

## *A Preliminary Draft of the The European Institute of Applied Buddhism Course Catalogue*

Distinguished programs of Buddhist Studies may be found at any number of universities around the world. There is, however, a crucial element missing from many of these programs: training in concrete methods for using the wealth of the Buddha's teachings to relieve suffering and promote happiness and peace in ourselves, our families, our communities and across the world. The European Institute of Applied Buddhism (EIAB) offers a complete program that fully integrates the study of Buddhist texts with concrete applications at all levels of students' daily life.

Buddhism as taught at EIAB is not religion. The teachings of the Buddha are offered in a non-confessional, non-sectarian manner, and there is no agenda either explicit or implicit to "convert" anyone to (or away from) any religious status. EIAB offers training in practices and methods developed by Shakyamuni Buddha himself and by others inspired by his teachings, with the sole purpose of relieving suffering and bringing happiness to ourselves and our world.

Under the aegis of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, the world-renowned meditation teacher, scholar and writer, together with senior Dharma teachers of Plum Village, students of EIAB gain not only a firm grounding in essential Buddhist teachings, but a mastery of their own minds, bodies, speech and actions through cultivating the art of mindful living. Specifically, EIAB trains students to apply Buddhist teachings in such a way as to:

- release tensions of the body, reduce bodily stress and pains, and in many cases alleviate not only symptoms but also underlying causes of illness
- look deeply to understand whatever suffering may be in them or around them
- recognize and transform painful feelings and emotions through insight
- use compassionate listening and skilful words to create bridges of real understanding between individuals and also between groups in conflict

Courses are open to all who wish to improve the quality of their own lives and those of their families and communities, by learning effective means of making happiness and peace a reality in all aspects of daily life. Buddhist teachings are offered at EIAB in a very practical, nonreligious way, and students of any – or no – religious background can benefit from learning them and putting them into practice. No academic prerequisite is necessary to begin a course of study at EIAB. Courses are taught at several campuses across Europe, North America and Asia.

Credit is awarded upon successful completion of each course. Upon completion of a prescribed series of courses, students may be awarded the degree of Master of Buddhist Studies and Practice (MBSP). Other institutions with programs in Buddhist studies, comparative religion or other subjects may like to send students for, say, 10-20 hours of training at EIAB to bring deeper meaning to their studies. EIAB works in cooperation

with other academic institutions to promote maximum transferability of EIAB credits to programs at those other institutions.

The EIAB also offers specialized programs of study and training for longtime monastic and lay practitioners who have realized the benefits of Buddhist practice and wish to become Dharmacaryas (Dharma teachers), to share the teachings and practice of Buddhism with others in ways that are relevant and effective for our time. The EIAB Dharmacarya Council decides when a student in this program is ready to receive official recognition as a Dharmacarya in the teaching tradition of Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh and Plum Village. This official recognition may include a ceremony of Dharma Lamp transmission.

## **Course Descriptions**

### **1. The First Steps**

These courses are for the basic practice of mindfulness. They are held regularly and have different levels.

#### **1A. Initiation to Mindfulness Practice**

This is a two-day course from Friday evening until Sunday midday. It is held once every month, or in case of demand, twice every month. The course includes the study and practice of:

- Guided sitting meditation
- Walking meditation
- Mindful breathing at every moment of the day
- Total Relaxation
- Stress Reduction
- Mindfulness of Feelings
- Group discussions and sharing on the experience of the above practices
- Mindful Movement of the body

#### **1B. Basic Mindfulness Practice**

This is a five day course held once every month. The course includes the study and practice of:

- Revision of all that has been studied and practiced in course 1A
- Work and service in mindfulness
- Mindful Communication viz: deep listening, loving speech, techniques to restore and maintain good communication in the family, the community and in the work place
- Guidelines for ethical conduct in the family, at work and in personal life: these guidelines can also be described as the practice of love aimed at the reduction of suffering of the individual, the society and the world; they are termed the Five Mindfulness Trainings and the Two Promises (for children).
- Using the practices of mindful breathing and walking to come back to the present moment

- Recognising the many wonders of life here in the present moment

### 1C. Advanced Mindfulness Practice

This is a five-day course held once every six months. The course includes the study and practice of:

- Revision of all that has been studied and practiced in courses 1A and 1B
- Students will learn how to invite the bell. The bell is a central part of the practice of mindfulness and students are trained to invite the bell to sound.
- Training to offer incense
- Training to chant and to read Buddhist chants and scriptures

2. These courses are tailored to meet the needs of those who wish to bring the practice of mindfulness into their chosen career. Each course is offered one time every year and lasts for five or six days. The courses are secular in character and are open to anyone of any spiritual tradition or of no spiritual tradition at all. The devotional and religious aspects of Buddhism will not be included in these courses. Each course includes revision of course 1B. The revision will be taught in such a way that those who have not previously completed Course 1B can take part in this course.

### 2A. Mindfulness Practice for the Business World

- Practices for mindfulness, relaxation and concentration especially tailored to the business world
- Training to create quality of life in leisure and family life as a background to improving the quality of business life
- Learning techniques for leading meetings that are productive and enjoyable
- Training in Conflict Resolution
- Training in creating collaboration and harmony in the work place
- Caring for the needs of colleagues and workers

### 2B. Mindfulness Practice for Schools, Teachers and School Administrators

The course is designed to help teachers foster attention and concentration in the classroom. There will be instruction on:

- How children learn emotional awareness
- Ways to help students who have a difficult home-background
- Ways to bring mindfulness into the classroom
- Ways to bring inclusiveness into the classroom
- Ways for the teacher to take good care of himself in order to be able to take better care of students.
- Ways of conflict resolution for the classroom
- Communication skills

### 2C. Mindfulness Practice for those Responsible for the Maintenance of Law and Order in Society

- Learning how to transform the seeds of fear and violence in oneself
- Learning how to bring quality into leisure time and the time spent with one's family

- Learning ways to communicate with colleagues
- Learning ways to create inner peace at any time of the day

#### 2D. Mindfulness Practice in the World of Politics

- Learning ways to avoid stress
- Learning ways to oppose policies of government constructively and without violence
- Learning ways to stop and breathe throughout the day
- Concrete practices in deep listening and loving speech
- Training to create quality in leisure and family life as a background to improving the quality of life in the political realm

#### 2E Mindfulness Practice for Doctors, Nurses, Psychotherapists

- Taking care of oneself in order to maintain health and be able to help others better
- Using the Insight of Buddhism into the Oneness of Body and Mind
- Learning ways of right consumption and nutrition according to the Buddhist tradition
- Training in non-fear
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#### 2F Focus on Healing Parent-Child Relationships

This course is primarily for those who feel that they have an unresolved conflict with their parents or children. It could also be helpful for psychotherapists and teachers who work with those who suffer because of their relationship with their children or parents.

