



Naropa University

2130 Arapahoe Ave
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naropa.edu

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NAROPA
UNIVERSITY

Read about
the state of the
university, social
entrepreneurship in
action, and more!

Naropa Offering Free Meditation Sessions

Every Wednesday Evening

Are you looking to deepen your experience with meditation and connect with others about the practice? Or know someone in Boulder who is? Naropa is now offering a weekly series on mindfulness meditation practice, free and open to the public.

These evening meditation sessions will take place each Wednesday, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in room 9246 at the Nalanda Campus, 6287 Arapahoe

Ave. Each session will include guided meditation and a talk given by experienced Naropa faculty on the view and practice of mindfulness, its application, and ways to integrate it into everyday life. Come as you are, and bring a friend! No experience necessary.

For more information, email Giovannina Jobson at gjobson@naropa.edu.



The State of the University

An excerpt from Naropa President Chuck Lief's address

I believe that we have good reason to be optimistic about Naropa today and Naropa in the future. It isn't news to any of you that higher education across the world is at a place of transition, perhaps unlike any transition points in the past. Naropa needs to offer a diverse range of services to our students, meet federal and state regulations, support a thriving community, and stay connected to our founding heritage as it should best manifest in the twenty-first century.

Enrollment is the lifeblood of Naropa. One way to increase our numbers is to be sure that our programs, current and new, are addressing the needs and passions of interested students. Of course, excitement about an academic program built on a contemplative foundation is at the heart of what we offer. Even more importantly in today's climate, we must structure our programs to be as applicable as possible to how students engage the world.

I am excited that the faculty have successfully developed a new BA in Art Therapy, brought back a strong Low Residency MFA in Creative Writing, and that we are very close to getting an early childhood and K–12 teacher licensure program launched. The licensure will include an endorsement that graduates have the skills to teach Culturally and Linguistically Diverse students. It will also prepare students to teach in several specialized areas, including the arts. Most importantly, students will graduate with a teaching degree founded on contemplative pedagogy and practices. In a world where anyone can say they are an expert in mindfulness, Naropa's certification will be a real offering to primary and secondary education.

The work of creating a more diverse and inclusive community has been at the forefront for the past year. I am grateful to the faculty, staff, and students who have been working across nine diversity working groups. Their work has included the creation of trainings, peer mentorship, a thorough policy review, student recruitment and retention, curriculum benchmarks, and more. As a community, and thanks to the risks taken by some, we have surfaced the pain of bias and exclusion. More than just naming it, we are working to do something. As a community, we can be quick to judge and assign blame. Walking the Naropa walk is hard. Being simultaneously honest and compassionate, being a warrior and a peacemaker, isn't easy.

We know that student housing is a challenge—especially in Boulder. I am happy to say that we just signed a long-term lease for a new building that is scheduled to open in 2017. We were invited to participate in the design process to create some community spaces in the new building, and are also looking to expand such spaces at Snow Lion. Off-campus student housing lends itself well to partnering with investors interested in using their dollars both to earn a return and support Naropa. We will continue to look for similar opportunities.

Naropa is at a powerful inflection point right now. The larger world is embracing mindfulness and contemplation, and our several thousand graduates have increasing impact. We continue to attract the most interesting, inspiring, and challenging students, as well as faculty expert in their disciplines and devoted to the student journey here.

At our first convocation in 1974, our founder, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, manifested a vision that Naropa could reignite the pilot light of education through this new model. We still remember his unfiltered joy in making this audacious proclamation. Contemplative education is now part of our DNA, and I hope we can experience that same joy together.



Dr. Learie Nurse,
Dean of Students

Welcome Dr. Learie Nurse

Naropa's New Dean of Students

Naropa is happy to welcome Dr. Learie Nurse as the new Dean of Students. With more than twenty years of experience in higher education, Dr. Nurse most recently served as acting Associate Director of Residential Life at the University of Vermont. He holds a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Vermont. Dr. Nurse has extensive experience in student affairs through appointments at the University of Vermont, the State University of New York, Plattsburgh, The New England Culinary Institute, and Barbados Community College.

