



**Rosemead, California**

## **PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Board of Trustees of University of the West (UWest) is pleased to invite nominations and applications for the position of President. The President is the chief executive officer of the University, is responsible for the administration of all aspects of its operations, and provides educational standards and leadership of high quality to maintain and advance UWest's standing both in the community and in regard to state, regional, and national accreditation. The President also maintains relationships with religious, community, governmental, and professional bodies, and represents the University to the public.

For 27 years, UWest has had a special mission: to provide a whole-person education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values and to facilitate cultural understanding and appreciation between East and West. At the campus in Rosemead, the University offers nine degree programs (Business, English, Liberal Arts, Psychology, Religious Studies, and Buddhist Chaplaincy) and is home to more than 380 students from over 44 countries and many different religions. One of many ambitious and thriving enterprises in the San Gabriel Valley, UWest encompasses 11 acres and contributes to Rosemead's status as a thriving combination of retail, commercial, and educational institutions.

UWest belongs to the Fo Guang Shan University Consortium, which also includes Fo Guang University (FGU) and Nan Hua University (NHU) in Taiwan, Nan Tien Graduate Institute in Australia, and Guan Ming College in the Philippines. Students from FGU and NHU regularly participate in 2+2 degree programs that allow for two years of study in Taiwan and two in the United States, resulting in degrees from both UWest and their Taiwanese school. UWest students have also studied at FGU in the graduate program for Buddhist studies. In March 2015, University of the West's accreditation was reaffirmed by the WASC Senior College and University Commission for the period of seven years.

The Board seeks an energetic, visionary, and entrepreneurial leader who respects and resonates with Buddhist values, has demonstrated success as a higher education leader and fund-raiser with experience in a religiously-informed educational environment, and preferably has experience as a teacher-scholar. The appointment to the presidency is expected to take effect in the summer of 2018.

## THE UNIVERSITY

**Institutional Background.** University of the West was incorporated as “Hsi Lai University” in 1990 by Venerable Master Hsing Yun, and it opened its doors in spring 1991. The University is a pioneering partnership between Chinese and American Buddhists to establish an American university integrating liberal arts traditions and Buddhist wisdom. In the summer of 1996 the university moved to the City of Rosemead, where it has become an independent institution of higher learning based on the model of a U.S. university.

The current name, University of the West, was adopted in April 2004. For the past several decades, the school has provided a world class liberal arts curriculum while also preparing Buddhists for leadership in the West. The Digital Sanskrit Canon Project and the Center for the Study of Minority and Small Business have also been established to further this mission. Today, while continuing to fill a need in the Buddhist community, UWest serves students from all walks of life with its range of programs in comparative religion, chaplaincy, business, psychology, English, and liberal arts.

**Founder.** Born in Jiangdu, Jiangsu Province, China in 1927, Venerable Master Hsing Yun is a widely respected advocate of Humanistic Buddhism and also the founder of the Fo Guang Shan (Buddha’s Light Mountain) order, one of the largest Buddhist organizations in the world, founded in Taiwan in 1967. Fo Guang Shan administers and sustains various cultural and educational endeavors including nursery schools, high schools, libraries, museums, colleges, and universities. In 1962, Venerable Master Hsing Yun established the Tsung Ling Buddhist College at Fo Guang Shan, and subsequently developed fifteen other Buddhist colleges for the study of the Buddhist dharma and the education and development of monks and nuns. The establishment of post-secondary educational institutions combining Buddhist theory and practices with formal academic studies has been a lifelong commitment of Venerable Master Hsing Yun.

To date, five such universities have been founded. In addition to UWest, Nanhua University in Jiayi, Taiwan, began instruction in 1996, and Fo Guang University in Ilan, Taiwan, opened in 1999. In Australia, Nan Tien Institute was founded in 2001 and received accreditation from the Australian government to offer graduate degrees in Applied Buddhist Studies in 2009. All four universities combine Buddhist teaching and practice with academic disciplines and grant a variety of degrees from the bachelor’s level through the Ph.D. level. Guang Ming College is the newest member of the Fo Guang Shan family. Located in the Philippines, it focuses on performing arts and Buddhist studies. All member institutions are associated with and connected to an extensive network of temple-sponsored research centers, where scholars from many countries engage in research projects.

In North America, Venerable Master Hsing Yun founded Hsi Lai Temple in 1978 in Hacienda Heights, California. After ten years of preparation, the temple officially opened its doors to the public in 1988. Hsi Lai Temple is situated on 15 acres and includes ten major buildings, including the main shrine, library, auditorium, convention hall,

exhibition hall, Buddhist art museum, memorial pagoda, and dining hall. Hsi Lai Temple is designed in the tradition of Chinese palatial architecture and is the most expansive Buddhist temple and monastic center in the Western hemisphere.