Students will:

- Practice calming themselves (shamatha meditation) in order to be able to see more clearly the roots of the conflict.
- Look deeply in order to be able to see anything positive that they have received from parents or children.
- Exercise in learning how to write letters of reconciliation before coming face to face to practice beginning anew
- Exercise in pairs in using loving speech and deep listening.

#### 2G Focus on Practicing in Times of Bereavement and Grief

This course is designed for students who have not yet been able to overcome their grief as a result of bereavement or divorce and separation. It is also open to those who, like psychotherapists and counselors, are engaged in helping the bereaved. The practices taught will include:

- Abdominal breathing in order not to be carried away by waves of emotion
- Being in touch with one's grief in a way that is compassionate and mindful: not strengthening and at the same time not repressing the grief
- Looking deeply into and resolving feelings of remorse and regret
- Looking deeply into the nature of impermanence, no-self and interbeing in order to be able to see the no-coming, no-going, unborn and undying nature of all that is.

3. These are courses that are held on an occasional basis and bring together people with specific shared experiences and concerns. Students study Buddhist teachings and apply them in their particular circumstances to achieve their goals while improving overall physical, mental and emotional health. All courses will include revision of Course 1B.

### 3A Mindfulness Practice to Ensure a Happy, Enduring Marriage

This course is suggested for couples who are intending to live together and raise a family. It is recommended that both partners attend the course together. Although the course is three weeks in duration, the students can stay longer in the institute in order to be able to consolidate and continue to practice what has been learnt under the guidance of teachers and with the support of other practitioners. The course teaches students to:

- Recognise painful or pleasant feelings manifesting in oneself and the other person
- Know how to accept and handle the feelings by looking into their nature, foundation and source of sustenance
- Generate feelings of happiness for the many conditions of happiness that are available in and around us in each moment
- Look deeply into one's own roots and the roots of the other person to understand the origins of one's own and the other's behaviour
- Recognise positive and negative seeds in one's own and the other's
- mind and commit to practice *selective watering*<sup>1</sup> in actions of thought, speech and consumption.
- Listen compassionately to recognize and understand the suffering and happiness in oneself and in the other person
- Practice Beginning anew to restore and enhance the quality of communication
- Identify and regularly check in with the individual and combined aspirations and ideals of each other.
- Practice the Four Immeasurable Minds of Love.

To further deepen the insights and skills realized in this course, students may wish to continue their studies and practice with the following courses:

1. The Four Brahmaviharas: Buddhist teachings on love
2. Focus on dealing with anger and other painful or intense emotions
3. Focus on conflict resolution and restoring communication
4. Anapanasati Sutta and The Breath of the Buddha Retreat
5. Sutra for the White Clad Disciple, Taking Refuge in the Three Jewels, the Five Mindfulness Trainings, and the Four Recollections
6. Studies and Practices of the Order of Interbeing History, the OI Charter, the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings, and Engaged Buddhism.

### 3B Mindfulness Practice for Young Adults

Students first of all master the basic mindfulness practices as described in courses 1 and 2. From this foundation they practice to:

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<sup>1</sup> This means actively encourage the potentialities of all that is wholesome in oneself and the other and refrain from inciting in oneself, or the other, whatever is not wholesome.

- Investigate issues of particular interest and concern to young adults, such as how to find right livelihood – *i.e.* meaningful work that supports body, mind and also spirit; meaningful ways of spending leisure time, a meaningful ideal for life.
- Develop their own daily practices for physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being;
- Relate skillfully with sexual energy
- Cultivate true love in intimate relationship
- Successfully navigate growth and change in relationships with parents and family
- Maintain good communication and conflict resolution in all relationships.

### 3C Mindfulness Practice for War Veterans

War veterans benefit tremendously from the basic mindfulness practices described in 1 and 2 above. This course is also an opportunity for veterans to look deeply, both individually and as a group, into their experiences in the military and after returning home.

The course will focus on:

- Learning to come back to the present moment
- Calming body and mind
- Discovering a true refuge of peace in one's self that is available anytime, anywhere
- Transforming suffering and isolation into compassion and connection.

Supplementary courses are: Focus on Stress Reduction, Focus on dealing with anger and other painful or intense emotions, Focus on Healing Depression, Focus on Transforming Anxiety and Fear.

### 3D Mindfulness Practice with Terminal Illness, Death and Dying

The course is designed for those who have recently been diagnosed with serious illness that could be terminal. The students will learn how to practice to:

- Live deeply the present moment in order to touch all that is wonderful in life
- Accept the illness and no longer revolt against it or blame themselves or others
- See the oneness of body and mind as part of the practice of managing physical pain
- Relax so that the physical pain is not increased by anxiety and fear
- Discover the truth of impermanence as a way to overcome fear

Students may wish to continue and further their practice with the following courses:

1. Focus on Stress Reduction
2. Focus on Transforming Anxiety and Fear
3. Sutra on Teachings to be Given to the Sick

### 3E Mindfulness for Peace- and Other Social-Activists

This course is designed for those who are actively engaged in non-violent action to oppose government policies of war. It is to help counter despair, burnout, frustration and the feeling of powerlessness that are often experienced by activists when they have been involved in non-violent resistance over time. During the course we shall learn and practice to:

- Breathe and enjoy the present moment,

- Avoid losing ourselves in tragedies of the past, in objectives for the future or even in crises happening in the present
- Nourish ourselves daily with all that is wonderful in life
- Meditate on impermanence to see that nothing whether positive or negative endures and in the light of this insight learn acceptance without indifference
- Discover ways to work for change that are not harmful to themselves and others and are more effective for their cause.
- Cultivate a healthy attitude towards self, colleagues, and those whose positions differ from one's own.
- Understand the true meaning of power.

