

Buddhism in China series

The 2010 program information has been posted; it will take place from July 1 to 22, 2010 and is entitled "The Huayan School, Huayan Buddhology and Mt. Wutai". For more information about the 2009 program, please see the Buddhism in Chang'an page. Click here to download the 2010 applicationIntroduction

Through the "Buddhism in China" program series, the Woodenfish Project aims to aid the development of young scholars in the West with research interests in Chinese Buddhism and related fields by offering them the opportunity for direct, intensive academic engagement with the major historical centers of Buddhism in China. The 2009 program will be held in the ancient Chinese metropolis of Chang'an (modern Xi'an) in collaboration with Northwest University. At one time the largest city in the world, Chang'an served as capital of the Sui and Tang dynasties when Buddhism in China famously experienced an age of phenomenal growth and development. As the focal point for state patronage of religion, the capital constructed dozens of monasteries that often rivaled even the imperial palace in their splendor, produced large quantities of distinctive Buddhist art, hosted the monumental scripture translation projects of Kumrajiva and Xuanzang, and formed an important staging ground for relations between China's various religious traditions. As the eastern terminus of the Silk Road, Chang'an was also a cosmopolitan center of seminal interaction among Buddhists from India and Central Asia to Japan and Korea. Participants in the program will study all of these facets of Buddhism in Chang'an with accomplished faculty both in the classroom and in the field at major historical sites.

Program Objectives

The primary objectives of the program are as follows:

- To deepen participants' knowledge of Buddhist history and culture in China;
- To give participants hands-on experience with historical Buddhist sites and objects;
- To introduce participants to possible avenues of research related to their interests;
- To facilitate the interaction of participants with professors and graduate students from Chinese institutions.

Program Structure

The participants will initially gather in Shanghai and spend five days visiting Buddhist temples and Chinese cultural sites in the nearby Jiangnan cities of Suzhou, Yixing and Yangzhou.

The program will then proceed to Xi'an, where the daily curriculum will consist of two main components. In the mornings, participants will attend advanced classes and discussion sessions taught by Northwest University professors on the various aspects of Buddhist history and culture in Chang'an. Special attention will be paid in class to highlighting important primary sources. In the afternoons, professors will guide participants on tours of important historical sites in and around Xi'an. Additionally, there will be three full-day field trips to sites of further distance from the city. In the evenings, participants will have the option of joining organized group activities.

English will be the primary medium of communication on the program. Although classes and site tours will be given in Mandarin Chinese, English interpretation will be provided.

Buddhism in Chang'an [MapView Buddhism in Chang'an in a larger map](#)

About the Woodenfish Project

Sponsored by Fo Guang Shan, the Woodenfish Project aims to build a bridge between East Asian Buddhism and young people from around the world through a series of educational programs geared toward young adults. <http://www.woodenfish.org/>

About Program Director Venerable Yifa, Ph.D

Venerable Dr. Yifa has been a nun at Fo Guang Shan Monastery in Taiwan since 1979. She received her PhD in religious studies from Yale University in 1996 and was awarded the "Ten Outstanding Young Persons Award" in Taiwan in 1997, the "Outstanding Women in Buddhism Award" in 2003, and the "Julia Hollister Award" in 2006 given by the United Nations for her contribution in Peace and Interfaith Education. She has been an administrator at Fo Guang Shan Buddhist College in Taiwan, and at Hsi Lai University in Rosemead, California. She has been a visiting scholar at the University of California Berkeley and Harvard University, a lecturer at Boston University and a faculty member at National Sun Yat-Sen University in Taiwan. She taught at McGill University as the Numata Visiting Professor in the spring of 2005 and served as the chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of the West in Los Angeles.

Dr. Yifa has been engaged in interfaith dialogue and was supported on some occasions by UNESCO. She was also a contributor to the "Safe Motherhood Project" by the UNICEF South Asia Office. Dr. Yifa is a frequent guest

lecturer on subjects including Chinese Buddhist philosophy, thanatology and ethics. Her current research focuses on Buddhist monasticism and women in Buddhism. She is the author of *The Origin of Buddhist Monastic Codes in China* and *Safeguarding the Heart: a Buddhist Response to Suffering and September 11* and *Authenticity: Buddhist Perspective on Junk*.

About Fo Guang Shan

Ven. Master Hsing Yun founded Fo Guang Shan Monastery in Taiwan in 1967, propelled by a vision to disseminate Buddhist values for the benefit of humanity. Fo Guang Shan follows the traditions of Chan (Zen) Buddhism. Venerable Master Hsing Yun is the 48th patriarch of the Chinese Linji (Rinzai) Lineage.

Today there are over 200 branches of Fo Guang Shan throughout the five continents. Together, Fo Guang Shan strives to serve the congregations and communities by providing educational opportunities, sponsoring cultural events, engaging in charity work, and conducting worship and meditation services. Guided by the principles of Humanistic Buddhism and the ideals of the Buddhist Pure Land, its ultimate goal is to foster peace and harmony among all people of the world. For more information about Fo Guang Shan, please visit this websites:www.fgs.org.tw

About Northwest University

Founded in 1902, Xi'an Northwest University has 3 campuses with a total area of 370 acres, and 22 schools and departments offering 67 undergraduate programs. To date the University has established 37 doctoral programs, 92 Master's programs and 9 postdoctoral programs. The University has a faculty and staff of over 2,300, of which 1,100 are full-time faculty, and nearly 600 are professors and associate professors. The University's student population amounts to about 18,000 including 2,000 doctoral and graduate students, and 150 international students. The University pays close attention to international exchange and cooperation, and has established collaborative relations with nearly 50 institutions of higher learning and research in foreign countries, Hong Kong and Taiwan.www.nwu.edu.cn