

# IBRARY OF TIBETAN WORKS & ARCHIVES

CENTRE FOR TIBETAN STUDIES

# Courses in

Buddhist Philosophy

New One-Year Special Buddhist Philosophy Course

Tibetan Language

2025

11 March - 12 December



THE GREAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PRESERVATION, DISSEMINATION AND CONTINUATION OF THE UNIQUE CULTURE OF TIBET HAS DEVOLVED UPON THE SHOULDERS OF THE TIBETAN PEOPLE. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND THE FUNCTIONING OF THE LIBRARY OF TIBETAN WORKS AND ARCHIVES ASSUMES THE UTMOST IMPORTANT IN THE PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THAT RESPONSIBILITY.

— HIS HOLINESS THE 14<sup>TH</sup> DALAI LAMA

#### INTRODUCTION

The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA) was founded by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama on 11 June 1970. It was established with the aim of preserving and propagating the rich culture of Tibet to counter the massive destruction it had suffered after the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1959 and the subsequent campaigns to eliminate the Tibetan culture.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the LTWA are to provide comprehensive Tibetan cultural resources and to promote an environment that encourages research and an exchange of knowledge between scholars and students. These factors are of the utmost importance in a contemporary world shaped by political and spiritual confusion. In trying to fulfill its aims and objectives, the Library's priorities include:

- ✓ Acquiring and conserving Tibetan manuscripts, books, artifacts, and works of art
- Providing access to books, manuscripts, and reference works (in Tibetan as well as
  in foreign languages) in study areas within the premises
- ✓ Compiling bibliographies and documentation of the Library holdings and related literature available worldwide
- ✓ Providing copies and prints of the resources and acting as a reference centre for such source materials
- ✓ Publishing books and manuscripts under the LTWA imprint
- ✓ Supporting research scholars
- ✓ Offering Buddhist philosophy, Tibetan language, and culture classes

The LTWA is firmly dedicated to a threefold vision of preservation, protection, and promotion of Tibetan cultural heritage.

# **BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY COURSES**

The LTWA offers daily Buddhist philosophy classes to help people appreciate and understand "reality" and help them deal with daily life. The classes are taught by qualified geshes in Buddhist philosophy who have dedicated a major part of their lives to study and practice. English translators are provided. Courses focus either on specific Indian or Tibetan texts or on significant topics of Buddhist philosophy and practice. The texts covered in the classes provide the foundation for a lifetime of meditation practice. Every day fifteen minutes of the class is dedicated to meditation practice, and Buddhist logic and debate is taught every Wednesday in the classes.

**Note:** Dates and times may change due to scheduled or unscheduled public teachings given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Such changes will be announced in advance. There will be no classes on Saturday, Sunday, and other official holidays. Occasionally a class may need to be cancelled or postponed. Prospective students are therefore requested to call, email, or visit <a href="www.tibetanlibrary.org">www.tibetanlibrary.org</a> to confirm the schedule before coming to the LTWA. The summer break is from July 11 to 31 and the winter break begins on December 12.

# Important information:

- ✓ All students are requested to attend the opening ceremony in the LTWA Conference Hall at 10 am, on March 11.
- ✓ Buddhist philosophy students will also receive the LTWA certificate on completion of a Buddhist topic/s or text/s in a semester provided that the students have at least 80% of attendance.
- ✓ All the LTWA students will celebrate the closing ceremony together after each semester.

#### FIRST BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY CLASS

Time: 9:00 am to 10:15 am

Teacher: Geshe Gyaltsen Tsering

**Text:** The Essence of the Stages of Path (Wylie: stag bu yong 'dzin ye shes rgya

mtshos mdzd pa'i byang chub lam rim chen mo'i sa bcad kyi thog nas skyes bu gsum gyi lam gyi rim pa'i man ngag gi gnad bsdus gsal ba'i sgron

me)

#### 11 March - 12 December

The textbook for this year's class with Geshe Gyaltsen-la is *The Essence of the Stages of Path* authored by Takbhu Yongzin Yeshi Gyatso. Based on Je Tsongkhapa's Great Treatise on the Stages of Path to Enlightenment, this *Lamrim* text deals with the stages of path to enlightenment in simple and accessible way to fulfil the needs of people who are new to Buddhist teachings.

The text outlines a progressive path that is tailored to different levels of understanding and capacities. By categorizing individuals into three main types called Three Individuals (skye bug sum) based on capacity - person of small capacity, person of medium capacity and person of great capacity – it teaches that the spiritual journey is gradual, and practitioners should approach their practice according to their current level of development. It explains that the path is not one-size-fits-all; different practitioners have different goals, aspirations, and abilities. It further asserts that the gradual progression helps individuals understand where they are on the path and how to move forward with clarity.