Students may wish to continue and further their practice with the following courses:

1. Focus on Conflict Resolution and Restoring Communication
2. Focus on Dealing with Anger and Other Intense or Painful Emotions

### 3F Mindfulness Practice and the Arts

This course is designed for those who are involved in the performing arts of music, acting and film-producing, and the creative arts of script-writing, painting, composing, sculpture, etc. The spiritual life is very closely connected to the arts. The artist is in a position to help give rise to the highest ideals in human life and conversely to incite and increase all that is most negative in the human consciousness. Mindfulness can greatly enhance the capacity of the artist to be an instrument for peace in the world.

During this course the artist learns to:

- Calm mind and body
- Develop concentration
- Nourish his or her deepest ideals in art work
- See the nature of sense impressions as food and examine the kind of food that he or she wishes to present to the world
- Discover new levels of creativity
- Discover the interconnectedness of all things: to feel more in touch with his or her own roots, to other people, to all of life,
- Allow artwork help us to be more mindful, present and alive.

Students may wish to continue and further their practice with the following courses:

1. Mindfulness Practice and Filmmaking
2. Sutra on the Four Nutrients: the Crucial Practice of Mindful Consumption

### 3G Mindfulness Practice and Filmmaking

Film is a very powerful tool for reaching many people and for making a positive difference in society. At the same time, the realities of the film industry and the process of bringing a film into being can be a highly stressful context in which to work. During this course the student practices to:

- Relax body and mind and improve concentration,
- Explore together with other students and teachers of the course ways to deal with deadlines, economic pressures on film content and other challenges;
- Be able to resolve interpersonal conflicts, transform work environments;
- Nourish his or her deepest ideal in the medium of film-making

- Know ways to maintain relationship with family and friends during long absences; and otherwise improve their quality of life and work in the film world.
- Students also learn about the nature of sense impressions as food in order to be able to protect themselves from producing and ingesting toxic cultural items.

Students may wish to continue and further their practice with the following course: The Sutra on the Four Nutriments: the Crucial Practice of Mindful Consumption.

### 3H Focus on Stress Reduction

Stress may be the most important cause of physical and mental illness in our time. Anyone who wishes to improve the quality of his or her health would benefit from this course.

The basic mindfulness practices taught in courses 1 and 2 are the essential foundation for dealing with the stresses that arise in our everyday life. This course can help those who experience stress on a regular or infrequent basis, or who wish to be of help to others who are so challenged. Students train to:

- Use mindful breathing throughout the day
- Stop and return to themselves at frequent intervals during the day
- Recognize the factors that lead to stress in their lives
- Visualize relaxing the different parts of the body and bring healing energy to each part
- Understand and embrace inherited habit energies that lead to emotional stress in order to be able to transform them
- By the end of the course students have mastered enough tools to help them guard against stress in their daily lives.

Students may wish to continue and further their practice with the following course: The Anapanasati Sutta: the Breath of the Buddha

### 3I Focus on Conflict Resolution and Restoring Communication

Studies have shown that the quality of our interpersonal relationships is one of the most important factors in determining our overall level of happiness and health. Even the best relationships must encounter differences and disagreements from time to time. The key to a joyful, successful relationship – be it a couple relationship, a friendship, a work team or any other – is not to try to eliminate all differences, but rather to know how to use disagreements as opportunities to learn more about oneself and the other person, and deepen the connection. Building from the basic practices taught in courses 1 and 2, in this course the student practices with several concrete exercises to:

- Develop the ability to listen deeply and compassionately,
- Express himself truthfully, skillfully and kindly.
- Stop and look deeply
- Use the practice of meditation in order to be able to understand better the body and mind of those the student is in conflict with and not to blame others
- Be compassionate to herself in order to be compassionate to the other
- Water positive seeds in her own consciousness by being in touch with all that is wonderful and refreshing in life

### 3J Focus on Dealing with Anger and Other (Related) Painful or Intense Emotions

The Buddha suggested that there is only one way to win and that is to master one's own anger. It should be said at the outset that, according to the teachings of Buddhist psychology, to rehearse or ventilate anger only serves to make it more difficult to transform. It is like repeating a song; the more you sing it the more easily it will come up in your mind. On the other hand repressing anger will, over a period of time, lead to sickness of body or mind. In order to go the middle way between the two extremes of repression and ventilation, Plum Village has developed a number of concrete ways to practice in order to transform anger.

In this course students practice to:

- Deepen the experience of mindful breathing, calming body and mind, relaxing and coming back to the present moment
- Know what to do when anger begins to arise in oneself
- Embrace painful feelings when they arise
- Look deeply into the roots of the anger that is in one's consciousness
- Understand and follow the Peace Treaty. The Peace Treaty is a document that has been developed in Plum Village. It enumerates clearly the steps that are to be taken by the practitioner who feels angry as well as for the practitioner who is the object of the anger of another
- Use the Peace Note as a way to express angry feelings without further damaging the situation
- Strengthen the seeds of understanding, compassion and forgiveness for oneself and others
- Be able to practice Beginning Anew. Beginning Anew is a practice of reconciliation that involves deep listening and loving speech
- Apply the teachings of the *Discourse on the Five Ways of Putting an End to Anger*

Students may wish to continue and further their practice with the following courses:

1. Focus on Healing Relationships between Parents and Children
2. Focus on Conflict Resolution and Restoring Communication
3. The Four Brahmaviharas: Buddhist Teachings on Love

### 3K Focus on Transforming Anxiety and Fear

Anxiety could be said to be the sickness of our time. It leads to many disturbances of body and mind. During this course students will learn:

- How to be in touch with all that is wonderful and refreshing in the present moment
- How to slow down or stop constant thinking by the practices of breathing, walking and guided meditation
- How to relax and renew energy at different times during the day

Students may wish to continue and further their practice with the following course:

Bhaddekaratta Sutta: Teachings on Living in the Present Moment

### 3L Focus on Dealing with Depression and Suicidal Tendencies

This course is designed to help those who seek to find ways to transform depression and those who help the depressed and suicidal. Mindfulness practice has proved very effective in reducing and healing depression and its effects on our body and mind.

