

# AFRICAN BUDDHIST Seminary

African Buddhist Seminary, PO Box 2319, Bronkhorstspuit, 1020, South Africa

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WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO APPLY

Serious, clean-living, intelligent, educated, English-speaking, non-smoking, non-drinking single men between the ages of 18 and 35, with a matric or equivalent certificate who are interested in enrolling as novices are invited to apply for a

## 3-year intensive Buddhist Monastic Training Course.

The course includes learning Mandarin Chinese, Buddhist History & Conduct, Ch'an / Pure Land Meditation, Chanting, Liturgy, Tai Chi, etc.

The cost of tuition, accommodation, food, basic medical treatment and monastic attire will be borne by the Seminary for the duration of study.

On completion of the course a novice may decide to continue with his studies towards becoming a Buddhist monk, or return to lay life with no obligation to the seminary.

Each applicant is required to submit all educational certificates, a current CV, police clearance certificate (proof of clean criminal record) and a medical certificate declaring him to be in good health.





### **Fo Guang Shan Organisation**

The founding father of this organization, Venerable Master Hsing Yun, was born in China in 1927. He became an ordained monk at 14 and later established Fo Guang Shan (Buddha Light Mountain) Monastery in Kaosiung, Taiwan, over

thirty years ago. Under his guidance and with the cooperation and generous contributions of time, money and energy from dedicated monastics and laity around the world, Fo Guang Shan (FGS) has now become one of the largest Buddhist organizations in Taiwan and has expanded its activities to many continents including Asia, America and Africa.



### **Nan Hua Buddhist Temple**

In 1992, the Bronkhorstspruit Town Council decided to donate 15 ha of land to FGS for the development of a Buddhist Temple complex in South Africa.

Venerable Master Hsing Yun sent one of his long time disciples, Venerable Master

Hui Li, to build the Nan Hua Temple complex in Bronkhorstspruit, in order to expand FGS's activities and promote Buddhism on the African continent. The money required for the project came from the donations of Buddhist devotees and followers of FGS in Taiwan and South Africa. Since then, Nan Hua Temple (NHT) Guesthouse, the African Buddhist Seminary (ABS, Meditation Retreat Center and the Main Temple have been completed in Cultura Park - a peaceful suburb of Bronkhorstspruit, Gauteng. The NHT complex has a number of resident monks and nuns. Many lay people, both Chinese and non-Chinese, as well as ABS novices help in a variety of religious, cultural, social and charitable activities.

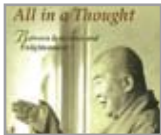
From Nan Hua Temple in Bronkhorstspruit, Fo Guang Shan has expanded its activities by opening branches and Buddhist temples in all major cities in South Africa, as well as in other African countries.



### **African Buddhist Seminary**

The general objectives of ABS are in line with FGS's objectives and motto, namely: Promoting Humanitarian Buddhism, Fostering Talent through Education and Creating Pure Land on Earth. The specific objectives of ABS are to provide young

men of all races with practice in the Buddhist monastic way of life and to prepare them for the role of Dharma teachers on the African continent.



### **Syllabus**

The seminary offers a variety of subjects, such as: Chinese Language, Basic Buddhism, Religious Doctrine of FGS (Ch'an / Pure Land Practice), Buddhist Conduct, Liturgy and Meditation.

The initial step is a three-year intensive preparatory monastic training course, followed by further studies and practical work for promising novices, either in South Africa, Taiwan or their home country.



### **Daily Life in The Seminary**

Daily life in the seminary starts with a wake up bell at 05:30, and ends at 22:00. Breakfast is at 07:00, lunch at 12:00 and dinner at 18:00.

From Tuesday to Saturday, the morning classes start at 08:00, afternoon classes

at 14:00 and evening classes at 19:00. On Sundays the novices participate in Dharma Functions and monastic work. There are no classes on Mondays.

The program of activities in ABS places equal emphasis on learning the Buddhist doctrine and its practical application in daily life. This ensures the development of theoretical knowledge and the practical and social skills necessary for leading a happy, healthy, unselfish and productive life.

Apart from classroom education, self-study periods and domestic work, time is allocated to exercise, basketball, soccer, etc.

The novices attend liturgy services and meditation every morning and evening. Every Sunday they participate and chant in Dharma functions in order to cultivate wisdom, devotion and compassion to accumulate good merit. The novices are expected

to shave their heads, wear monastic robes and abide by a set of strict rules, which include abstaining from eating meat, taking alcohol and using drugs, fighting, sex, stealing, lying, gossip etc. They clean their own rooms and cook their own vegetarian meals, and sometimes cook for the public as well - all in order to develop a sense of responsibility, humility and service. The novices have to learn to eat with chopsticks. They eat at regular times in accordance with the dining-room rules, which include silence during meals. They walk in group, in a slow, orderly and dignified manner. They are expected to respect each other, their teachers and the general public - and learn to live with all people in the spirit of peace, harmony, service and cooperation. As members of the Sangha (Buddhist spiritual community) they are expected to be an inspiring example of Buddhist teachings while studying at the Seminary.



### **Facilities**

The seminary is set in a tranquil environment, close to NHT. It consists of four buildings with the following facilities: classrooms and accommodation for more than 120 novices, study rooms, meditation and prayer halls, library, offices, parking,

basketball court etc.



### **What is Buddhism?**

Buddhism is sometimes described as a way of life, a philosophy or a code of moral conduct. It can be experienced, understood and practiced as any of these, but for many people it is their religion.



### **Who Was The Buddha?**

The Buddha was born in 563 BCE in Southern Nepal (Northern India), as a member of a rich and powerful royal family. His name was Siddhartha Gautama.

At the age of twenty-nine, he became so overwhelmed with the realization

that an ordinary human life is filled with so much suffering and unhappiness that he set out to find a spiritual way out of the suffering. He traveled throughout North-Eastern India as an ascetic for about six years.

He almost died of hunger. He vowed to meditate until he found answers to his questions. His vow and search culminated in his Enlightenment, under the now famous Bodhi Tree. His realization of the need for moderation led him to follow and teach what is known as the Middle Way.

He discovered why life is filled with suffering, and how people can escape from the unhappiness of existence. When others heard about his discovery, they began to listen to his teachings and called him the Buddha, which means the Awakened One. He established an order of monks and nuns (the Sangha) to spread his teachings (the Dharma) to people everywhere. He traveled around India and taught until the age of eighty, when he died.

He has inspired many people by his teachings and the example of his life. Countless books have been written and multitudes of schools established to teach Buddhism.



### **What The Buddha Taught**

**The Buddha taught The Middle Way, based in The Four Noble Truths of existence:**

· All human life is characterized by suffering;

- Suffering arises out of craving;
- To stop suffering, one must eliminate craving;
- The best way to eliminate suffering is to follow The Noble Eight-Fold Path.

### **The Noble Eight-Fold Path consists of:**

- Right Understanding
- Right Thoughts
- Right Speech
- Right Action
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Concentration