This *Lamrim* text has offered flexible methods for different levels of aspiration: For those at the initial capacity, the emphasis might be on achieving a better rebirth and cultivating basic virtue to escape suffering. For those at the medium capacity, the focus will shift to liberating oneself from samsara through the practices of meditation, ethical conduct, and wisdom. For those at the great capacity, the goal becomes bodhicitta and the aspiration to attain Buddhahood in order to help all sentient beings achieve freedom from suffering.

This distinction is essential because the Lamrim shows how practitioners can structure their practice according to their personal goals, leading to greater effectiveness in their spiritual development.

#### Recommended texts

- Je Tsonkhapa's Middle-Length Treatise on the Stages of Path to Enlightenment (Tib. Wylie: byang chub lam rim 'bring, phonetics: jang chub lam rim dring)
- Essence of Superfine Gold: A Guide on the Stages on the Path of Enlightenment, by the 3rd Dalai Lama, translated by Dr Chok Tenzin Monlam, LTWA.
- Teachings on Je Tsongkhapa's Three Principal Aspects of the Path, with commentary by the 14th Dalai Lama, LTWA.

## SECOND BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY CLASS

Time: 10:30 am to 11:45 am
Teacher: Geshe Lobsang Tsondu

**Texts:** Patrul Rinpoche's Words of My Perfect Teacher (Wylie: Kun bzang bla ma'i

zhal lung

#### 11 March – 12 December

Geshe-la will continue teaching the remaining parts of *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*, picking up from where we left off last year. This text serves as a practical guide to the spiritual practices common across all Tibetan Buddhist traditions. It is one of the most cherished introductions to the foundations of Tibetan Buddhism and is frequently recommended by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other esteemed teachers. The text provides a detailed methodology for how ordinary individuals can transform their thinking and embark on the path to liberation. It explains everything we need to know to practice the teachings effectively while helping us avoid the many pitfalls that can arise on the spiritual journey.

After that, Geshe-la will teach the Wheel of Sharp Weapon (blo sbyong 'khor lo' I mtshon cha). This text is a significant text in Tibetan Buddhism, attributed to the Indian master Dharmarakshita. This work addresses the profound consequences of harmful actions and the importance of ethical conduct, illustrating how negative deeds lead to suffering. Here's a brief overview of its key themes:

- Karma and Its Consequences: The text emphasizes the law of karma, detailing how harmful actions can lead to negative outcomes both in this life and in future lives.
- Impermanence and Suffering: It highlights the transient nature of life and the inevitability of suffering, encouraging practitioners to reflect on the importance of ethical living.
- Mind Training: The text often focuses on developing awareness and compassion, providing methods for transforming harmful thoughts and actions into positive ones.

- The Path to Liberation: It underscores the importance of engaging in virtuous actions to cultivate a better future and ultimately achieve liberation from the cycle of samsara.
- Visualization Practices: Some versions include meditative practices that help practitioners visualize the consequences of their actions, reinforcing the teachings on karma.

## Recommended text

Rinpoche, Dza Patrul. *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*. Translated by Padmakara Translation Group. Boston: Shambhala, 1998.

Ngawang Palzang, Khenpo. *A Guide to the Words of My Perfect Teacher*, Boston: Shambhala, 2004.Pal, Namkha. Mind Training Like the Rays of the Sun, Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives

Jinpa, Thupten (trans.). *Mind Training: Great Collection*. Montreal: Library of Tibetan Classics.

#### NEW AFTERNOON BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY CLASS

Tibetan language only (no translation will be provided)

Dates: 17 March – 12 December 2025

Class timing: Monday to Friday 2 – 3 pm

Teacher: Geshe Lobsang Tsundu

#### Term 1: 17 March – 11 July 2025

Geshe Lobsang Tsundu will begin the year by teaching chapter two of Dharmakirti's Commentary on Valid Cognition (deg(x) deg(x)). The purpose of studying valid cognition ultimately is to gain an understanding of reality backed by flawless reasoning. Some of the important topics covered within chapter two of the text include using reason to establish the Buddha as an infallible guide, establishing the existence of the four arya truths and proving the existence of past and future lives.