The course will focus on:

- How to slow down or stop negative thinking by the practices of breathing, walking and guided meditation
- The practice of abdominal breathing in order not to be carried away by waves of emotion
- Looking deeply to see the roots of our feelings in the body and the mind (the part of the body where the depression arises and the thoughts that accompany the depression)
- Discovering the kinds of consumption that feed depression and learning ways to put an end to this consumption
- Using writing or drawing to help look deeply into how the student can handle depression
- Understanding the nature of our mind
- How to be in touch with all that is wonderful and refreshing in the present moment
- Learning ways to heal the depression when it is not manifesting by selectively consuming sights, sounds, aromas and mental images that strengthen the most healthy aspects of body and mind.
- Learning how to rest, relax and renew energy
- How to engage the body in the healing process through mindful, joyful and creative physical movement. (There may be yoga, Tai Chi and other movement forms offered).
- How to relax and renew energy at different times during the day
- How to see that they are a continuation of their parents and ancestors and apply the practices of mindfulness to heal the suffering they have inherited from their ancestors.
- How to take refuge in healthy spiritual communities, and strengthen and heal relationships with others to prevent isolation and loneliness.

The practices mentioned above have helped students to reduce or completely stop medication over a significant and varying amount of time. However for the duration of the course all students are required to maintain their current dosage of medication and only reduce or stop medication on the advice of their personal counselor, psychiatrist or doctor

### 3M Mindfulness Practice for Children and Parents/ Mindfulness for families with children 6-18

These courses are organized so that children can practice with their parents during the course. The institute will be open to receive children 5 years and older when this course is in progress with the proviso that the children be accompanied by an adult. Parents who are not able to bring their children are also welcome to attend the course. Some parts of the course will be practiced by children and parents together and for some parts of the course a special children's programme will be offered. The course will teach families to be joyfully and wholly present for each member of the family.

Age-specific activities for children that will be offered include:

- Awareness of breathing,

- Relaxing the body,
- Pebble meditation (a sitting meditation practice for children)
- The Two Promises, (ethical guidelines for children),
- Touching the earth for children,
- Walking meditation,
- Learning mindfulness practice songs
- Cooperative games, sports, arts,
- Time in nature,
- Creative movement,
- Eating meditation
- Skilful communication with parents, teachers and classmates

Parents will meet together to:

- Learn and share experiences and insights on parenting and nourishing good qualities in their partner (Some aspects of the Marriage Course will be brought into this one).
- Practice mindfulness with their children when they return home after the course
- Communicate skillfully with their children –children will also be instructed on skilful communication with their parents-.
- Learn practice songs as a joyful reminder of the practice
- Learn ways to discover the most positive aspects of the native culture in order to be able to transmit these to the children
- Help children in the matter of right consumption
- Practice Beginning Anew together with their spouse and children

Family activities will include the practice of Beginning Anew to establish good communication and resolve conflicts, establishing a breathing room and ancestor's altar at home, the Peace Treaty, and mindful consumption for the whole family. At the end of the course, there will be a festival, bonfire or ceremony to celebrate the transformation and insights of the week.

### 3N Mindfulness Practice for High School Students

In this time of rapid changes, there is often much confusion over identity and belonging. Teenagers seek greater autonomy from parents and family. The practice during this course will be presented with fun and in interesting ways. It will include music, creative expression, movement, time in nature, writing a journal, and physical exercise, like hiking, sports, yoga, etc. Teenagers will learn how to:

- take care of their bodies and minds through mindful breathing, walking, relaxing and eating,
- connect meaningfully and skillfully with their peers,
- take care of their emotions,
- reduce the stress that arises in connection with academic studies,
- cultivate solidity,
- listen deeply to themselves so that they can respond intelligently and mindfully to others .
- listen deeply to others in order to re-establish communication where it has been lost.

- They present to each other the Five Mindfulness Trainings as the basis for mindful and happy living, focusing especially on mindful consumption and healthy relationships.

### 3O Mindfulness Practice for College Students

This course will include everything in the Young Adults' course (3B) as well as:

- Investigating issues of particular interest and concern to young adults, such as how to find right livelihood – *i.e.* meaningful work that supports body, mind and also spirit; meaningful ways of spending leisure time,
- Realizing a meaningful ideal for life
- Developing their own daily practices for physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being
- Relating skillfully with sexual energy
- Cultivating true love in intimate relationship
- Successfully navigating growth and change in relationships with parents and family
- Maintaining good communication and conflict resolution in all relationships.
- In addition the course will focus on how to deal with the stress and pressures of academic life by learning stress reduction.
- The mindfulness practices taught will increase concentration and insight, both in class as well as out of it. There will be group and individual periods to explore Right livelihood and discerning our direction and purpose.

### 3P Mindfulness Practice for People of Colour

This course will address the specific experiences of people with Native American, Indigenous, African, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latin American, and Middle Eastern heritage who live as minorities in predominantly European or European American societies and cultures. We will use mindfulness practice to learn how to:

- Create a true home for ourselves wherever we are,
- Accept ourselves and others
- Embrace our emotions
- Nourish compassion and forgiveness for ourselves and others .
- Inquire into the real nature of our identity by recognizing the interbeing nature of all that is, thus freeing ourselves from suffering
- We will together create an ancestors' altar and practice Touching the Earth to connect with our ancestors and heal feelings of alienation and the suffering of discrimination.
- We will also celebrate and honor our diverse histories and cultures through song, poetry and dance in a festival on the last evening of the course.

### 3Q Mindfulness Practice for Environmental Protection

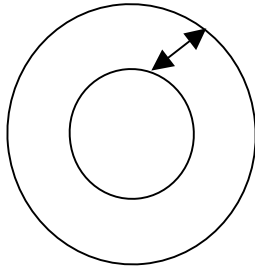
The Diamond Sutra is one of the oldest texts on protecting the environment. In this sutra the Buddha taught that the human species and other species are interdependent. Moreover, the species that we call sentient and the species that we call nonsentient interare. This course is to help those whose concern is to protect the environment:

- To study the Diamond Sutra and other Buddhist teachings

- To learn ways of mindfulness to avoid burn out, despair and destructive anger in the work of environmental protection, i.e. practices similar to those offered in course 3E for Social Activists.
- To learn how to create and maintain harmony and peace in themselves, their families, and in work for the environment.
- To spend time in nature to heal themselves and to touch deeply the voice and wisdom nature offers.
- To study the 5 Remembrances to help us accept and come to terms with the reality of impermanence, death and decay, not only of us as individuals, but also of societies and civilizations. With this acceptance we will no longer do our ecological work out of fear or despair, but out of freedom and peace.

