



DHARMA REALM BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY

Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts



FREEDOM IS THE GOAL OF LIBERAL EDUCATION

Dharma Realm Buddhist University approaches the liberal arts with a spirit of deep trust—a trust in each student’s inherent potential for self-awareness, discernment, and wisdom. To this end, the four-year Bachelor of Arts program puts students in direct conversation with seminal works of both Eastern and Western traditions—books that have shaped the world in which we live. In small, discussion-based classes, students deeply reflect on foundations of the human experience, exploring implications for both themselves and the wider world. The goal of the program is not to dictate established truths without, but to kindle and illuminate abiding truths within. Such education properly conducted does not indoctrinate, but simply disentangles.



RADICALLY FREE. RADICALLY RESPONSIBLE.

At DRBU, there are no majors, no lectures, no departments. Students progress through their course of study in a cohort of less than twenty students, and all classes are discussion-based. Students read, discuss, and write about core texts from the great teachings of humanity, not secondary sources or textbooks. Over four years of study, students are exposed to nine strands of thought—Buddhist Classics, Western Classics, Chinese Classics, Indian Classics, Language, Mathematics, Natural Science, Rhetoric and Writing, and Music. These strands offer a body of knowledge that opens up new perspectives into a wider reality. These writers and philosophers, each in their own way, developed a depth of awareness and insight into human nature and the workings of causality. They open our minds, challenge our ideologies, and speak to contemporary problems.

At DRBU, we believe that for education to be truly transformative, it is not enough to rest on the authority of a teacher, or even a particular text. True transformation happens on the level of each student’s individual consciousness. For this reason, students are constantly asked to investigate, validate, and challenge—to participate directly in their own education. It is the ultimate responsibility of each student to choose what perspectives work for them. This is the radical freedom, and alongside it, the radical responsibility of developing self-reflective knowledge.



EXPANDING THE MIND BEYOND THE LIMITATIONS OF A GIVEN CULTURE

By putting the Western and Eastern traditions together in one program, students develop a shared understanding that exceeds the limitations of a given culture.

Whether it's in the Buddha nature, the Good, the Ātman, or the Dao, each of these great traditions offers wisdom into the highest potential of human nature.

Over the course of the program, DRBU students create a solid foundation for understanding the ideas, values, and ethos that govern contemporary life and shape the interconnected world in which we live.

Such an education is of great importance in the current world of rapidly increasing globalization and heightened communications. A deep understanding of human thought across cultures is urgent for the future of humanity as a whole.



“Directly reach Bodhi, your unchanging true nature—this is called ‘the incense of liberated knowledge and understanding.’”

**DHARMA JEWEL
PLATFORM SŪTRA
OF THE SIXTH PATRIARCH**

WHAT WE STUDY

{A Sampling }

BUDDHIST CLASSICS 16 units

Pāli Canon
Mahāyāna Sūtras
Autobiographies
Nāgārjuna

CHINESE CLASSICS 12 units

Daodejing
Confucius
Zhuangzi
Tang Poetry

INDIAN CLASSICS 12 units

Bhagavad Gītā
Upaniṣads
Yoga Sūtras
Mahatma Gandhi

WESTERN CLASSICS 16 units

Plato
The Bible
Shakespeare
Nietzsche

LANGUAGE 20 units

Classical Chinese
Sanskrit

NATURAL SCIENCE 12 units

Galileo
Darwin
Einstein
Schrödinger

RHETORIC AND WRITING 10 units

E.B. White
George Orwell
Bizzell
Herzberg

MATHEMATICS 12 units

Euclid
Descartes
Newton
Leibniz

MUSIC 6 units

Musical storytelling
Repetition and variation
Functional harmony

Integrated curriculum of
120 units over 4 years



“Some of the best parts of the program are the sense of student empowerment and getting a true world history experience—being able to follow a culture as it develops over time.”

YANIK, CLASS OF 2021



SMALL CLASS SIZE, DEDICATED FACULTY

At DRBU, classroom learning is discussion-based, encouraging the active participation of every student. We deeply believe in every individual's inherent capacity to know and foster this ideal with the understanding that we learn from each other. The role of the teacher is to help clarify the issues, demonstrate the methods, serve as a sounding board and a mirror that reflects, and thereby indirectly facilitate the student's own understanding.

