

The Chenrezig Institute Buddhist Studies Programme

An FPMT Basic Programme

Subject list:

Mind and Cognition

"All human accomplishment is preceded by correct cognition."

An introduction to the Buddhist understanding of the mind and its functions, including both a presentation of cognition in its various valid and distorted forms, and an introduction to Buddhist psychology.

The Bodhisattva's Way of Life

"For as long as space endures, and for as long as living beings remain, until then may I too abide, to dispel the misery of the world."

The teaching on the bodhisattva's deeds is based on Shantideva's inspirational verses on Mahayana aspiration and practice, composed more than a thousand years ago and still widely regarded as the most authentic and complete guide for the practitioner dedicated to the enlightenment of all beings.

Tenets

"My doctrine has two modes: advice and tenets. To children I speak advice, and to yogis, tenets."

Based on the idea that the Buddha taught different things to different people in line with their capacities, Tibetan scholars systemised the numerous trends in Indian Buddhist thought and taught the four schools of tenets as a means to approach the most profound philosophical teachings via more accessible levels.

Sutra Grounds and Paths

Clear outline of the paths followed by the Hearer, Solitary Realiser and the Bodhisattva, the methods, realisations and the abandonments of the various levels on the way to liberation and enlightenment.

Seventy Topics

An important study of the entire sutra path to enlightenment as presented in the Ornament of Clear Realisations, including the fundamental features of the basis, path and goal in the Mahayana.

Ornament of Clear Realisation

The root text for the study of the levels and types of realisation on the path to enlightenment, this is traditionally the basis for extensive study in the monastic curriculum.

Signs and Reasoning

The study of logic within the Tibetan tradition, necessary for clear analysis of any of the subjects studied, and the basis of debate.

Mahayana Mind Training

"Bodhisattvas are likened to peacocks: They live on delusions - those poisonous plants.

Transforming them into the essence of practice, they thrive in the jungle of everyday life."

Elucidation of the means to develop and enhance the Mahayana attitude - the aspiration to become a Buddha for the sake of all beings - and in particular, how to transform adverse conditions to that end.

The Stages of the Path

"With study comes understanding; but this must be put to use. It is therefore vital to put as much as one can of what one has studied into practice ..."

The graduated path to enlightenment, from correct guru devotion and renunciation up to supreme altruism and the view of the middle way. Presented in a clear and concise form, these teachings are easy to understand and to apply in meditation.

Heart Sutra

"Form is empty, emptiness is form; form is not other than emptiness, emptiness is not other than form ..."

The famous Heart Sutra reveals the truth of emptiness through a short exchange between two of the Buddha's most illustrious disciples, Avalokiteshvara and Shariputra. Traditional commentary expands on the cryptic style of the sutra to clarify the nature of the wisdom realising emptiness and the 'method' practices which are its essential complement

Sublime Continuum of the Mahayana

"I bow to the one who, with no beginning, middle or end, has a serene stillness and is clear-minded and fully evolved, who became clear from his own aspects and once clear, shows fearless, constant paths of the mind to bring realisation to those with no realisation"

One of the most important teachings in all traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, clarifying the meaning of our Buddha potential, in particular the emptiness of the mind that allows evolution to a state of complete enlightenment.

Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth

Death, intermediate state and rebirth underpin samsara, the condition of repeated rebirth impelled by previous action and delusion. But they are also the three 'basic bodies' of Highest Yoga Tantra practice, forming the bases for altruistic transformation into the Truth, Enjoyment and Emanation Bodies of a Buddha.

Grounds and Paths of Secret Mantra

"In brief, the Buddhahood achieved over countless aeons, you will attain in this birth, through the most excellent bliss, or the state of Vajradhara."

Concise overview of the structure of the Tantric path. Tantra distinguishes itself in particular through a unique combination of method and wisdom, achieved through meditation on the perfect form of a Buddha as completely devoid of true existence.

(this subject is usually taught over two modules - The Lower Tantras / Highest Yoga Tantra)

Commentary on a Highest Yoga Tantra Practice

A detailed commentary on an actual Highest Yoga Tantra deity practice, in particular the two stages of generation and completion.