**Mission, Vision, and Values.** UWest is guided by statements of mission, vision, and values that place a liberal arts and sciences education of highest quality at the core:

***Mission:*** *The mission of University of the West is to provide a whole-person education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values and to facilitate cultural understanding and appreciation between East and West.*

***Vision:*** *UWest will model Whole-Person Education through engaged and interdisciplinary learning in all programs, an exceptional, caring faculty and staff who fulfil the unique mission, and service projects seeking to improve local and global communities. UWest graduates will practice social responsibility, value diversity, and pursue lifelong learning and spiritual growth. UWest will be a widely recognized name.*

***Values:*** *UWest instills the values of Character, Compassion, and Community in its students, programs, and business practices.*

**Principles:** In pursuing its mission, UWest:

- Provides a whole-person education, highlighting where the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and creative converge.
- Offers an education as unique as each student, supplying the tools and support for students to develop their own paths to academic success.
- Delivers a strong liberal arts education that draws from Buddhist wisdom and strives toward a global perspective, to ensure that graduates can compete and contribute in the modern world.
- Embraces and celebrates diversity as a gateway to wisdom and understanding.
- Creates an environment of compassion, encouraging students to pursue equality and to act in service to others.
- Presents opportunities for intellectual and cultural exchange between East and West.
- Seeks and develops students of strong character who are able to lead others and make decisions motivated by the common good.
- Establishes space and guidance for students to achieve self-knowledge for a peaceful and fulfilling life.
- Promotes spiritual knowledge, guiding students to find their purpose and meaning through “contemplative education.”
- Believes in education as conversation, with students and faculty learning with, from, and on behalf of one another.

**Strategic Plan.** The University of West Strategic Plan for 2015-2020 was finalized in March 2015 following a two-year institution-wide dialogue. It was updated in March 2016. It sets six goals, each with numerous strategies, for the university to pursue as an institution in the coming five years. The strategic plan is a “living document” and

subject to periodic revision as goals and strategies are achieved, modified, or eliminated. During the 2015 calendar year, University departments developed their own strategic plans aligned with the institutional plan. For the most recent iteration of this plan, see <http://www.uwest.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Strategic-Plan-Final-3.0-1.pdf>.

**The Academic Program.** UWest prides itself on its academic program, with degrees and course offerings designed to provide knowledge and skills relevant to the discerning student and the discerning employer, satisfying students' present interests, and preparing them for future ambitions. Students are encouraged to see the whole campus as their classroom, learning with, from, and on behalf of others. Small class sizes allow for a more personalized and effective learning environment, and an emphasis on whole-person education highlights where the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and creative converge.

U West offers undergraduate degrees in four areas:

- Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, with concentrations in Accounting, Computer Information Systems, International Business, and Marketing;
- Bachelor of Arts in English, with concentrations in Literature and TESOL;
- Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts, with self-designed concentrations; and
- Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

Six graduate degrees are offered in four areas:

- Master of Divinity in Buddhist Chaplaincy and Doctor of Buddhist Ministry;
- Master of Business Administration;
- Master of Arts in Psychology – Marriage and Family Therapy; and
- Master of Arts in Religious Studies and Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Studies.

In addition to these degree programs, certificates are offered in: English Language, TESOL, and Business Administration (undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate).

**Accreditation.** In 2015, University of the West received the WASC Senior College and University Commission's action letter announcing the decision to reaffirm UWest's accreditation for the period of seven years. The Commission has scheduled UWest's next Accreditation Visit in fall 2021. A special visit was conducted in spring 2017 to review the university's progress in the areas of strategic planning, analysis of disaggregated student success data, and development of graduate culture. A regular Mid-Cycle Review report will be due in spring 2019.

The final phase of UWest's reaffirmation of accreditation process with WASC consisted of two main reviews: the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR), which took place in 2010, and the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER). The EER began with a self-study, the EER report, which UWest submitted to WSCUC in August 2014, followed by the EER visit, October 27-29, 2014. The EER team visit was experienced as an affirming and constructive event that enjoyed wide participation by UWest students, faculty, trustees, staff, and alumni.

**Board of Trustees.** Overall governance of the University lies in the hands of its 15-member Board of Trustees. The Trustees select the president, oversee all faculty and senior administrative appointments, monitor the budget, supervise the endowment, and protect University property. For further information on the Board, see <http://www.uwest.edu/about-uwest/board-of-trustees/>.