#### Term 2: 01 August - 12 December 2025

After finishing teaching chapter two of Commentary on Valid Cognition, Geshe Tsundu will then introduce chapters 18, 24 & 26 of Nāgārjuna's Fundamental Wisdom of the Middleway (ঙ্গ্ৰেল্ডাৰ্ম্ম), likely the best-known work amongst his six logical works of the Mādhyamika which examines the ultimate nature of reality. Deeming these chapters of

the text critical, His Holiness the Dalai Lama over the years has often centered his teaching of the Fundamental Wisdom exclusively on these three chapters. Using Buddhapālita's commentary, Geshe-la will elucidate on the theme of chapter 18 – an analysis of the "self" and "entities", and then the themes of chapters 24 and 26 – an analysis of the four arya truths and analysis the twelvefold chain respectively.

# Admission requirements:

#### Attendance Rule

A minimum of 75% attendance is required for students to be eligible to sit for the two end-of-term examinations. Admission is also open to casual students who will be required to keep the minimum attendance but will not be required to sit for term examinations.

#### Certificate

A certificate will be awarded accordingly to students who successfully complete the full course of study. Any student who drops the course in the middle is not eligible for the course completion certificate.

# Required text books:

 Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen's Commentary on Dharmakirti's Commentary on Valid Cognition, published by Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Varanasi, 2013.

Buddhapālita's Commentary on the Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way, published by LTWA, 2012.

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# SPECIAL BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY CLASS

The LTWA organizes evening Buddhist philosophy class occasionally. The program is especially aimed at the CTA staff members and other Tibetans living in and around Gangchen Kyishong. However, anyone who is interested may attend the classes. The Director, Geshe Lhakdor, and two other geshes will teach in turn.

#### **TIBETAN LANGUAGE COURSES**

The LTWA also offers daily Tibetan language classes taught by experienced teachers to help people better understand Tibetan culture. Tibetan language courses are taught in two semesters: **March 11** to **July 12**, and **August 1** to **December 12**. There are three regular Tibetan language classes: basic, intermediate, and higher intermediate; and two regular speaking classes: basic and intermediate. There are two other classes: one basic casual Tibetan language class and one early morning advanced Tibetan language class. The classes are held five days a week from Monday to Friday.

#### Note:

- Serious students who wish to receive the LTWA certificate on completion of a semester must sit for monthly tests.
- New students who wish to study basic Tibetan language will be admitted to the Casual Tibetan Language Course at any time during a semester. For other Tibetan language and speaking classes, new students will not be admitted after the third week of a semester.

#### **REGULAR TIBETAN LANGUAGE COURSES**

# 1. Basic Tibetan Language Course:

Beginning with the alphabet, vowels, and combinations of letters, students learn the fundamental structure of the language, how to make simple sentences, and so forth. The aim at this level is to train students in reading and simple conversation.

Time: 9:00 am to 10:00 am

Teacher: Tashi Tsomo

Substitutes: Palden Tsomo and Ani Norzom

**Textbooks:** 1. Colloquial Tibetan: A Textbook of the Lhasa Dialect

(LTWA publication)

- 2. A Standard Tibetan Pronunciation (not published yet)
- 3. The Heart of Tibetan Language

(LTWA publication)

## 2. Intermediate Tibetan Language Course:

The intermediate course is a stepping-stone to the upper intermediate course. Students in this course reinforce and extend their command of Tibetan grammar and idioms. The main aim of this class is to help students become confident in Tibetan.

Time: 9:00 am to 10:00 am

Teacher: Bhu Dawa

Substitutes: Ani Phuntsok Wangmo and Ani Norzom

**Textbooks:** 1. Modern Tibetan Language, Vol. 1 (LTWA publication)

2. Freedom in Exile (LTWA publication)

3. Folklore: Tibetan stories (not yet published)

# 3. Higher Intermediate Tibetan Language Course:

In this course, Tibetan grammar and honorific words are taught. The class also touches on aspects of Tibetan culture and religion to provide students with a basis for discussing Buddhism in Tibetan.

**Time:** 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

Teacher: Tashi Tsomo

Substitutes: Ani Phunstok Wangmo

**Textbooks:** 1. Lectures on Tibetan Religion and Culture (LTWA publication)

2. Freedom in Exile (LTWA publication)

3. Bod kyi sgra rig pa'i gnas la dpyod pa bsal ba'i me long

(LTWA publication)

4. bston pa'i mdzad rnam gsal ba'i me long (LTWA publication)

## **REGULAR TIBETAN SPEAKING COURSES**

# 1. Basic Tibetan Speaking Course:

This course is aimed at assisting our students to communicate in Tibetan, thereby enriching their knowledge of the feelings and basic way of life of Tibetans. The main aim of this class is to help students become more confident in spoken Tibetan.

