



Buddhist Studies Information Network Project

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INTRODUCTION:

Buddhist Studies and Information

The Chung-hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies in order to suit for the 21 century electric information age by increasing the power of the internet. Following the trend of distributing digital information quickly and effectively. From March of 1998 the Institute seriously started up its Buddhist Studies Information Network Center, to be in tune with the new age needs, and be more complete in its Buddhist Digital Reference Databases. And to setup the development of the Buddhist Internet Teaching Courses.

Work Plan for the Buddhist Studies Information Network Center

1. To assist The Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association do the work of entering the Chinese Tripitaka into digital form and post them on the Internet and CD.
2. Build up a Buddhist studies Internet database for the use of finding Buddhist material information for Buddhist scholars and students.
3. Designing the Institutes web site for international database use.
4. Make the Institutes electric information suitable for modern reforms.

Recently the Buddhist Studies Information Network Center has published a CD and also has the same material available on net (<http://www.chibs.edu.tw>), it includes:

Introduction of the Institute

Buddhism embodies deep intellectual roots and religious values, but without an educated sangha it was impossible to transmit this knowledge to the general public. Master Sheng-yen sought to rectify this situation. First he completed his own education, earning a Ph.D.

from Rissho University in Japan, and then later went on to found the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies. Master Sheng-yen has devoted his life to promoting Buddhist education and he hopes that his efforts will reap the desired result: To produce Buddhist scholars of international standing who have the ability to skillfully propagate the Dharma.

Graduate Students

Until 1998 there has already been some 145 graduate students which have been accepted. Usually in all three levels there are about 30 students. Those who have completed their theses are 58 out of 110 students who have finished their studies. Three students have already received their doctor degrees from Japan and the United States, and 40 have received master degrees. Until now there are more than ten students continuing their studies in Japan, America, England, Germany and India. All the others who have graduated and those who have not, are presently working at Universities, doing research in Buddhist colleges, teaching, publishing, cultural, or news media. Other than this every year a few non-credit students are chosen by depending on their test scores.

Cooperation and exchange

In hosting international conferences and seminars on Buddhism, the institute cooperates with local universities, Buddhist graduate schools, and Buddhist seminaries. The institute has sister school relations with four universities in Japan — Bukkyo University, Rissho University, Komazawa University, and Hanazono University — the University of Michigan in the U.S., and Dharmakaya foundation in Thailand. Publications are regularly exchanged with these universities, and periodic exchanges of students and professors are also arranged.

Library

The library currently houses twenty-nine versions of the Buddhist Canon in various languages, 3,400 audio-visual cassettes, and holds more than 20,000 books on Buddhism in Chinese, Japanese, English, German, French, and Tibetan. With completion of the new premises, the stock will be expanded to around 300,000.

Publications

The Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies produces two annual and two monthly publications — the Chung-Hwa Buddhist Studies, the Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal, the Humanity Monthly, and Dharma Drum Monthly — and the Dharma Drum Publishing

Company specializes in publishing books exploring both the scholarly and practical aspects of Buddhism.

New Facilities

The institute is currently housed in the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Culture. Due to the rapid growth of our faculty, the space here has become inadequate. Consequently, in 1989 a large tract of land was acquired on a mountainside overlooking the ocean north of Taipei. A new institute and monastery complex, called Dharma Drum Mountain, is currently under construction at this site.

Outstanding Features of the Institute

1. Until now there has not been any institutions of higher education inside the country which has a Buddhist studies department. So this institute is special when it comes to planing the basic foundation, midlevel and advanced classes in various areas of studies for the three years program. Step by step the Institute supports the student's talents.
2. A scholarship fund gives the graduate students free room and board, along with a wonderful studying environment.
3. The Institute employs internationally recognized Buddhist scholars from time to time to give lectures and talks, or use other communication devices to communicate with the graduate students to instruct them on how to write their theses.
4. Every two or three years the Institute hosts an international conference, until now there has been three such conferences, and has co-hosted once. Each time a special topic has been chosen to raise the Institute's knowledge level, and letting my country build a place for international atmosphere for Buddhist studies.
5. Publishing of learning skill material. Every year two publications are printed, the Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal and the Chung-Hwa Buddhist Studies, and encourages the publishing and compiling of Buddhist works done by the Institute's master and doctoral students and instructors. It also encourages the publishing of oversea scholars' associations research essays etc ...
6. The Institute has established a Buddhist extension educational center in the Taipei City area, which gives Buddhist instruction to the general community after work.
7. The Institute has its own computer lab, with access to the internet for outside educational information, as well as assisting the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association in producing the electric translation of the Chinese Tripitaka. This is all to advance into the Information Age.