

Buddhist Studies M.A.

Application Information

Application period: 15 February - 31 March (winter term) and 1 December - 15 January (summer term)

Semester start: October 1st (winter term) and April 1st (summer term)

Language(s) of instruction: English

Introduction

Goals and Content

The International Master Program in Buddhist Studies consists of several study tracks. The regional foci are India, Tibet, China, Japan, and Thailand. This International Master is aimed at students with a solid philological background in one of the above-mentioned regional specializations. We consider competence in the language(s) of at least one of these regions a crucial factor. Generally, our courses work with primary sources which require philological training.

Courses with regional specialization vary year by year and deal with topics related, for instance, to intellectual history or Buddhist literature. We consider Buddhism to be one factor which constitutes and shapes culture and society as well as the intellectual and religious history of a particular region. In order to understand it both historically and systematically, we study a Buddhist tradition in its regional developments and specificities, the ways Buddhist traditions have interacted with other sectors of a given society, and how Buddhist thinkers in a particular region have been influenced by other religious systems and socio-political settings.

In each semester of the first year you will further join the seminar "Topics in Buddhist Studies," the focus of which lies on systematic issues that may be observed across cultural and regional differences. Such are particularly important for Buddhist Studies as a discipline. This course brings together graduate students in Buddhist Studies from all regional specializations at the Asien-Afrika-Institut. "Topics in Buddhist Studies" deals, for instance, with issues of Buddhist history and modernity (e.g. Socially Engaged Buddhism, Buddhism in Europe, or the tradition's dialogue with other religions) as well as with conceptual and philosophical questions (karma, consciousness, etc.).

Participating in this study program will train your skills in dealing with Buddhist primary sources and advance your competence in cross-cultural and interdisciplinary communication with your fellow students. It will prepare your academic career in terms of joining international post-M.A. graduate schools which require thorough intimacy with Buddhist primary sources on the one hand and interdisciplinary research skills on the other.



Specific characteristics

- Generally, one semester at a partner university outside Germany.
- Courses in the study tracks India, China, Tibet and Thailand are held in English.
- In the Japan study track, German language proficiency is required as well.

Admission Requirements

(List of all admission requirements as per the current admission bylaws)

China Study Track

Legally attested certificate of a university degree. This may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree must be a Bachelor "Ostasien" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution. Required is also evidence of substantial experience in reading and translating classical Chinese. Degree certificates must evidence a minimum of 50 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Modern Chinese. Chinese native speakers are exempt from this bylaw.

India Study Track

Legally attested certificate of a university degree. This may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree must be a Bachelor "Sprachen und Kulturen des Indischen Subkontinents und Tibets" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution. It may be a Bachelor with the specialization in Buddhist or Religious Studies as long as a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Sanskrit or Pali have been acquired. Alternatively you will need a degree from a German or international academic institution with a minimum of 45 credit points (ECTS) related to Buddhist Studies, Religious Studies or Indology which include a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Sanskrit or Pali or equivalent language training.

In case no sufficient evidence for competence in Pali or Sanskrit can be provided within the application period, the candidate will have the possibility to undergo a placement test conducted by the Universität Hamburg which has to be passed in order to be admitted.

Japan Study Track

Legally attested certificate of a university degree. This may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree must be a Bachelor "Ostasien" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution. Degree certificates must evidence a minimum of 50 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Japanese, or 44 semester hours per week (SWS) of Japanese language courses. Alternatively,



candidates have passed the N3 level of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT). Additionally, proof of competence in the Japanese literary language (bungo) is required; this course may be studied and completed at Universität Hamburg after admission.

Certificates evidencing language competence must not be older than two years. In case none of the above-mentioned documentations can be provided within the application period, the candidate will have the possibility to undergo a Japanese language placement test conducted by the Universität Hamburg which has to be passed in order to be admitted. Native Japanese speakers are exempt from this bylaw.

Applicants must provide evidence for proficiency in German, equivalent to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Thai Study Track

Legally attested certificate of a university degree. This may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree must be a Bachelor "Sprache und Kultur Südostasiens" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution.

