms of ethnicity and nearly 70% are women. It is reasonable to hypothesize that these differences are related to larger trends within the BCA including which groups are more likely to see a full-time job as a minister a viable career path as well as which types of students may receive more financial support from their home temples. It is an open question as to how IBS can respond to these hypothetical differences and better support or attract different populations of students.

Fig. 5: Ethnicity by Program



Administrative changes forced by the discontinuation of GTU’s shared services, the switch to a new student information system, and lack of consistency in record keeping — coupled with the small cohort of non-GTU students over the past five years — points to the necessity for IBS to better track student information. This is particularly true for the Kyoshi Certificate students, a population which has grown considerably over the past few years but of whom we have little reliable data. For example, whereas we assume through personal relationships with this small cohort that most are unwilling to relocate to Berkeley and enroll full-time because of competing professional obligations, we do not know that from any impartial or objective source. Were IBS to offer more housing and scholarships, for example, were IBS to directly target certain populations within the BCA for recruitment, would we see a different outcome? Could that model be effectively used for other programs such as the Certificate in Sōtō Zen Buddhist Studies or the chaplaincy program?

Finally, the consistent numbers of auditors and special students as well as the number of students who “convert” from special students to degree program students is worth some attention. Whereas this is a small population, it does serve our broader mission to be a center for Buddhist education for the public as well as representing a potential “gateway” for degree or certificate students.

Learning Objectives



In this section:

Overview	34
Institutional Learning Outcomes.....	34
Program Learning Outcomes.....	35
Master of Buddhist Studies.....	35
Master of Divinity.....	37
Discussion.....	38

Overview

During the 2016 program review, the faculty adopted the following Institutional and Program Learning Outcomes for the two IBS degree programs. A comprehensive program review was subsequently drafted by the Dean¹³; however, it has not been possible to actualize that fully, and has lacked specific benchmarks. The lack of full adoption was the result of several factors including the shift between student information systems, lack of consistent data collection, and the low number of students who entered the MBS or MDiv programs (since 2016, only one student has completed either of these degree programs). Moreover, it became clear in the process of preparing this report and in conversations with faculty during the spring 2018 pedagogy workshops that the ILOs and PLOs were lacking and in need of revision, a position backed up explicitly by the first seeking accreditation visiting team.

As a result, the following report on IBS's learning objectives is preliminary and reflects our intention to revise learning outcomes and think through appropriate benchmarks and supporting evidence.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

All IBS students, irrespective of degree program, can expect to:

Receive a comprehensive broad grounding in the entirety of the Buddhist tradition (ILO1)

Whereas IBS is rooted in the Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist tradition, our pedagogical model for decades has stressed the importance of contextualizing this tradition within the broad sweep of Buddhism generally. More recently, we have come to value a pedagogical model whereby students from different Buddhist (or non-Buddhist) traditions enter into dialogue within the classroom to share and grow from multiple perspectives. This learning outcome reflects this pedagogical imperative.

IBS meets this outcome by requiring all students to complete the two-semester survey courses, Traditions of Buddhism in South Asia and Traditions of Buddhism in East Asia.

Develop critical thinking skills through academic research, written, and verbal communication (ILO2)

As both a seminary and a graduate school, IBS prepares students for careers in religious leadership, ministry and chaplaincy, and the academy. This learning outcome reflects the skills necessary for success in these fields. IBS meets this outcome primarily through coursework and written assignments as well as the “capstone” MBS thesis or MDiv project. Moreover, in conjunction with partners such as the Center for Buddhist Education, students have opportunities for professional development, specifically in preparing and delivering dharma talks (verbal communication).

¹³ See: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/2018ProgReview/CPR%20Draft.pdf>

Critically and contextually engage a specific Buddhist tradition via a methodologically coherent final project/thesis (ILO3)

Related to ILO1, whereas we are committed to providing a comprehensive study of Buddhism in its entirety, IBS is also committed to giving students the opportunity to become experts in a specific field or tradition. Chaplains, of necessity, need to be grounded in a specific community or tradition of practice while engaging a diversity of clients, for example. Ministers will need to become ordained in a specific tradition. And scholars in pursuit of a terminal degree will focus their studies both in terms of subject and method. This learning objective reflects this larger pedagogical imperative.

Receive opportunities for professional development through practical education (ILO4)

IBS recognizes the importance of preparing its students for specific careers, and that this preparation goes beyond the classroom. This outcome reflects the desire of IBS to ensure that students have opportunities for professional development that might include practical education in liturgy or ritual for ministers, field education for chaplains, or research and publication opportunities for scholars. Whereas this outcome is clear, and whereas IBS offers a number of programs that are in service to this goal (see pages15-17), IBS has been less intentional in regards to systematizing these programs, or linking them directly to degree and certificate programs. This lack could be resolved with specific faculty or staff responsibility over such programs, for example, a program coordinator or field education director.

Program Learning Outcomes

Master of Buddhist Studies

No new students have enrolled in the MBS program since the requirements were revised in 2016. All students who are enrolled in the program began prior to 2016 or transferred into the MDiv. Generally speaking, for each of these outcomes, IBS will need to identify appropriate benchmarks and appropriate evidence such that future success can be properly measured. Moreover, each of these objectives is focused primarily on in-class or thesis work, and any objectives tied to professional development or further graduate study are noticeably absent.

Be that as it may, as currently written, students in the MBS program will:

Develop substantive knowledge of Buddhist history, thought, texts, and practices

Related to ILO1, this goal reflects IBS's pedagogical commitment to provide education in the entirety of the Buddhist tradition. Additionally, the MBS program is intended to introduce students to the academic field of Buddhist Studies in preparation for further graduate work. IBS meets this objective through core program requirements, specifically the two-semester sequence in South and East Asian Buddhism, a methods course, and the terms, texts, and translation course.