4. The following courses are for those who have already received the Lamp Transmission, or been accepted to train towards receiving the authority to teach the Dharma or have received the core ordination of the Order of Interbeing from Thich Nhat Hanh and the Plum Village Sangha. It is possible that others with sufficient experience in the practice could be allowed also to attend some of the courses here outlined.

The Institute will be staffed in the main by a permanent core of about 30 monks and nuns. They are also in the institute to study. They will have their own programme of studies that will in some cases open also to long-term lay practitioners. From this core body certain members will be designated to lead the courses for short-term students that are outlined above in numbers 1-3. Courses designated with the number 4 will often be held concurrently with courses designated 1-3, so that the permanent body of monks and nuns can study at the same time as some of their members are offering courses 1-3. All students in the Institute whether monastic or lay will come together for certain daily activities such as mindful work, walking meditation and some sessions of sitting meditation. The following diagram illustrates the structure of the institute. The outer circle represents the visiting students who attend the workshops. The inner circle represents the monastic staff. The arrow represents the movement of certain members of the monastic staff who participate in leading the practice during the workshops and also give teachings for monastics.



#### 4A Guided Meditations for Touching the Earth: Intimate Conversations with the Buddha

The basic text for this course will be “Touching the Earth”

There will be the practice of prostration and recitation of the chants in this book in order to be able to:

- Purify body and mind
- Clarify our ideal of living
- Make available to our mind consciousness the words that can water the most positive seeds available in our store consciousness
- Repent and begin anew

#### 4B Tea Meditation Practice

Zen practitioners from ancient times have known how to enjoy a cup of tea in the present moment. This particular practice as developed in Plum Village has a ritual element that is very simple and effective.

- The student can learn how to use varying degrees of formality according to the needs of the participants at any particular tea ceremony.
- The student practices grace and ease in ceremonial action thanks to the practice of continuous mindfulness during the ceremony
- The student learns how to interact with others as members of the same body
- Learns how to integrate into the practice elements of his or her own culture that are wholesome and nourishing.

#### 4C The Four Brahmaviharas – Buddhist Teachings on Love

The practice of love is an important part of the practice of mindfulness. Love is a wholesome emotion that can help us realize true healing and awakening. If someone has not realized compassion we cannot say that that person is enlightened, no matter how much intellectual understanding of the Buddhist teachings he or she may demonstrate.

The Four components of love in Buddhism are called The Abodes of Brahma or the Four Brahmaviharas. They are: Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity. During this course we shall learn how to think, speak and act based on these four components.

- We shall learn how to practice the Four Brahmaviharas along with the Six Harmonies that help us live our daily lives in harmony with our family and our community.
- We always begin with learning how to love our own person. If we cannot feel compassion for our own suffering it is unlikely that we shall feel compassion for someone else.
- We also have to learn to love truly our loved ones; how to give them space and freedom to develop spiritually. The Buddhist Teachings show us how to do this.
- Finally we learn to love and forgive those who, in the beginning, seem the most difficult to love and forgive.
- Students will train to understand and discern the difference between true love and craving or infatuated attachment.

#### 4D. The First Dharma Talk of the Buddha-*How to face the reality of suffering in our world and know how to realize transformation of suffering*

During the forty years of the teaching ministry of Shakyamuni Buddha and for the 2,500 years that have followed, The four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path have formed the backbone of all Buddhist teachings.

The Buddha told his disciples on one occasion that he taught only one thing and that was ill-being and the end of ill-being. The teachings of the Buddha were not metaphysical or mystical in the usual sense of the word.

During this course students will use the text of the first teaching of the Buddha in order to learn how to:

- Accept suffering without running away from it
- Look into the roots of personal suffering and the suffering of the collective consciousness
- Balance the suffering and the happiness in our life
- Understand the roots of suffering in order to be able to transform it,
- See that the four noble truths interare,
- See suffering as a necessary ingredient of our practice and our life.
  
- learn the way of right practice that is always in balance, since it does not waver in the extremes of austerity and sensual pleasure
- learn to practice diligently anywhere in any walk of life.
- establish a firm basis for the practice of the Five Mindfulness Trainings
- know how to take good care of body, speech and mind.

This course can be practiced in conjunction with #30, #27.

#### 4E Sutra for the White-Clad Disciple *The Buddhist contribution towards a global ethic for the survival of our planet*

The course will cover the three main subjects that are the subject of this Sutra:

- The Five Mindfulness Trainings

- The Four Recollections of the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha and the Mindfulness Trainings
- Living Happily in the present moment

Students will study and practice in order to use the Four Recollections in daily life. They will examine the living and changing nature of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. They will see how the wording of the Trainings can change to fit the culture and era in which they are being practiced, without the spirit of the trainings being lost. Students will also see that the practice of the Recollections and the Five Trainings is a wonderful way to help us abide peacefully in the present moment. Students will learn how to perform the ceremony for reciting the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

#### 4F The Heart Sutra *the practice of dealing with fear, anxiety and disconnection.*

This sutra, which belongs to the earliest phase of the Mahayana teachings, is the essence of the teachings on transcendent wisdom or perfect understanding “Prajnaparamita”. Although many Buddhists make it a practice to recite this sutra daily, students of this course will study it with a view to putting its teachings into practice.

- Guided meditations will be offered to help realize the meaning of no-birth and no-death
- Students will be guided to see the interbeing nature of the historical and ultimate dimensions
- Students will learn to use these teachings as the solid ground for making peace with oneself as well as:
- Transcending the fear of birth and death
- Transcending duality
- Penetrating the five skandhas: body, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness and seeing that they have no separate self-nature.
- If interest is expressed, the original Sanskrit or Chinese versions of the sutra will be presented.

#### 4G The Diamond Sutra and its Applications to Deep Ecology and Conflict Resolution

The student will use the teachings of this sutra in order to:

- See the equality of all species whether sentient or non-sentient and the need for all to be liberated together
- See the interconnectedness of all species
- Work as an environmentalist without being overwhelmed by despair
- Live without being caught in appearances that cause discriminatory ideas concerning race, religion and social class.
- Looking deeply at our perceptions concerning identity
- Examine the “logic” of the Diamond Sutra (A is not A but is B) and use this insight to help us resolve conflicts. This is the ability to see that the father is the son.
- Neuroscience has identified certain functions of the brain in categorizing perceptions. Although these categories are useful to a certain extent, they are also deceptive and can be at the root of suffering. The Diamond Sutra tells us that “where there is a sign there is a deception.”