“Dr. Learie Nurse brings expertise in working with students from diverse backgrounds, as well as creating and leading co-curricular programs that will strengthen the Naropa student experience—all of which will play a critical role in developing Naropa's student life vision,” said Cheryl Barbour, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Affairs. “Learie will be instrumental in developing programs that support student retention and cultivate a vibrant and inclusive campus community.”

“Does Nature have a marketing problem?”

Alumnus Justin Bogardus poses question in TEDx talk

Justin Bogardus, MA '13, has been asking a vital question in a humorous way. He recently gave a talk at TEDxVail about his award-winning short viral comedy series, “Nature Rx: Prescription Strength Nature.” The film has over ten million views, has been featured at over forty film festivals worldwide, and has won several Best Short awards. Bogardus was asked to present a version of the TEDx talk “Does Nature have a marketing problem?” at the Wisdom 2.0 Conference in San Francisco in February, alongside world-renowned speakers like Sharon Salzberg, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Russell Simmons, Jack Kornfield, Ram Dass, Joan Halifax, Byron Katie, and many others.

In April, Bogardus continues his circuit, giving a twenty-minute version of the TEDx talk at Clemson University as part of the US Play Conference with the US Play Coalition, which promotes the importance of play and getting outdoors throughout life.

Watch the TEDx talk “Sex, Spock, and Climate Change” on YouTube and learn more about the short film at nature-rx.org.

Social Entrepreneurship in Action

New Partnership with Bridge House

Naropa has embarked on an exciting partnership with Bridge House, a Boulder-based nonprofit organization providing a range of services to the homeless community. The university has contracted with Community Table Kitchen, a social enterprise owned and managed by Bridge House, to provide food services and catering. Through this partnership, Naropa and Bridge House are creating meaningful opportunities for individuals to transition out of homelessness, while providing food service for more than 1,400 students, faculty, and staff across Naropa’s three campuses. This partnership will employ more than a dozen individuals, who themselves are either formerly homeless or transitioning out of homelessness.

“Naropa’s partnership with Bridge House supports our increasing commitment to supporting social enterprise, both in the classroom and in practice,” said Naropa President Chuck Lief. “The cafes will enable our students, faculty, and staff to engage with people who are often hidden from view or stigmatized, and provide much needed financial resources to the employees and to Bridge House. We hope that more companies and organizations can follow our lead in creating this kind of sustainable social impact.”

Special *Lion’s Roar* discount for Naropa Alumni

Portion of proceeds benefit Naropa

Our friends at *Lion’s Roar* (formerly *Shambhala Sun*), today’s most widely read Buddhist magazine, are offering a special discounted subscription for Naropa alumni. For a limited time, you can get a 1-year subscription at 70% off the cover price & *Lion’s Roar* will contribute a portion of your subscription back to Naropa.

Accessible, practical, and profound, *Lion’s Roar* offers Buddhist Wisdom on everything from health, parenting, and relationships to politics, social action and the arts. The publication also includes teachings on Buddhist meditation and practice from today’s best teachers and writers.

Visit naropa.edu/lions-roar to take advantage of this special offer!

The Pilot Light

Catch up with Naropa through the official university blog

Named after Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche’s observation that in our culture today “something doesn’t quite click. It’s as if we missed the pilot light while the stove is burning,” Naropa’s new blog is dedicated to realizing Trungpa’s vision of an awakened society. The blog features posts written by Naropa faculty on issues regarding contemplative education, mindfulness, sustainability, diversity, and leadership; glimpses into the Naropa student perspective; and updates from the alumni community. Follow The Pilot Light at naropablog.com to stay up to date with conversations happening at Naropa!

If you have something you’d like to share with the Naropa community, submit your story to blog@naropa.edu.