Degree certificates must evidence a minimum of 25 Credit points (ECTS) in Thai. Native Thai speakers are exempt from this bylaw.

Tibet Study Track

Legally attested certificate of a university degree. This may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree must be a Bachelor "Sprachen und Kulturen des Indischen Subkontinents und Tibets" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution. It may be a Bachelor with the specialization in Buddhist or Religious Studies as long as a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Classical Tibetan have been acquired. Alternatively you will need a degree from a German or international academic institution with a minimum of 45 credit points (ECTS) related to Buddhist Studies, Religious Studies or Tibetology which include a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Classical Tibetan or equivalent language training. Candidates whose mother tongue is Tibetan will need to document at least 20 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in classical Tibetan.

In case no sufficient evidence for competence in Classical Tibetan can be provided within the application period, the candidate will have the possibility to undergo a placement test conducted by the Universität Hamburg which has to be passed in order to be admitted.



Additional Admission Requirements

All applicants must provide evidence for proficiency in English (equivalent to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)). English native speakers are exempt from this bylaw.

For details of the legal basis for this regulation, please see the admission bylaws for your chosen degree program: www.uni-hamburg.de/zugang-master

Recognition of Transcripts for Degree Programs Completed at Foreign Higher Education Institutions

If you obtained your first degree abroad, your certificate will be reviewed during the application procedure in the faculty of your program.

If your degree certificate is not in English or German, please include a copy of a certified English or German translation of the certificate with your application documents.

Application

Online Application

You will need to complete the online application available on Universität Hamburg's application portal during the application period: www.uni-hamburg.de/online-application

Please create a user account, enter your information online, and submit your application online.

You will then need to print your online application as a PDF document and submit it together with the following documents to the email address or contact indicated below. You do not need to submit paper documents.

Documents to Submit

Please submit a single PDF containing all documents by e-mail to: steffen.doell@uni-hamburg.de.

For documents not issued in English or German, an electronic copy of a certified English or German translation is required.

- PDF printout of your online application
- Degree certificate or provisional Transcript of Records. If you cannot yet provide a degree certificate when you apply, please submit your current Transcript of Records confirming your provisional grade point average. You will then need to submit your degree certificate by the end of the first semester of the International Master Program in Buddhist Studies at the latest.

- If the relevance of the area (or sub-area) in which you completed your first university degree to the field of Buddhist Studies is not evident from the certificate please provide further certification (e.g. Transcript of Records).
- Curriculum vitae
- A statement of motivation that explicates the regional specialization ("track") you apply for.
- Proof of English language skills (equivalent to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR))
- Applicants with focus on Japan must provide evidence for proficiency in German

If you intend to submit a special application (e.g., hardship application), you will need to send this directly to the Application and Admissions Team (Team Bewerbung und Zulassung) together with the required proof separately from the application documents indicated above by the application deadline.

More information on special applications: www.uni-hamburg.de/sonderantrag and www.uni-hamburg.de/info-master .

Application Address

steffen.doell@uni-hamburg.de

Please note that your application can only be considered if your complete application documents reach the application address by the application deadline. This deadline is final; no extensions can be granted.

If you want to submit an additional special application (e.g., hardship application), you will need to send this special application directly via the online application form together with the required proofs as an upload by the application deadline. For more information on special applications, please see www.uni-hamburg.de/sonderantrag and www.uni-hamburg.de/info-master .

Selection Criteria

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, a selection procedure will be necessary.

For details of the legal basis for this regulation, please see the selection bylaws for your chosen master's program: www.uni-hamburg.de/auswahl-master .



Admission and Enrollment

Once your application has been reviewed, an acceptance or rejection letter will be made available in your STiNE account under the Dokumente (Documents) tab. Please see the information at www.uni-hamburg.de/online-application. An enrollment deadline will be indicated in your acceptance letter - please submit the documents required for enrollment by this date. The enrollment process is an online process. Detailed information about the enrollment process is provided at www.uni-hamburg.de/masterenrollment.

Contact

If you have questions or require further information, please contact Prof. Dr. Steffen Döll at: steffen.doell@uni-hamburg.de

Last updated: January 2025