

University of British Columbia

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Buddhist Studies at UBC: Reflecting on 2014 and Looking Forward to 2015.

It has been a busy year, and 2015 looks to be similarly vibrant. The two major centres for Buddhist Studies at UBC are “The Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhism and Contemporary Society” (<http://buddhism.arts.ubc.ca/>) and the “UBC Buddhist Studies Forum” (sponsored by Tzu-chi Canada and other organizations, <http://blogs.ubc.ca/dewei/>). The UBC Buddhist Studies Forum brings scholars to UBC, hosts conferences, and in cooperation with overseas academic institutions, runs intensive international summer and winter programs in China. The RHNHFF Program in Buddhism and Contemporary Society is celebrating a new name and new institutional affiliation with The Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation—joining the many institutions, programs, and people it sponsors to pursue the academic study of Buddhism, Chinese culture, and the arts. The RHNHFF Program supports undergraduate and graduate courses on Buddhism, and the Tung Lin Kok Yuen Canada Foundation Distinguished Speaker Series and Annual Conference. And finally, the Kameyama Lecture Series at the Department of Asian Studies helps to bring Buddhist studies scholars to UBC.

In 2013-2014, the UBC 2013 ICSCC-Fudan University Summer Program on Buddhism and Chinese Religions in August of 2013 (Shanghai, China), included seminars by Stephen Bokenkamp, John Kieschnick, Jinhua Chen, Seishi Karashima, and Barend J. ter Haar. From January to June 2014, UBC welcomed Professor André Laliberté (University of Ottawa) as the Visiting Chair in Buddhism and Contemporary Society while Jessica Main and Jinhua Chen were on research leave. Laliberté held a workshop on “Buddhism and the Work of Care” (April 2014) and a conference on “Buddhism and Politics in the Twentieth Century” (June 2014). Both he and Professor Rondao Lai (University of Southern California) presented public lectures on their recent research. As well, Laliberté hosted Venerables Xianli and Xianxun from Beijing Longquan Monastery in January 2014, and together with the Kameyama Lecture Series, organized a lecture by Brian Victoria. At the undergraduate level, Eiji Okawa and Dr. Gordon Djurdevic taught *Introduction to Buddhism* (ASIA 250) and the *Introduction to the Major Eastern Religions* (RELG 102) respectively.

Looking forward, we are pleased to welcome a large number of

Buddhist studies scholars to UBC to speak about their research: in conjunction with the Forbidden City Exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery (October 2014 to January 2015) co-sponsored by The Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation, the BCS Program is pleased to present lectures by Shi Zhiru (October 2014), Patricia Berger (October 2014), and John Kieschnick (January 2015). The BCS Program will also host a lecture by David Loy (May 2015). The UBC Buddhist Studies Forum will be welcoming Mikael Adolphson (January 2015), Raoul Birbaum (February 2015), Paul Groner (April 2015), and Wendi Adamek (April 2015). Scholar of *Tang Buddhism*, Professor Lu Tongyan, Shandong University, will be a visiting scholar at UBC's Department of Asian Studies.

The coming year will also be busy with conferences, workshops, and symposia. The BCS Program and Kameyama sponsored a graduate workshop on the Ippen shonin e-den by Charlotte von Verschuer in November 2014. The following month, UBC Buddhist Studies Forum held its International Winter Program of Seminars and Fieldwork on Buddhism and East Asian Cultures at Mount Emei, Sichuan, China. In May of 2015, UBC will host the fifth annual Tung Lin Kok Yuen Canada Foundation Conference on "Buddhism and Wellbeing," and the UBC Buddhist Studies Forum, will hold its Summer Program (July 2015) in Wuxi, China. Course offerings this year include *Introduction to Buddhism* (ASIA 250) and *Introduction to the Major Eastern Traditions* (RELG 102) taught by Jessica Main, *Chan Buddhism* (ASIA 385), *Chinese Buddhism* (ASIA 382), and *Readings in Chinese Religious Texts* (ASIA 511B) taught by Jinhua Chen.