Demonstrate analytical skills through specialist and comparative work

In support of students who wish to pursue further graduate work, this learning objective is intended to prepare students for academic work and to begin the process of specializing in a specific tradition and discipline or method. This objective can be met through the required methods and other coursework. Moreover, students are encouraged to complete a concurrent certificate program to focus their studies and develop specialist and comparative work.

Assess multiple theories and methods of Buddhist Studies

Primarily met through the methods course and the development of a thesis, this objective, again, reflects the focus of the MBS on the academic study of Buddhism.

Develop critical thinking, writing, and research skills

Met through course-level research assignments and the final Master's thesis, specific benchmarks should be set to measure this objective as well as specific types of evidence to be collected.



Master of Divinity

Prior to revising the MDiv degree requirements in 2016, no students were enrolled in the program; since 2016, no students have completed it. Thus, IBS lacks sufficient data to measure success of these outcomes. However, this also provides IBS with time to fine-tune benchmarks and think deeply about appropriate forms of evidence. Outcomes two and four allude to spiritual development and field education, areas that the program may want to focus on and/or highlight, appropriately supported by additional personnel resources. Hiring a field education coordinator will be essential to the success of these outcomes.

As currently stated, the goals of the MDiv program are to provide students with:

Foundational knowledge of Buddhist history, literature, thought, practice, and ethics as the basis for effective ministry, chaplaincy, or religious leadership both in and out of Buddhist sanghas

Reflecting a desire for breadth of learning, this objective, again, references ILO1 and the pedagogical imperative of broad grounding. Similar to the first MBS PLO, this objective is met through required courses, including the two-semester sequence, a methods course as well as six subject-area requirements in history, ethics, literature, practice, ministry, and pastoral care.

Structured and critical exploration of one's own Buddhist tradition as a basis for ministerial formation and the development of facilities to provide pastoral care

Paired with breath, students are also expected to demonstrate depth of understanding and a rootedness in their specific Buddhist lineage or tradition as a basis for spiritual formation and service as a minister or chaplain. This objective is met through specialist courses in specific traditions, and students are encouraged to complete a concurrent certificate program to focus their studies.

Engagement with one's tradition within a multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-Buddhist context to support an engagement with diverse communities

To be an effective religious leader in a pluralistic society, IBS recognizes the importance of both intra-Buddhist and inter-religious learning. This objective, then, is met throughout the curriculum in diverse classroom settings and specifically in requirements to complete courses in inter-religious studies and/or courses at GTU and its member schools.

Opportunities to develop research and communication skills through writing, public speaking, and dharma talks to effectively communicate Buddhist thought

This objective reflects IBS's commitment to professional development and is met both through extracurricular programming and through the final thesis or project. Of the former, students are presented with opportunities to complete liturgical training programs, deliver public talks, and the like. Of the later, students must complete an academically rigorous final project or thesis.

Discussion

Three issues are clear from the above. First, as mentioned in the first seeking accreditation visit report and discussed during a faculty pedagogy workshop in April 2018, institutional and program level learning outcomes need to be revised. Second, following from this, appropriate benchmarks and evidence need to be identified to measure the success of outcomes. And, third, there has not been a large enough cohort of students in either of our degree programs to make any definitive conclusions.

Of the first point, in their current form, the ILOs too closely mirror the program learning objectives. A tentative suggestion would be to rethink them as institutional values, perhaps directly linked to IBS's vision statement, that can be supported through specific projects and initiatives at the institutional level. For example, a commitment to educational breadth in ILO1 could be restated as "Intra-Buddhist and Intra-religious learning," and supported through institutional partnerships and intentional and specific opportunities for extracurricular learning. It would follow then that this commitment to breadth might be decoupled from the program level learning outcomes which would then be revised accordingly.

Of the second point, once learning outcomes are effectively revised, the faculty must set appropriate benchmarks. In its current state, the draft comprehensive program review relies heavily on coursework and grades for measuring outcomes. This may be insufficient. It may be more appropriate to follow the GTU's lead and collect specific course-level assignments to be evaluated through a platform such as Taskstream to better track and evaluate student success. In this scenario, curriculum maps would be revised to reflect at which points in the program students are expected to meet any one of the program outcomes; final projects from those courses would be collected and reviewed by the student's advisor as well as the Dean; and this information could serve as the foundation for assessing the outcomes during the next program review.

However, and of the third point, at present we have a small cohort of students. Thus, whatever data we have thus far collected is minimal and provisional at best. This, of course, presents us with an opportunity to carefully and intentionally identify specific types of evidence and design an appropriate and scalable system to assess the program moving forward as IBS grows. Rather than waiting for a larger cohort of students, IBS should think carefully about the types of systems that could capture student data and other evidence, either through our new SIS (Populi) or additional software.

Finally, the certificate programs do not presently have any learning outcomes. Now seems an ideal time to think through the objectives of these programs and ask critical questions on how to ensure they provide the same level of quality education as a degree program.

Student Support



In this section:

Overview40
Student Surveys.....41
Discussion.....43

Overview

In regards to Criteria for Review 2.13, the WASC Commission recommend that IBS consider “how to address student needs for support with financial aid services and advising.” This recommendation was based on the team report which was specifically concerned with the changing nature of GTU shared services, the financial aid office, and student advising. Generally speaking, institutionally, as IBS nears accreditation it will be the task of the administration to ensure that financial aid services are offered to IBS students. And despite the changing SISs, GTU will provide IBS faculty access to their system for the purpose of student advising.

However, the larger context of CFR 2.13 is student support generally speaking, including tutoring, financial aid, housing support, and student life. Whereas some of these concerns are not relevant for a graduate school (we have no athletics department, for example), faculty are aware that students often need academic support. This is in part due to the average age of our students skewing older and, thus, students are returning to graduate school some years or decades after finishing undergraduate work. Faculty proposed hosting a series of extracurricular workshops to support students, a program which will be launched, ideally, in AY2019-20.