Together, we form an intellectual community that engages in meaningful conversations that continue outside the classroom. In this environment, big questions and deep inquiry are nurtured and supported, both by fellow students and our dedicated faculty and staff.

"I don't think you'll find a more dedicated group of faculty. Each is truly committed to the students' growth."

MAUREEN, DRBU ALUMNA



"What is really special is the way the faculty interacts with the students. I started to realize, after being here for a few months, that I was a 'grown up'— and it was because I was being treated that way. In the classroom, there is no hierarchy. The teacher is listening to me with the same open ears that I am listening to the teacher. There is mutual respect going on."

PETRA, DRBU ALUMNA

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

In congruence with the Buddha's teaching that one should "know for oneself," academic freedom is one of the central tenets of DRBU. In the classroom, all ideas are held to the same level of questioning and scrutiny. Students are encouraged to examine and consider all the views they encounter, including their own.

The DRBU pedagogy and curriculum center on one goal: that each student develops the capacity to be an independent thinker. A core assumption underlying the University's teaching methodology is that the text, instructor, and student form a triangular relationship of inquiry in which none of the three may be presumed as "the measure of all things." Rather, "authority" is posited to emerge through the interaction among the three.



BUILD A FOUNDATION FOR A CONSTANTLY CHANGING LIFE

The DRBU curriculum is designed to build a strong foundation for lifelong learning, discovery, and leadership. Our approach to liberal arts education trains students to develop their potential across all dimensions of life. This includes cultivating flexibility, versatility, open-mindedness, ethical sensibility, and working across cultures.

In our constantly changing society, the ability to adapt to change opens one up to a larger world. Our students can carry their foundational DRBU education forward into a multitude of careers and pathways to leadership.





A SPIRITUAL AND DIVERSE CULTURE



Our campus is shared with the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, creating a rare opportunity to study within the peaceful energy of a spiritual community.

There are a number of spiritual practices available on a daily basis, including morning meditation before class. Students also get together on their own to engage in spiritual exercises that they find inspiring and meaningful.

Our University community of faculty, administrators, and students embraces a diverse international culture. It stimulates self-reflection, encourages deeper investigation, and challenges us to integrate perspectives and arrive at new understandings.

As we investigate the ideas and ideals of the world's classical traditions, we mutually support each other not just in our studies, but also in our efforts to embody these ideals outside the classroom.



“I’ve had insights from spiritual practice that would have been difficult to arrive at in a classroom setting. Yet the classroom gives me a rich, conceptual framework that helps explain what I experience. So both work together.”

YUEN-LIN, DRBU ALUMNUS



SURROUNDED BY THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Our campus strives to be sustainable and environmentally ethical. DRBU students help run the organic farm, which produces vegetables and herbs for the kitchen.

Our campus is powered by 100% clean electricity, produced by our own solar panel farm.

DRBU is situated 100 miles north of the San Francisco Bay Area. Old-growth redwoods are within a 30-minute drive, and the California coast is only 90 minutes away.





FINANCES SHOULD NOT BE A BARRIER IN GETTING A GOOD EDUCATION

At DRBU, we believe in giving the gift of a good education. Tuition is affordable, financial aid is available, and students are not asked to take on loans. Thus far, all of our students have graduated without any student debt.

Several factors contribute to DRBU's ability to maintain our commitment to affordability and access. DRBU relies on the generous support of institutions and individuals who continue to believe in and support our mission. Our buildings and residences are functional yet simple. Students who receive financial aid participate in service scholarships, taking on important roles in the support and maintenance of the University, which help keep operating costs down.

As a result, students are admitted based on their compatibility with the program, rather than their ability to pay. The financial aid program meets the demonstrated financial needs of all admitted students. This allows us to create cohorts of students who are broad-minded, intellectually curious, thoughtful, and engaged in the daily discourse of class.

We encourage you to reach out and discuss questions regarding financial aid.

Visit our website for more details.

WWW.DRBU.EDU/ADMISSIONS/FINANCIAL-AID

Dharma Realm Buddhist University is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501, 510 748 9001.



Contact us to apply, schedule a campus visit, sit in on classes, or speak with an Admissions representative.

ADMISSIONS@DRBU.EDU
707 621 7000