4H. Lotus Sutra *with emphasis on the teachings of reconciliation and hope*

- Learning to recognize the historical and the ultimate dimension.
- Penetrating the historical dimension deeply enough to be able to touch the ultimate.
- The practice of inclusiveness and non-discrimination as far as other spiritual paths are concerned.
- The use of skilful means to help others.

4I The Satipatthana Sutta *designed for psychologists, psycho-analysts and psychotherapists to help use the teachings of the Buddha for healing and transformation of depression and related illnesses*

This sutta is the foundation and heart of Buddhist practice. The course is to help the student to become familiar with the text so that it penetrates every moment of his life. The practice of the sutta is as follows:

- transforming and healing by the practice of mindfulness.
- practicing awareness of body and each part of the body, oneness of body and mind, relaxation of body and mindful breathing.
- practicing awareness of feelings, recognizing feelings that arise from the body and those that arise from mental perceptions, recognizing the impermanent and selfless nature of feelings.
- practicing awareness of mind in order to accept and call by name the mental formations and to heal and take care of the mind states that cause oneself and others to suffer
- practicing awareness of objects of mind in order to see how internal formations arise based on sense impressions; learning how to give appropriate attention to the objects of the senses.

4J The Anapanasati Sutta *-breathing for health, happiness and insight to transform fear.*

This course teaches the wide implications of mindfulness of breathing as it has been taught in Plum Village, including the teachings that were given in the Breath of the Buddha Retreat in Plum Village in 2006:

- studying sutras related to the Pali Anapanasati in the Chinese Canon
- learning the wide implications of the practice of mindfulness of breathing in all walks of life.
- mindfulness of breathing as the basis for happiness
- mindfulness of breathing as the basis for insight and liberation from suffering.

4K The Bhaddekaratta Sutta *-seeing the universality of teachings on dwelling in the present moment with citations from Christianity and Judaism*

This course is a study of the most ancient scripture on dwelling in the present moment. There will also be reference to scriptures in other traditions that refer to the practice of dwelling in the present moment.

The student will practice the teachings on dwelling in the present moment by using:

- mindful breathing
- the four establishments of mindfulness

- guided meditations to help the student look deeply into the five skandhas to see that they are not myself.
- practicing to remove the view, *Sat kayadrsti*, that this body, this feeling, this perception, this mental formation, this consciousness is myself.

4L Sutra on the Teachings to be Given to the Sick –*preparing for death without fear, learning to accompany the dying.*

This sutra is the teachings given by the Venerable Shariputra to a lay disciple who is dying. The course is of especial interest for those who work with the dying.

We master the practice given in this sutra in order to master our own body and mind in times of sickness and at death. We also master the practice in order to offer fearlessness to the other person who is sick or dying.

The first stage is to be able to water the seeds of spiritual happiness in the dying person in order to diminish the fear and the other painful feelings by strengthening all that is positive in that person's mind.

The second stage is to be able to guide the person so that she does not identify herself with her five skandhas, her sense organs, her past, or future and thus to see that she is empty of a separate self.

The third stage is to see that not only she herself is empty but that all objects of her sense perceptions are also empty.

Depending on the level of understanding, practice and religious or non-religious affiliation of the dying person, the one who is accompanying him will have to adapt the teachings. During the course there will be time to look into how these teachings can be adapted to different circumstances and different spiritual traditions.

4M Samiddhi Sutra on Youth and Happiness –*for young adults to find a meaningful spiritual dimension in life and overcome complexes.*

The course begins with an overview of the place of this sutra in Buddhist canonical literature. The content of the sutra is examined under the following topics:

- The Three Complexes: the complex of inferiority, superiority *and equality* that reinforce the notion of a separate self and are at the root of much psychological instability
- The characteristics of the Dharma including the aspect called “beyond time”
- The practice of Dwelling Happily in the Present Moment
- The harmful nature of sensual pleasures that include fame, profit, sex, power, food
- The obstacles to happiness that are principally the ideas we have about happiness
- The interbeing nature of suffering and happiness.
- The course is particularly suitable for young people who wish to follow their deepest ideal.

4N Sutra on the Four Nutriments–*a diet for the future of our planet; nutrition for body and mind*

In our own time the most crucial factor for personal transformation and the transformation of the situation of the world is right diet. According to the teachings of the

Buddha a diet is fourfold. The four constituents of a right or wrong diet that will be studied in this course are as follows:

Edible food: the importance of what we eat and how much we eat for the future of our planet and our own spiritual development,

Food of sense-impressions: films, television, music, painting, magazines, books, and conversations are all part of this diet for our mind. How to protect ourselves and our children from the deleterious effects of these objects of our senses. How to benefit ourselves and our children from the positive elements that objects of our senses can offer.

Volition as food: how to know our deepest yearning and to realize it. How not to waste our life in chasing after worldly comforts such as power, fame and possessions.

Consciousness as food: the role of the collective and individual consciousness in forming our environment and our person or nature and nurture.

4O The Seven Factors of Enlightenment- *how to wake up and go in a direction that makes a future possible.*

What meaning these seven factors taught by the Buddha have for our own times? They are: Mindfulness, Investigation, Energy, Ease, Joy, Concentration and Equanimity.

All can be applied to help us in our relationships with our family, our fellow workers and our society.

4P The Three Doors of Liberation- *towards penetrating the nature of reality and the nature of the mind; the practice of meditative concentration and insight.*

A penetration of these doors of Emptiness, Signlessness and Aimlessness, helps us understand no-birth and no-death and realise fearlessness. Emptiness is not a doctrine or an idea but the very nature of reality or not having a separate self-identity.

By penetrating the five skandhas the student sees that they interare and cannot be self-reliant. Water appears as snow, ice, vapour, river and cloud and these are the signs of water. These manifestations are signs they are not the substance, water. The student learns to see herself as a sign representing a whole line of ancestors and descendants.

To understand aimlessness is to understand the interbeing nature of the perceiver and the perceived. You are already what you want to become.