There may be other factors contributing to student success and there may be other needs or desires on the part of students which IBS has not met. To identify these, two surveys have been distributed annually to graduates and alumni since 2016. Additionally, a survey was distributed to current students in 2016 with questions regarding the extracurricular workshops. These data are presented here to determine what IBS can do to better support its students.



Student Surveys

At the end of the academic year in 2016 and 2017, a survey was sent to all graduates and alumni from the previous five years. All graduates responded to both surveys for a total of 9 responses. Of 22 alumni, 18 responded in 2016 and 6 responded in 2017. Both surveys included the following two questions:

1. Please tell us the one greatest strength of your program, something that supported your studies or allowed you to successfully complete the program.
2. What was the greatest weakness of the program? What is one thing the IBS could do to better support its students?

Of the 29 responses to the “greatest strength” question, 20 made some reference to the faculty, staff, or community as contributing to a sense of support and overall student success. Of these 20 responses, half specifically or exclusively mention faculty; and of those, four named Daijaku Kinst. Other responses mention the availability of academic resources, the blending of academic and practice-based perspectives, and diversity of thought, teachings, and Buddhist lineages. See Appendix B for complete responses.

Of the 28 responses to the “greatest weakness” question, no single issue emerged. Five responses mention funding in some way, either that IBS should award more scholarships or, through accreditation, participate in federal loan programs. Two responses mention better support from faculty or advisors; one of these responses is too vague to be meaningful (“more support from teachers”); the other is so specific as to suggest an individual concern rather than indicative of a larger trend.¹⁴ Two responses ask for more language study; again, one is extremely vague and one is exceptionally specific, thus giving away the identity of the student. See Appendix B for complete responses.

Six responses mention the need for more practical education. Suggestions include courses or programs in homiletics and liturgy, pastoral care, psychology, and propagation or communicating the Buddhist teachings to laypeople.

Eight responses reference the overall quality of the educational program as either being inconsistent or lacking in some way. Three of these claim that the length of the program is too short to cover the full 2600 year history of Buddhism. Two request more courses on Shin Buddhism specifically. Two suggest that course quality varies from instructor to instructor or class to class. And one specifically raises the specter of grade inflation, stating that “As” were given out too easily for doing minimal work.

¹⁴ The comment in question is cited here to show the specificity of the issue and also, potentially, spark conversation among the faculty about expectations for advisors: “I did not meet close enough with my advisor, and therefore, my first draft of my thesis was completely incorrect, and had to be discarded, and re-written in about a month’s time. I wish that my advisor had encouraged meeting and discussion about my topic. In my over-confidence I didn’t realize that I was straying off course, and I wish that my advisor was easier to communicate with, and had been more helpful, and in particular had been more inquisitive about the status of my progress. “

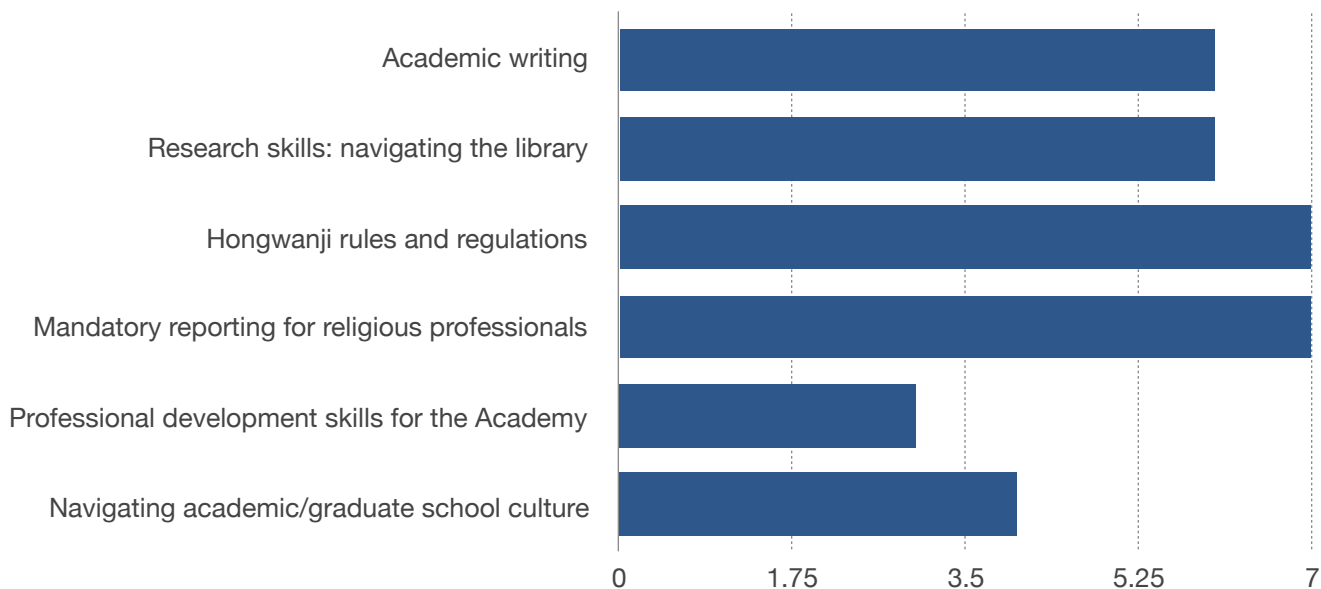
In the fall of 2016, a survey was distributed to current students asking about potential extracurricular workshops. Of a potential 26 students, 10 responded. The survey included only two questions¹⁵:

1. What would be the ideal time for a workshop given your schedule or workload?
2. What kinds of workshops would be helpful? Choose as many as you like.

Responses to the first question were evenly split between weekends and weekday evenings (with one write-in response for weekend webinars).