How Can Mindfulness & Compassion Impact the College Experience?

CACE Hosts Conference to Open Dialogue

At its best, a university serves as a vibrant ground for the development of knowledge and wisdom, personal and social transformation, and deep engagement with the questions of meaning and purpose. Higher education's ability to fulfill this mission is currently challenged by skyrocketing student loan debt, the corporatization of the university, the advent of massive online courses, and the marginalization of low-income students. Against this backdrop, contemplative educators ask: How can a meaningful, affordable, and impactful university education be fostered for everyone? How can our changing demographics and diversifying student populations become opportunities for creative change?



Hosted by the Center for the Advancement of Contemplative Education (CACE), the conference "Mindfulness, MOOCs & Money in Higher Ed" sought to explore core questions about the place of college in American life, and examine how mindfulness, contemplation, and compassion might bring greater well-being, resilience, and creativity to students and educators alike. Presenters and participants delved into questions like: How can we cultivate wisdom at the heart of our educational enterprises through creative technologies, innovative curriculum, and visionary leadership? And how can our institutions of higher education actively contribute to building a more inclusive, just, compassionate, and awakened human society?

The conference offered inspiration, methods, and practical insights that inform daily work and teaching to create ongoing networks of dialogue. Learn more at naropa.edu/cace.

Gross National Happiness

Hope, Heartache, and Inspirations for Making It Our Own

Bhutan's vision of Gross National Happiness (GNH) inspires hearts and minds about the possibilities of a more sane, sustainable, and life-enhancing future. Gross National Happiness, a term coined by the Fourth King of Bhutan, is a concept that implies that sustainable development should take a holistic approach towards notions of progress and give equal importance to non-economic aspects of well-being.

Naropa Environmental Studies students Bryan Gensits, Lacey Ranf, and Sopa Harmann recently returned from six months of living in Bhutan as part of Naropa's first overseas study abroad program at the Royal University of Bhutan. Together with faculty member Anne Z. Parker, they ignited a lively conversation about GNH at the Front Range Bioneers Conference.

The Naropa students looked beyond fantasy and idealization to invite personal and practical steps to shaping our own future. They told lively stories of real life challenges in Bhutan and what it takes on the personal and collective level to shape GNH on the ground, taking it off the pedestal where we tend to leave it and bringing it into our hearts. They recounted their own learning journeys from idealization, to disillusionment, to arriving at a deep sense of gratitude for the tireless and compassionate way the Bhutanese citizens work to make the value of human life front and center in the world they are building.



Rev. Elaine Yuen, PhD

Compassion, Contemplative Practice, and Ethics in STEM

By Rev. Elaine Yuen, PhD

I recently presented on Compassion, Contemplative Practice, and Ethics in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) at the Contemplative Mind in Higher Education Conference at Howard University in Washington, D.C. Our panel explored whether a mindful practice can support ethical vision in scientific research. There were four of us on the panel from different disciplinary traditions (philosophical, psychological, engineering, and Buddhist), and we presented varying perspectives on how contemplative practice might interact with the narrowing and fragmenting of social and spiritual vision that STEM pedagogies often encourage.

We found agreement in acknowledging that compassion is the foundation of ethical action, and that underlying ethical thinking are interrelationships with other people. Ethical frameworks may help to articulate values, which in turn inform behavior. Contemplative practice may help to refine and acknowledge deeply held (and sometimes unconscious) value sets, as well as point out how contextualized relationships (with family, friends, society in general) may help or hinder in unpacking these values.

It was grounding for me to discuss these issues at Howard University, a historically Black institution located in the downtown area of Washington, D.C. The theme of the conference was "Building Just Communities," and many of the presentations and presenters hailed from urban and underserved areas. Naropa faculty and staff were widely represented, presenting in fourteen sessions. It was gratifying to hear how mindfulness and compassion practices are being utilized in diverse settings to bring about a greater social consciousness.