4Q As a Bird with Two Wings: Fourteen Verses on Meditation (Shamatha and Vipashyana, Stopping and Looking Deeply)

These verses were composed by the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh in order to summarize the function and meaning of meditation practice as follows:

- The function and the fruits of stopping (shamatha)
- The function and fruits of looking deeply (vipashyana)
- The use of mindful breathing and mindful walking as essential to these two practices
- Dwelling in the present moment as the result of these two practices
- The Four Fruits according to the Plum Village tradition: arriving, dwelling peacefully, interbeing, and the insight of no-birth,
- The necessity of both Tathagata and Patriarch teachings and how they are not separate
- The necessity of both Original Buddhism and Mahayana as complementary.

#### 4R Leading Practices and Chanting

This course is for students who wish to help their sangha in the ceremonial aspect of Buddhism. Although Buddhist ceremonies may look devotional to an outsider, are in fact the practice of mindfulness, concentration and insight. Without these three elements those who conduct and participate in the ceremony cannot bring about any lasting beneficial effect from the ceremony.

The following ceremonies are included in the course:

- Daily liturgy of chanting and recitation
- Marriage Ceremony
- Ceremonies for the deceased: cremation, memorial and others
- Ceremonies to support the sick and the afflicted.

#### 4S Organizing Retreats and Workshops of Mindfulness Practice

There is a tremendous need throughout the five continents for mindfulness retreats. Although organization may not be the most important criterion for the success of a retreat, good organization is indispensable for the happiness and ease of the retreatants. Good organization depends on the organizers being able to work together as a single body in harmony. Organizing a retreat is a practice in itself.

Students will learn:

- How to maintain mindfulness while organizing
- How to practice skilful communication with other organizers
- The practices that need to be included in any mindfulness retreat
- Additional practices that can be included depending on the length of the retreat

#### 4T The Art of Building a Community of Practice

The course is to help the student develop the capacity for building community.

Aspects that will be covered include:

- The organization of the original sangha of Shakyamuni Buddha
- The precepts and sangha building
- Decision making
- Conflict resolution
- Experience of Sangha building in Plum Village Centres
- The mentor-mentee relationship
- The second body
- Building a lay sangha a) residential
  - b) non-residential

#### 4U Engaged Buddhism – History and Practice

The course includes a study of:

The History of Engaged Buddhism in Vietnam

The practice of Engaged Buddhism in Plum Village

#### 4V Studies and Practices in the Order of Interbeing

The Order of Interbeing was founded by the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh in 1966 when 6 members were ordained during the war in Vietnam. Since then many hundreds of lay and

monastic practitioners have been ordained as core members all over the world. The course will include a study of:

- The history of the Order of Interbeing
- The OI charter
- The OI Mindfulness Trainings
- Ordination into the Order
- Responsibilities of Order Members
- Aspirants to the Order and mentorship of aspirants.

#### 4W Shining Light and Beginning Anew

Shining light is a traditional monastic practice that can be, and has been usefully adapted for lay practice in lay communities. For monks and nuns it is used annually at the end of the three-month winter retreat during the invitation ceremony and whenever a monk or a nun is seeking a higher ordination or transmission. In lay sanghas it is often used to guide those who are aspiring to receive ordination into the Order of Interbeing. In the time of the Buddha and traditionally, ever since then, there is organized annually an Invitation Ceremony. During this ceremony every monk and nun in the community comes before the community and asks to be told if the other monks and nuns have seen, heard or suspected any infringement of the disciplinary code that he has not yet confessed.

As a Dharma door in Plum Village this practice has been revised in some respects to fit the needs of monastic and lay communities of our time. The whole sangha will sit down to express to each member their perceptions of her strengths, weaknesses and the kind of practice that it would be helpful for her to do in order to increase her strengths and transform her weaknesses.

Beginning Anew is a practice of enhancing good communication that is carried out on a regular basis in all communities of Plum Village. Every week or two weeks the community has a chance to sit together in a circle and express their appreciation of other members, their regrets for anything unskillful they may have done and if they feel it is appropriate any difficulties they may be having.

It is also necessary sometimes to practice Beginning Anew on a one-to-one basis. If there is an altercation or misunderstanding between two members that has led to irritation, anger and hurt feelings, those two members will sit together to listen deeply to each other and remove wrong perceptions they have about each other. In order for both these practices to be successful a diligent practice of deep listening and loving speech is necessary. The course will be a training in these two skills and in other skills that are necessary for these two practices.

#### 4X The Essential Qualities Needed to Make a Good Dharma Teacher *for aspirants who are in training to receive the lamp.*

This course is reserved for those who have already been chosen to be aspirants to the Dharma Lamp transmission.

It is an opportunity for these people to practice together and look together with a number of teachers who have already received the lamp to discover the qualities that are needed

to be able truly transmit the teachings of the Buddha. There will be an opportunity to examine the following concepts and see their relevance with regard to teaching the Dharma.

- The Four Siddhantas
- The Four Reliances
- The Two Kinds of Truth

5. The following Courses were taught in Plum Village during the three-month winter retreats. Each course lasted at least 3 months and in many cases longer. They are essential for someone who wishes to teach the Dharma as they treat in depth a number of Buddhist texts that can be studied with a view to applying them in daily life.

#### 5A The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: Basic Buddhism

The course begins with an extensive and thorough study of the Four Noble Truths, The Noble Eightfold Path and the teachings of Dependent Co-arising always with reference of how these important teachings are as relevant today as they have ever been and how they can be applied to relieve suffering in the world. The basic teachings given by Buddha Shakyamuni during the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE are relevant to our own time and can be applied in our daily life in society. The course will also include teachings on other basic teachings of the Buddha that are sometimes enumerated as the 37 wings of awakening. They include:

- The Four Right Efforts: Skilful ways to develop the beneficial factors of our mind and body and not to increase the unbeneficial
- The Four Bases of Success: developing our concentration so that we can transform a place of despair into one where there is hope, peace and liberation.
- The Five Faculties and the Five Powers: how to develop spiritual power that benefits ourselves and others.
- The Noble Eightfold Path: an inestimably rich source for our practice of mindfulness in the modern age. These teachings are sufficient on their own to guide us in right action of body, speech and mind
- The Seven Factors of Enlightenment: as well as other factors that are met with elsewhere amongst the 37 wings of awakening, the elements of ease, joy and equanimity are studied and practiced here.
- The Four Foundations of Mindfulness: described by Shakyamuni Buddha as “the one way in”. Without the practice of mindfulness it is very difficult to attain any lasting and effective transformation of our body and mind. The Four Establishments are: body, feelings, mind and objects of mind.