Of the 6 choices to the second question, most respondents chose 4 out of the 6, including mandatory reporting for religious professionals, Hongwanji rules (for ordination), research skills, and academic writing. Only 3 and 4 respondents were interested in professional development for the academy or academic culture, respectively.

Fig. 6: Responses to Workshop Choices



¹⁵ A third question allowed respondents to suggest workshop subjects. All of the responses to this question can be usefully grouped into the category of “professional development” for ministers and chaplains and were variations on the choices listed in the second question. See Appendix B for complete responses.

Discussion

Generally speaking, IBS faculty and staff are its strongest resource, contributing to a sense of community among students which supports them throughout their course of study. The Institution should be careful not to overly rely on human capital (resulting in burn-out among faculty and staff) and be more intentional about creating spaces and systems to support organic student community growth.

Paired with our institutional learning objective to provide opportunities for professional development, responses from student surveys strongly suggest the need for IBS to further develop these opportunities and intentionally systematize current resources. A director of field education and/or a student resources coordinator will be essential.

Whereas funding was mentioned as a concern, it was not as high a concern as anticipated. Moreover, at least one mention of scholarships was in relation to a policy which has since been changed.¹⁶ Nevertheless, it is clearly important for students to have adequate financial support given the institute's attempts to compete with peer institutions and the high cost of living in the Bay Area.

It is clear from these responses, as well as faculty input, that better support in terms of academic research, writing, and study skills is needed. Instituting an academic research and writing skills workshop series would be crucial in this regard, especially to meet the needs of second-career and returning students.

The overall quality of the educational programs, especially in regards to varying quality between classes and grade inflation, is of some concern. More clearly articulated student learning outcomes in alignment with program learning outcomes as well as rubrics and better assessment policies may help in this regard. Faculty were supportive of these efforts presented by the dean during a faculty pedagogy workshop in spring 2018. The Dean's Office will review course syllabi for appropriate learning outcomes and rubrics beginning in the 2018-19 academic year. An audit of course grades is also recommended to determine if grade inflation is, in fact, a concern.¹⁷

¹⁶ Prior to AY2016-17, scholarships were dispersed at the end of the semester; this policy has been dropped and scholarships are now distributed at the start of the term.

¹⁷ It was not possible, due to shifting SISs, to conduct an audit of grades for this report.

Online Education



In this section:

Overview	45
Current Online Offerings	46
Current Proposals for Online Certificate Program	47
Discussion.....	48

Overview

Anecdotally, IBS has known for some time that there exists a potential market for online programs. For example, in reviewing inquiries for general information submitted via the IBS website, since 2015 of 120 requests for information, 43 specifically requested information on online courses.

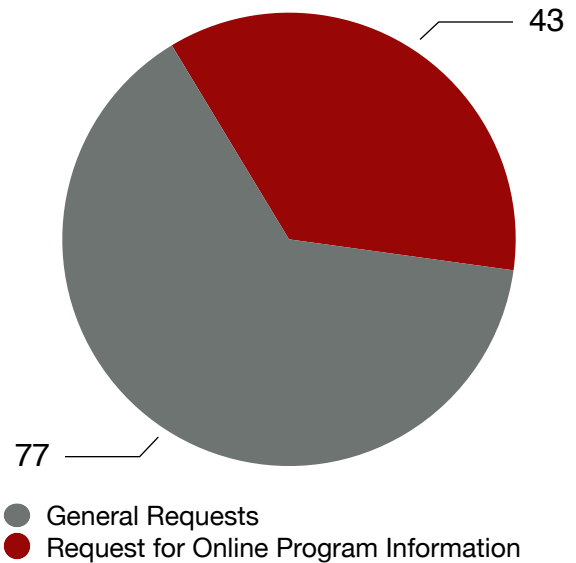
According to a study published by Auburn Theological Seminary in 2017, online programs are generally on the rise in divinity schools and seminaries. Two-thirds of ATS schools report offering at least some online courses, and more than 100 schools offer degree programs at least partially online. The authors report that “In 2013, after some hesitation, ATS opened the door for member schools to apply for a fully online MDiv, and twenty-six schools have received this permission.”¹⁸

Interestingly, as covered under Institutional Contexts, none of IBS’s direct competitors offer an online degree program in either Buddhist ministry or chaplaincy, and very few offer online programs at any level in Buddhist Studies. Nevertheless, discussion about the emerging potential of online education was discussed at the most recent Buddhist Ministers Working Group meeting, thus reflecting the opportunity for IBS to be on the leading edge of online Buddhist education.

Whereas the Auburn report is overall highly supportive of online and distance educational programs, it acknowledges the challenges seminaries face in developing such programs. Perhaps not surprisingly, one of the largest hurdles reported by Deans surveyed was neither technology nor cost but faculty resistance. This often came in the form of training and time management. Finding ways for faculty to not only embrace technology but also in re-thinking pedagogy for online courses is key. And as IBS faculty have already noted, setting up an online course can be extremely time consuming. In addition to managing an online course or digitizing traditional materials, with asynchronous online classes, there is a sense among both faculty and students that faculty are “always available;” appropriate expectations (both class-to-class and institutionally) need to be set.

Greater concerns for IBS as a seminary are the related issues of community and formation. The Auburn report discusses at some length the challenges and concerns raised by institutions and faculty that distance students are not part of the community precisely because they are not on campus. Some faculty have found this to be more of a problem than others, with online or telephone conversations taking the

Fig. 7: Requests for Information



¹⁸ See page 8: [http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/2018ProgReview/\(Not\)Being There.pdf](http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/2018ProgReview/(Not)Being There.pdf)

place of face-to-face interactions.¹⁹ These interactions, however, may not be enough for ensuring that seminary students are spiritually, psychologically, or socially healthy and mature enough to take on leadership roles in their communities. Such concerns have been raised by IBS faculty, and it will be incumbent upon the institution to think carefully about such issues as we move forward with online education, especially for degree programs.