Time: 10:30 am to 11:30 am

Teacher: Palden Tsomo

Substitutes: Tashi Tsomo and Ani Norzom

**Textbook:** Speak Fluent Tibetan (LTWA publication)

# 2. Intermediate Tibetan Speaking Course:

Students will reinforce and extend their command of spoken Tibetan, thereby enriching their knowledge of the feelings and basic way of life of Tibetans. The main aim of this class is to help students become more confident in speaking Tibetan.

Time: 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm Teacher: Palden Tsomo

Substitute: Bhu Dawa

**Textbook:** Speak Tibetan the Tibetan Way (LTWA publication)

#### **CASUAL TIBETAN LANGUAGE COURSE**

# **Casual Tibetan Language Class:**

Beginning with the alphabet, vowels, and combinations of letters, students learn the fundamental structure of the language, how to make simple sentences, and so forth. The aim at this level is to train students in reading and simple conversation.

Time: 10:00 am to 11:00 am
Teacher: Acharya Ani Norzom

**Textbooks:** 1. A Basic Grammar of Modern Spoken Tibetan (LTWA publication)

2. A Standard Tibetan Pronunciation (not published yet)

# INTENSIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS

The LTWA organizes two yearly intensive learning programs. A three-month Intensive Translation Program was started in 2006 and a two-month Intensive Tibetan Studies Program was started in 2011. This year, the Intensive Tibetan Studies Program is tentatively scheduled from April to May, and the Intensive Translation Program is from July to September. A minimum of fifteen students are required to run the programs and a maximum of forty students are admitted to each program. The programs are open to Tibetans and others from the Himalayan regions and foreigners who have a good command of the Tibetan language.

In the Intensive Tibetan Studies Program, students are taught Tibetan language and literature, Buddhist philosophy and practice, and Tibetan history. In the Intensive Translation Program, students are taught Tibetan language and literature, Buddhist philosophy and practice, English language and literature, and translation methodology.

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE FACULTY MEMBERS

#### BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY TEACHERS

Geshe Lhakdor is director of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. He served as His Holiness the Dalai Lama's official translator for sixteen years. In 1982 he received his master's degree in English from Punjab University, Chandigarh and MPhil from Delhi University. He received his geshe degree from Drepung Loseling Monastic University in 1995. He has worked as a co-translator of the several books by HH the Dalai Lama, the notable among which are The Way to Freedom, The Joy of Living and Dying in Peace, the Mind and Lightening the Heart, and the Stages Meditation (commentary on the Bhavanakrama). He is presently the Chairman of the Education Council, CTA.

**Geshe Lobsang Tsondu** was born in Reting, Ü-Tsang, Tibet. He began his religious studies at the age of twelve at Sera Monastery in Tibet where he studied Buddhist philosophy until he was forced to flee Tibet in 1985. He received his geshe degree from Sera Monastery in south India in 2003. After that he studied tantra at Gyutoe Tantric University for one year. He taught Buddhist philosophy to the nuns of Kopan Monastery in Nepal for three years before joining the LTWA in 2005.

Geshe Gyaltsen Tsering was born in Kham Draggo, Tibet. He began his religious studies at the age of 18 with his uncle at Rasang mountain retreat in Tibet. He then continued to study Buddhist philosophy in Draggo Monastery for five years. He fled Tibet in 1988 and studied Buddhism for the next 25 years in Drepung Loseling Monastery in south India. He received his geshe Iharampa degree in 2013. After that he studied tantra at Gyume Tantric University for one year. He was invited to teach at the LTWA in 2014.

#### TRANSLATORS

**Tsering Norbu** holds an Uma Rabjampa degree (MA equivalent) in Tibetan studies and Buddhist philosophy from the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, Dharamsala. He has been translating at the LTWA since 2010.

**Phurbu Dolma** has a bachelor's degree in Tibetan Studies from the College for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah and a bachelor's degree from Delhi University. She has been translating at the LTWA since 2012.

Jampa Choejor earned his Shastri degree (BA)in Buddhist and Tibetan studies from Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), Varanasi, and MA in Buddhist and Tibetan studies from Namgyal Institute of Tibetology under Sikkim University, Sikkim. He studied Buddhist philology at Sera Jey Monastic University from 2005 to 2011. He joined the LTWA as Dharma translator in 2023.

**Ven. Phuntsok Wangmo** joined the Library as a translator in March 2024. She holds a Master's degree in Applied Psychology from Gautam Buddha University in Noida, and has completed several advanced Tibetan studies courses, including the 3-year Madhyamika course, the 7-year Pharchin course, and the 3-year Basic Logic course.