#### 5B Applied Buddhist Psychology

This course is for both lay and monastic practitioners who aspire to the lamp transmission. The basic text used is the Fifty Verses on Manifestation Only by Thich Nhat Hanh. The study of the nature of consciousness according to Buddhist masters over so many generations is able to shed important light on the discoveries of neuroscience in our own time. The insights of past Buddhist masters such as Vasubandhu, Asanga and

their heirs in the Dharma such as Master Huyen Trang will be studied in conjunction with the Fifty Verses.

Perceptions play a very important role in our life. Nearly all strife and conflict arise from our way of perceiving. If we can be mindful of the illusory and deceptive nature of our perceptions we can avoid making many mistakes that are at the root of disharmony and violence. We can also help others to do the same. Students will examine all kinds of consumption including that of sense impressions. Students will learn how to cultivate beneficial mind states.

It has been said by a famous Vietnamese Zen master of the 11<sup>th</sup> century: “Without understanding our mind, the practice of meditation is difficult.” That is to say that to make progress in love and understanding and to be able to transform our mind at the base, there needs to be a deep understanding of our mind. We should also add that without meditation understanding our mind is difficult. To make proper use of the insights offered in this course we must practice mindfulness at every moment in order to be aware of feelings, perceptions and mental formations. We can use the insights of Buddhist masters only in combination with our own experience of how our mind is.

#### 5C. The Avatamsaka Sutra (Golden Lion Treatise by Fazang)

This course was taught over the three month winter retreat in Plum Village. These teachings open up the Avatamsaka world of a depth and beauty that is difficult to imagine conceptually. In this world the all is seen in the one and the one is seen in the all.

The treatise also summarizes the main currents of Buddhist teachings as they were known in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and were systematized by the Avatamsaka school. The course includes:

- Teachings on Interbeing and Interconnectedness
- The insight of meditation and its implications for science

#### 5D The Sutras and Recitations of *Chanting from the Heart*, the Plum Village Chanting Book

This course lasted for fifteen months in Plum Village over a period of three years. It is a rich resource to help us understand the daily chanting schedule. Those who study this course will familiarize themselves with every aspect of the daily liturgy: sutra readings both Mahayana and Original Buddhism.

#### 5E Master Linji and Personal Empowerment

The text that is taught in this course is the Records of Linji. The course lasted for about five months. The student learns the art of being business-less and how to conduct daily life at ease and naturally. This helps transform the habit of “workaholism” and always wanting to do something. The student can learn “do not just do something rather sit there!”

According to Linji Buddha is not a reality outside of yourself and cannot be the object of your search and attainment. The student can return to the present moment and use the clear mind that exists here and now. We need to study and practice, but our studies and

practice are to help us be the business-less person who is truly free. Our true person is the one who has no position.

#### 5F Dialectics of Madyamaka (the Middle Way) and its applications

This course constitutes a study of the work Madhyamaka-karika by Nagarjuna. The course was taught by Thich Nhat Hanh in Plum Village over 6 months.

This course is essential in helping the student not be caught in theories and ideologies and understanding the true nature of emptiness rather than the words that describe it. It is also helpful in showing where the teachings of Original Buddhism and Mahayana meet.

#### 5G Overview of the Nikayas of the Pali Canon and the Agamas of the Chinese Canon

This was taught by the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh as a three-month course in Plum Village. In this course, the student will understand the canonical roots of Buddhism dating from the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. The sutras studied constitute what is known as Primitive or Original Buddhism.

A comparison of the two main recensions in Pali and Chinese helps us to see the richness of the transmission. It also helps us identify the places where there was a mis-transmission of what the Buddha originally taught.

#### 5H Overview of the Mahayana

This course was taught over two three-month retreats. The sutras covered are the Ugradattapariprecha, Ratnakuta, Vimalakirti, Vajracchedika and Avatamsaka. The course looks at:

- The harshness of the reaction of some Mahayana sutras against monastic Buddhism
- The role of the lay bodhisattva in Mahayana Buddhism
- How the later Mahayana sutras are able to include the teachings of the Original Buddhism without reacting against them.

#### 5I Survey of Living Traditions of Buddhist Meditation

This course was taught during a series of three three-month retreats. It includes the history of meditation practice in India, China and Vietnam.

6. These courses are for monks and nuns. They centre on the practice of the monastic disciplinary code.

#### 6A The Revised and Classical Pratimoksha

This course is reserved for those who have received the full-ordination of a Buddhist monk or nun. When the Buddha was asked who would be his successor he replied that it would be the Pratimoksha, which is the disciplinary code for monks and nuns who have received the full ordination. The Buddha also said that in the case of the minor precepts no longer being in harmony with the times or the culture they could be changed as long as the spirit of the precept was maintained. For this reason, after 2,500 years the need for a revised version of the Pratimoksha became evident. During the lifetime of Shakyamuni

Buddha there was no internet, no motor car, no telephone, computer etc. These aspects of modern life need to be covered by the monastic disciplinary code in order to avoid corruption. The revised Pratimoksha was completed in 2000 and is used as the basis for conduct of monks and nuns of the Plum Village tradition in Europe, North America and Asia. The course includes:

- Understanding the background of each precept: the reason for its institution
- Understanding how to apply each precept in daily life
- Understanding the spirit of each precept
- Understanding how the practice of precepts is a) the practice of mindfulness b) the practice of love

### 6B Stepping into Freedom

This is a course on precepts and fine manners for novice monks and nuns.

The course includes:

- The basic training for a novice
- How to keep the beginner's mind alive
- The reason for the institution of each precept and fine manners training.

## Degrees, diplomas and certificates

At the successful completion of any course the practitioner will be given a certificate of attendance. The EIAB will have agreements with some universities throughout the world in order to be able to have the certificate qualify as part of a degree programme. In this case the quality of the students studies and practice during the course will also be assessed.

The Master of Applied Buddhism will be awarded on the occasion of the student receiving the Lamp Transmission (authorization to teach) from the Plum Village Dharmacarya Council.

The Doctorate of Applied Buddhism will be awarded to the candidate who has practiced, studied and taught the Dharma Doors of Buddhism for ten years after receiving the lamp, in the case that the practice and teachings of that person are deemed to be of a sufficiently high quality by the deans of the Institute and the council of dharmacaryas.