Beginning in 2018, IBS will be hosting a three-year, Henry Luce Foundation-funded program on Public Theologies of Technology and Presence. The program is specifically interested in exploring the “ways in which technologies reshape human relationships and alter how people are or are not ‘present’ with each other.”²⁰ Whereas this program was not proposed as part of the chaplaincy or ministerial program, faculty would do well to be engaged with it and learn from what these outside scholars, technologists, and journalists have to say that may be relevant for our own online and distance education programs.

Current Online Offerings

For the past several years, IBS has offered at least 2 to 3 courses online per semester. Decisions about which courses are offered online have more often been based on available faculty and curriculum needs and not directly tied to any systematic online educational plan. For example, the Certificate in Buddhism and Contemporary Psychology requires a series of specific courses on Buddhist psychology, one of which has been historically taught by an adjunct faculty member who lives on the East Coast. There is no specific reason why the course could not be taught on-site by a different faculty member; and were this certificate marketed as a distance education program, all three of the core psychology courses would, of necessity be offered online.

Historically, our required two-semester sequence in the history of Buddhism in South Asia and East Asia has alternated online and on-site every other year. However, this arrangement was not always satisfactory. For example, when offered on-site, part-time distance students would delay taking the courses. When offered on-line, on-site students preferred to wait to enroll. As introductory courses, it is preferable that students complete them in their first year, and they serve as a requirement for other courses; thus delaying enrollment can complicate a student’s progress through a degree program.

Increasingly, over the past five years, faculty have begun allowing distance students to join on-site classes via web conferencing. This “hybrid” model has allowed the Kyoshi Certificate Program, for example, to increase enrollment as the majority of these students are off-site. Whereas this has been successful, it was an “organic” development and has not been organized or adequately supported. Thus, there have been some technological difficulties and a lack of consistent training or policies for faculty and students.

¹⁹ The “(Not) Being There” report notes that for many schools, a significant number of students are commuters or otherwise already “off-site.” IBS may want to audit student records to see how many in-residence students are already living a considerable distance from campus.

²⁰ See: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/luce/>



As mentioned earlier, no systematic tracking of distance, off-site, or part-time students has been conducted over the past five years. However, in reviewing student records, it is estimated that 20% of our students have enrolled in online or hybrid courses for at least a portion of their time in a degree or certificate program. Anecdotally, potential MDiv students have contacted faculty to inquire about in-residence policies suggesting they would be willing to spend a semester or two in Berkeley but would prefer to complete the bulk of the degree online, largely for professional or personal reasons (working full-time professionals or family obligations).

Current Proposals for Online Certificate Program

In recognition of the potential for online education as well as the shortcomings of IBS's current offerings, in 2018 the faculty gave approval to a new Certificate in Buddhist Studies to be offered fully online. The Dean has submitted the program for formal approval by the BPPE and WASC with a target date of fall 2019 for accepting new students.

The certificate will require students to complete 4 IBS courses over the course of a single year. Students will also be expected to take mostly the same courses, and enrollment will be capped to create a small cohort. A single curriculum, a small cohort, and a year-long program are all solutions other schools have developed to create a sense of community and connection among online or distance students. Students

will have the option of taking some on-site courses via web conferencing, but we will also need to increase our overall online course offerings for those students who will need asynchronous classes.

To support the program, IBS will need to invest in technology upgrades. Specifically, at present, faculty who allow web conferencing are generally using personal laptops and are, more or less, “going it alone” in terms of set-up and support. IBS is applying for a grant to purchase computers, projectors, and other equipment for web conferencing and general in-class AV needs. Once technology has been procured, the Dean will organize training sessions for faculty which will include both technology and pedagogy training.

Finally, new policies and student support systems will need to be created. Specifically, we will want to think through how certificate credits may be used for continued studies at IBS as well as residency policies. And to support distance students, appropriate support for research should be identified and disseminated to students.

See Appendix C for the latest proposal of the online certificate program.

Discussion

Online, distance, and low-residency programs will surely play an important part in Buddhist higher education in North America, and IBS is in a position to be on the leading edge of this movement. Nevertheless, several interrelated concerns should be attended to ensure the quality and success of such programs.

Creating community and spiritual formation are perhaps the largest hurdles to overcome; these are also specific to the MDiv program (and the Kyoshi Certificate program to a lesser extent). Developing an online certificate program as an initial step may help IBS to work out the technical and pedagogical bugs of distance education before making more dramatic changes to the degree programs.

Summary & Conclusions



IBS's educational model, its faculty, and its community are among its greatest strengths and have served it exceptionally well for decades. As the Institute moves through accreditation and faces financial challenges, increasing student enrollment and while ensuring the high quality of our programs will remain of central concern. Following from this report, we recognize four areas for improvement, areas which can be the basis for specific goals, benchmarks, and recommendation by the faculty following review. These areas for improvement are suggested as a preliminary step for later discussion among the faculty, in part, because they represent attainable goals given where the Institute is financially and in terms of the accreditation process.

Enrollment: increasing FTE and diversity

According to the IBS Strategic Plan, we hope to double FTE 2021. It may be prudent to revise this goal based on available evidence; nevertheless, increasing FTE rather than headcount should be our short-term goal. There is evidence to suggest that the majority of our current and potential students will remain part-time and/or at a distance, not for cost of living reasons but for personal and professional reasons. Converting part-time to full-time students may not be a reasonable short-term goal; therefore, tying student tuition projections to FTE rather than full-time headcount is likely to be a more realistic way of projecting tuition income.