#### **TIBETAN LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

**Acharya Sangye Tandar Naga** is the head of the Tibetan Cultural Research Department and the editor of *gtam-tshogs*, a journal in Tibetan. He has over twenty years of Tibetan teaching experience. He teaches the morning special Tibetan language class and other academic workshops at the LTWA. He joined the LTWA in 1991.

**Acharya Ani Norzom** holds an acharya degree in Tibetan Studies and Buddhist philosophy from the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Varanasi. She joined the LTWA in 1999 and has been serving as Tibetan language teacher since then.

**Palden Tsomo** has a bachelor degree in Tibetan studies from the College for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah, Dharamsala. She taught Tibetan as a foreign language at the Esukhia, Dharamsala, for three years. She was recruited as Tibetan language teacher at the LTWA in 2018.

**Bhu Dawa** has a bachelor degree in Tibetan language and literature from the Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education, Bangalore. He obtained his B.Ed. from the College for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah, Dharamsala. He served as a Tibetan language Teacher at the TCV School, Gopalpur, for over three years and then joined the LTWA in 2019 as Tibetan language teacher.

**Tashi Tsomo** completed her schooling from Central School for Tibetans, Herbertpur, Dehradun. She obtained her BA B.Ed. degree from CIHTS, Sarnath, Varanasi. After that, she taught in Sambhota School, Orissa, for more than three years. She joined the LTWA in July 2019 as Tibetan language teacher.

# **OFFICIAL HOLIDAY LIST 2025**

Western New Year	January 1	
Republic Day of India	January 26	
Tibetan New Year (Losar)	February 28—March 2	
Great Miracles Day	*	
(Choetrul Duechen)		
Tibetan Uprising Day	March 10	
Saka Dawa	*	
Universal Prayer and Purification Day	*	
(Zamling Chisang)		
Birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama	July 6	
Buddha's First Teaching (Choekhor Duechen)	*	
Independence Day of India	August 15	
Tibetan Democracy Day	September 2	
Gandhi Jayanti (Birthday)	October 2	
Buddha's Descent from Heaven	*	
(Lhabab Duechen)		
Commemoration of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness	December 10	

<sup>\*</sup>The dates for these occasions are not fixed, and students will be informed in advance.

# DAILY CLASS SCHEDULES 11 March - 12 December 2025

Time	Buddhist Philosophy	Language	Textbooks
9:00 am - 10:00 am		Basic Tibetan Language Teacher: Tashi Tsomo Sub: Palden Tsomo	<ul><li>Colloquial Tibetan</li><li>A standard Tibetan Pronunciation</li></ul>
9:00 am – 10:00 am		Intermediate Tibetan Language Teacher: Bhu Dawa Sub: Ani Phuntsok Wangmo	<ul> <li>Tibetan folk stories</li> <li>Speeches of HH the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama</li> </ul>
9:00 am – 10:15 am	First Buddhist Philosophy Class Geshe Gyaltsen Tsering	The Essence of the Stages of Path by Takbhu Yongzin	
10:00 am – 11:00 am		Casual Tibetan Teacher: Acharya Ani Norzom	<ul> <li>A Basic Grammar of Modern Spoken Tibetan</li> <li>Modern Tibetan Language I</li> </ul>
10:30 am – 11:30 am		Basic Tibetan Speaking Teacher: Palden Tsomo Sub: Tashi Tsomo	• Speak Fluent Tibetan
10:30 am – 11:45 am	Second Buddhist Philosophy Class Geshe Lobsang Tsondu	<ul> <li>Words of My Perfect         Teacher (kun bzang bla         ma'i zhal lung)</li> <li>Wheel of Sharp         Weapons (blo sbyong         mtshon cha'i 'khor lo)</li> </ul>	
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm		Intermediate Tibetan Speaking Teacher: Palden Tsomo Sub: Bhu Dawa	• Speak Tibetan the Tibetan Way
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm		Higher Intermediate Tibetan Language Teacher: Tashi Tsomo Sub: Ani Phuntsok Wangmo	<ul> <li>Lecture on Tibetan         Religion and Culture</li> <li>Particles and Exercises         (photocopy)</li> <li>bston pa'i mdzad rnam         gsal ba'i me long</li> </ul>
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Special Advanced Buddhist Philosophy Class	Teacher: Geshe Lobsang Tsondue	

#### REGISTRATION

Students are required to register and obtain a registration slip from the Library office before attending any course. Fees are nominal and they are only meant to defray the running cost of the courses. Therefore, course fees should be paid at the time of registration, either for a whole course or on a monthly basis.

**FEES** 

**Registration:** Rs.100 (one time)

**Buddhist Philosophy:** Rs.400 per month for one class **Language Course:** Rs.600 per month for one class

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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