Additionally, faculty should have a sustained discussion regarding student diversity. Whereas we have an overall plurality in terms of gender and between Asian and white students, much of this data is speculative and not consistent across programs (e.g., more men in the degree programs than the certificate programs). What can the Institute do to correct these imbalances and what is beyond our control? Moreover, the faculty may want to consider other markers of diversity or collecting different types of data. The categories currently used reflect what is required by IPEDs and the Department of Education. These categories presume a gender binary, for example, and IBS may be interested in increasing other types of diversity. For example, in addition to gender and ethnic diversity, IBS may want to reach for Buddhist diversity with students reflecting a wider array of Buddhist traditions.

Better data collection would be necessary to set and track goals for enrollment and diversity. And resources will need to be allocated for student recruitment and marketing to have any meaningful effect on increasing FTE or headcount.

Outcomes and benchmarks

Both institutional and program learning outcomes need to be revised, benchmarks to measure success need to be set, and appropriate types of evidence need to be identified and collected.

It may be wise for the faculty and administration to significantly revamp or scrap entirely the existing institutional learning outcomes and replace them with vision-based goals or values. These could reflect “big picture” values of the Institute and be assessed and tracked not by the faculty but the administration and the Board. At the same time, the program learning outcomes could remain largely intact but slightly edited to be more broadly inclusive of the stated purpose of the individual programs (e.g., an academically rich, language study-focused MBS for further graduate study, a robust and spiritually formative MDiv in support of ministry and chaplaincy).

Appropriate benchmarks and evidence logically follow from those changes. And while the student body remains small, the Dean’s Office can work on creating scalable systems to better track, collect, and analyze data in support of program objectives.

Additional staffing — in particular for field education or program coordinators — will be essential to achieve these goals.

Student support services

Regardless of the evidence suggesting that part-time students may not convert to full-time status owing to lack of scholarships, the Institute cannot neglect the importance of raising necessary funds to compete with our peer schools for potential students, especially those students who are not on the Shin Buddhist ministerial track. It may also be the case that ministerial students do not always receive community funding and would benefit from additional institutional support.

More than merely supporting students in regards to funding, it is clear that there is a demand and need for specific extracurricular learning. This manifests in: liturgical and practical education; legal and ethical considerations for religious professionals; academic writing and research support; clinical pastoral education placement; and advising and guidance through the ministerial ordination process.

These needs can be met in a variety of ways. It may be that some practical education is best handled by affiliates and partners outside the Institute; if so, these programs should be coordinated and their effectiveness assessed by a field education coordinator. By contrast, some needs should be met “in house” via a series of extracurricular workshops, seminars, or new course offerings. Regardless of the solution, it is clear that such programs need to be systematic, intentional, and coordinated. Resources should be devoted to higher staff appropriately.

Online and distance education

Online, distance, and part-time students have been a consistent area of growth for IBS. To meet whatever goals are set in regards to enrollment and FTE, and to remain competitive as our peer schools inevitably expand in this area, IBS needs to aggressively pursue online and distance education programs.

In addition to the in-development certificate, the faculty should consider other types of programs and the larger ramifications of online and distance learning. Other types of programs may include low-residency programs degrees wherein students complete the bulk of a program online and then spend a short period of time in-residence in Berkeley. This would be a significant change from our current pedagogical model and would need careful thought to be successful. Additionally, merely adding more online courses or “doubling” existing courses (i.e., offering the two semester sequence simultaneously online and on-site) may go far in increasing enrollment. Adding more courses, of course, would require additional funds to support hiring additional instructors.

As the faculty works through these issues, attention should be paid to pedagogy, policy, and strategy. Any new educational modality will require us to think carefully about how we teach as well as how we ensure students have a sense of community as well as our attention to their spiritual development. Policies will need to be drafted to ensure that we are in compliance with state and federal regulations. And a strategic plan for online and distance learning should be considered such that decisions are intentional and tied to specific timelines and budgets.

Appendix A: Student Demographics

Data below covers all students enrolled in a degree or certificate program from AY2013-14 through AY2017-18. Auditor and special (non-degree) students only go back to Spring 2015.

Data was culled from multiple sources including: (1) GTU and IBS student records before the switch to new SISs; (2) student files and application forms; (3) other “non-official” records kept by the Registrar’s office.

“Cert” refers to whether or not a degree student completed a concurrent certificate program; “K” refers to the Kyoshi Certificate, “T” to Theravada, “P” to Psychology, “C” to Chaplaincy.

“LOA” refers to “Leave of Absence,” and whether or not a student has taken one during their course of study. Similarly, “Part time” refers to whether or a not a student enrolled part-time at any point during their course study. Percentages for ethnicity refer to the percentage of students of color.

Table 10: Student Demographics, Raw Data

Student	Year Entered	Grad Year	Total sem.	Cert?	Exchg?	LOA?	Part-time?	Age at entry	Gender	Ethnicity
MDIV										
1	SP16			K				41	M	A
2	FAL17							34	F	A
3	FAL15						Y	34	M	A
Totals				33%			33%	36.33	2/1	100%
MBS										
1	SP07					Y	Y	57	F	A
2	FA08	W				Y	Y	62	M	W
3	FA10	SP15	8		Y			22	M	A
4	SP15	FAL17	6					26	M	A
5	SP11	SP15	8			Y	Y	34	M	A
6	SP11					Y	Y	48	M	A
Totals			7.3		17%	66%	66%	41.5	5/1	85%

Student	Year Entered	Grad Year	Total sem.	Cert?	Exchg?	LOA?	Part-time?	Age at entry	Gender	Ethnicity
GTUMA										
1	FA16			T			Y	54	F	W
2	SP16			C			Y	49	M	W
3	FA12	SP15	6					35	M	W
4	SP14	FA15	4					24	M	W
5	FA13	W						49	F	W/H
6	FA11			C		Y		54	F	W
7	FA16			C				30	M	W
8	FA13	W						41	F	W
9	FA11	FA16	11	C			Y	45	M	W
10	FA12	FA16	9	T			Y	65	F	W
11	FA14	W		C		Y	Y	33	M	Af
12	SP13	SP16	7	C			Y	46	M	W
13	FA14	FA16	5	C			Y	34	M	W
14	FA16							58	F	W
15	SP10			C		Y	Y	59	F	W
16	SP11	SP16	7	C			Y	36	F	W
17	FA12	FA16	9			Y		46	F	A
18	FA12	FA16	9	T,C			Y	43	F	W
19	SP17			C			Y	48	M	W
20	FA13	SP16	8	C			Y	57	M	W
21	SP11	SP15	9	P	Y		Y	33	F	A
22	SP11	SP16	10	C			Y	27	M	A
23	SP15							46	M	W
24	FA17			C			Y	50	F	W
Totals			7.5	71%	0.04%	16%	62%	44.25	12/12	20%
KCP										
1	SP15						Y		F	W

Student	Year Entered	Grad Year	Total sem.	Cert?	Exchg?	LOA?	Part-time?	Age at entry	Gender	Ethnicity
2	FA15						Y		M	W
3	FA16						Y		M	W
4	SP12						Y		F	A
5	FA17						Y		F	A
6	FA17						Y		F	A
7	FA17						Y		F	A
8	FA11	W				Y	Y		F	W
9	SP12						Y		M	A
10	FA13	SP17					Y		F	W
11	FA15						Y		M	A
12	FA17						Y		F	A
13	FA17						Y		F	A
14	FA15						Y		M	W
Totals			8	n/a	n/a	0.07%	100%		5/9	57%
BCC										
1	SP15	SP16	3				Y		M	W
2	SP13	SP15	5				Y		M	W
BCP										
1	SP16						Y		F	A
SZC										
1	SP17						Y		M	W
Totals			4	n/a	n/a		100%		3/1	25%
Special	7									
Auditors	40									
TOTAL	98		7.3	52%	8.52%	27.4%	72.2%	40.69	27/24	41%

Appendix B: Student Support Survey Results

Combined responses from 2016 and 2017 Graduate and Alumni Surveys to the question, “Please tell us the one greatest strength of your program, something that supported your studies or allowed you to successfully complete the program.”

Table 11: Student Survey Responses, Strengths

I think the greatest strength of the program was its combination of scholarship with spiritual perspectives, it made for a more rounded and thought-provoking education.

Daijaku

daijaku

It is a life learning experience, I get to use more of this knowledge to develop myself.

Incredible faculty who have a depth of knowledge and experience with practical application of the knowledge. My advisor Daijaku supported me thoroughly, I couldn't have done it without her!

The faculty is top notch and really helped me not only to complete the program, but was also very helpful after completion and throughout my career.

Good academic grounding in Shin Buddhism. Instructors (Drs. Matsumoto, Nasu) very competent in their interpretation and sharing of the Shin Dharma.

The staff

The online program made it possible for me to attend and graduate since I had a full time job and family

It gave me resources that I didn't know were available. These resources stem from materials to networking in the Buddhist community.

Supportive and effective administrative staff and advisors made for an individually tailored learning experience.

Having to write and support my thesis. Also group discussion; more students needed to participate.

MBS is a must to become a BCA ministers at least.

I had amazing teachers who supported me not only academically, but personally during my time at IBS.

The IBS office staff is AMAZING. Helen, Linda, and Sayakal all deserve HUGE kudos, they are some of the friendliest, diligent and helpful faculty I have encountered in 20+ years of higher education.

The jewel of the Sangha. I really loved how students, teachers, and staff would support each other. We shared many lovely activities and events together, including lectures, Buddha celebration days, and lunches. This created a sense of community and spiritual friendship.

Community - support for pastoral formation.

It gave me access to scholars and resources that would not be available otherwise.

Learning the fundamental teachings of Shin Buddhism.

flexibility in coursework

Diversity of thought, lineages and teachings.

Dr. Gil Fronsdal, a remarkable, dedicated, critical, and visionary professor.

good variety of classes

The faculty were very supportive.

The support of faculty, staff, and fellow students

Strong support from professors, staff and students.

It gave us a place to learn Jodo Shinshu deeply in English.

I always felt very encouraged by the faculty, staff and my fellow classmates. The IBS has created a unique environment for deep appreciation of and critical reflection on the Buddhist traditions of the world.

The fact that the community is relatively small was a real asset. I got to know my fellow students well (both IBS and other GTU affiliate programs) and many of us are still in close contact and continue to support each other. The same goes for the close relationships we got to have with our professors and advisors.

Combined responses from 2016 and 2017 Graduate and Alumni Surveys to the question, “What was the greatest weakness of the program? What is one thing the IBS could do to better support its students?”

Table 12: Student Survey Responses, Weaknesses

Funding and name recognition.

There were several GTU courses at that would have been more useful to me than several Shin classes I was required to take at IBS. Reverend Yamaoka's class was outstanding because it was directly applicable to my field. The other Shin classes were interesting, but I may have been better served by taking non-compulsory electives.

perhaps a bit more practical application focus on the religious principles of buddhism

IBS should have its own Ph.D. Program soon.

Perhaps more scholarships to soften the financial impact of the program.

Better instruction in psychology and on teaching/communication methods to help ministers relate the Dharma to contemporary Americans.

Provide more liturgy classes for the ministerial students

When I was there the program was in flux - I think I was on the bleeding edge of a new online program

It was two short. 2600 years is hard to cover over a three or four year period. I don't think there is much we can do except continue our education with IBS even after complete courses.

Quality of classes varied; sometimes felt forced to take suboptimal classes to fulfill the plethora of requirements for the chaplaincy program. However, I appreciate the effort being made to expand these options.

Create stronger academic standards. It seemed that if you attended class and did the work, you'd get an A. An A, to me, is beyond the required studies.

Not enough classes about Shin Buddhism. Need to improve the library. May need more Shin Buddhism classes.

I resided in the dorm and was happy there, but I believe the international students need more assistance/support with adjusting to life in America, such as setting up bank accounts, getting cell phones, etc. The dorm needed new bedding and towels too.

I did not meet close enough with my advisor, and therefore, my first draft of my thesis was completely incorrect, and had to be discarded, and re-written in about a month's time. I wish that my advisor had encouraged meeting and discussion about my topic. In my over-confidence I didn't realize that I was straying off course, and I wish that my advisor was easier to communicate with, and had been more helpful, and in particular had been more inquisitive about the status of my progress.

More scholarship and financial aid money.

It is not enough time to learn all 2600 years of information. I don't think there is anything except for us alumni to continue to learn.

Perhaps offer more classes on Shin Buddhism history.

nebulous student community

Scholarships at beginning of semester

My plan from before I started was to learn Pali and to study the Theravada texts in the original. In my very first semester after moving to Berkeley from France, my course "Introduction to Pali: was cancelled, pulling the rug out from all I had hoped to do. This was a disaster academically. I managed to learn Pali in my second year, with an IBS special reading course, and then an intensive course with the Oxford Center of Buddhist Studies, but although I learned enough on my own to work with the original Pali texts, my proficiency was way less than I had expected it should have been. And it came a year later than it should have. If IBS is going to confer certificates in Theravada Studies, it needs to consider how to ensure that candidates get a solid grounding in the Pali language in their first year of studies.

need more support from teachers, counselors

Online programs could formatted better

I hope to see IBS continue to grow its community through accreditation, which will make the wonderful educational opportunities at IBS accessible to more students (for example, by making it easier for students to take out loans for education).

Teach practical skills about temple board / minister dynamics.

In it not enough time to learn 2600 years of Buddhism Deeply

Opportunities for language study were lacking.

Those on the ministerial path need to have pastoral care classes as part of the required curriculum

Responses to the open-ended question “Are there other workshop topics not listed above that you may be interested in?” in the student workshop survey.

Table 13: Responses to Student Workshop Survey

Current issues in BCA, JSBTC, & Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Homiletics Effective Congregational Leadership Religious Non-Profit Management Practical Ministry

Ritual skills and development (different from theory) Chaplaincy Development

Studying from a distance how to access articles and resources?

public speaking burn out professional expectations for ministers and chaplains

Appendix C: Online Certificate Proposal

Certificate in Buddhist Studies

Proposal submitted to IBS Faculty

February 14, 2018

Draft for discussion

Program description (for public, website, etc.)

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 low-residency, online 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. This limited enrollment program is designed to be completed in one year, either in residence or fully online, and culminates in a [three-day? weekend?] retreat and symposium in Berkeley.

Enrollment is limited to ten students per academic year. Each year, the program will focus on a specific theme or core issue to be explored through coursework as well as the culminating retreat.

Students who complete this program will:

- Learning Outcomes TBD

The certificate is overseen by Scott Mitchell, Dean.

Formal application is required. Interested students should review application materials and requirements on the IBS website. There is a \$40 non-refundable application fee.

Program requirements:

Students must complete a total of 4, 3-unit courses over the year-long program and attend the culminating retreat at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, held annually in the summer.

Required course:

- Introduction to Buddhism and Buddhist Studies

Elective courses (subject to change based on annual theme):

- Elective courses TBD
- Other courses with Dean's approval

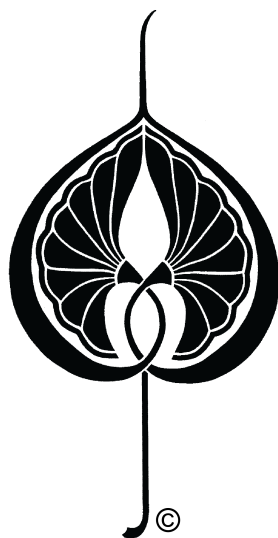
Notes for faculty discussion, amendment, and approval:

The cohort and one-year model: I am proposing that the certificate's enrollment be limited to 10 students with the assumption that students complete in one year. This recommendation is made, first, to address the problem of community; in the absence of physically being in Berkeley, how do we create a sense of community and belonging among students? The cohort model has been adopted by other schools in an attempt to give students a shared experience over a short period of time. Secondly, by limiting enrollment, we may create the illusion of scarcity which increases the implied value of the program, thus increasing demand.

Online vs. hybrid: whereas the intention with the program is to create an online-only certificate, there may be value in allowing in-residence students (particularly at the GTU) to enroll in the program. Questions to be resolved would be whether or not GTU students could get credit for the program and whether or not hybrid courses will be useful to potential students to the extent that they are bound by Pacific Time. Fully online, asynchronous courses may have a broader appeal.

Annual theme: it is proposed that the certificate be organized around a pre-defined annual theme that would be a draw for potential students, help organize their studies over the course of the year, and reinforce the shared sense of community. Themes would be broadly conceived and dovetail with existing IBS course offerings. For example, a theme on texts and translations could overlap with any of our existing textual study classes and the Terms, Texts, and Translation course. A theme of ethics or engagement could overlap with ethics course, and so forth.

Culminating retreat: previous versions of this program have suggested hosting an annual retreat, in part, to give certificate students an opportunity to meet faculty and other students in person. Whereas I am still in support of this idea, logistical issues need to be discussed. For example, given our current institutional capacity, can we reasonably expect to host an annual event? Should we partner with CBE to host an event that has an appeal to people not in the certificate program? If the intention was to create community, do the proposed cohort model and annual theme meet this need in a way that is more responsible given IBS's current state of staffing and finances?



© 2018 Institute of Buddhist Studies
For more information, visit us on the web at
www.shin-ibs.edu
info@shin-ibs.edu

Follow us on
[Facebook](#) &
[Twitter](#)