**Faculty.** The UWest faculty is comprised of fifteen full-time members and an additional 35-40 adjunct members who constitute 12-15 full-time equivalents. The Faculty Senate is working with the administration to develop policies for appointment and promotion that follow more closely the American model.

**Students and Student Life.** The UWest student body numbers 383, of whom approximately half are domestic and half international, the latter coming from more than 40 countries, particularly Taiwan, China, Korea, and Thailand. One-third of the students are undergraduates, while two-thirds are at the graduate level. Approximately 30% of the students are Buddhist. The University has approximately 800 alumni/ae, but UWest has not tracked its graduates.

On-campus housing is available and convenient, especially for students coming from outside of the state or the country, and off-campus housing is abundant. Students pursue their academic, personal, and career goals in an environment which is engaging, culturally diverse, and inclusive. In keeping with UWest's mission, Residential Life promotes a holistic approach to independent living, leadership development, personal growth, community building, and collective responsibility. Students have the opportunity to join any of a wide variety of student organizations—from Martial Arts to Music to Badminton. For quiet reflection, meditation, or study, the campus has numerous spots, including a Meditation Center and Buddhist Shrine. For recreation, UWest has a gym open 24/7; a swimming pool; courts for outdoor sports; and a recreation center featuring indoor table sports. Whittier Narrows Regional Park is across the street, with recreation fields, walking and jogging trails, lakes, golf, and other activities. The nearby San Gabriel Mountains offer many opportunities for outdoor adventures including hiking, biking, camping, swimming, skiing, and more.

**Campus.** The UWest campus of eleven acres is located in the city of Rosemead, approximately 30 minutes from downtown Los Angeles. There are six main buildings: Administration, Education, Auditorium/Bookstore, Cafeteria/Recreation, and two dormitories. Outdoors, there are a swimming pool and outdoor courts for basketball, badminton, and volleyball. The surrounding community offers many culturally diverse restaurants, shopping destinations, and entertainment opportunities.

**Finances.** UWest operates on an annual budget of \$9.5 million, of which 40% is provided by Fo Guang Shan or affiliated entities. It maintains a reserve fund of about \$10 million, which functions as an endowment. The annual cost of attendance for full-time students residing on campus varies from \$24,000 to \$28,000, depending on program of enrollment and type of room. For off-campus students, the costs are in the range of \$30-32,000. In addition to institutional scholarships, the Financial Aid Office

administers Federal, State, and University funds in compliance with regulatory requirements while recognizing and respecting the needs and values of our diverse student body.

Additional information about the University is available at <http://www.uwest.edu/>.

## **THE FUTURE: Challenges and Opportunities**

University of the West recognizes that it possesses several important strengths and distinctive features:

- a mission- and values-driven institution, under Buddhist influence;
- small in size, with resulting close personal relationships;
- a school of opportunity, being affordable and non-selective;
- on a growth trajectory; and
- enjoying positive community relations.

Beyond these, the constituencies of University of the West—trustees, faculty, administration, staff, and students—have identified key challenges and opportunities for the University at this point in its young history and are eager to see—and play a role in—significant progress in these areas. Correspondingly, there is anticipation of presidential leadership to inspire the University toward accomplishing these advancements and also to identify possible new directions that will enable UWest to be increasingly successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Identity and Prominence.** Through focused and collaborative efforts, UWest has the potential to have a stronger image and become better known, particularly in Southern California. It has the challenge to undertake more effective marketing to sharpen UWest’s identity as a liberal arts college and to solidify its niche as a faith-based institution with Buddhist values.

**Enrollment.** In response to one of the primary goals enunciated in the Strategic Plan, UWest seeks to increase its enrollment to 600 (500 FTE) by 2020, with at least 60% at the undergraduate level. This increase is intended to be achieved from both domestic and international communities and at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, while maintaining the University’s current professionalism, its uniqueness, and its character. One approach to achieving this growth is to broaden the graduate program offerings.

**Finances.** UWest needs to become more financially independent from the current significant level of support from Fo Guang Shan and its related entities. Major advances in all forms of fund-raising must be pursued, and one aspect of this challenge is to establish and support a fully- functioning office of development.

**Curriculum.** Also in response to the Strategic Plan, UWest is challenged to make significant advances its curricular program, in particular to increase the interdisciplinary

nature of the curriculum and its power to transform the lives of its students both intellectually and socially. A related opportunity, as mentioned above, is to broaden the scope and direction of offerings at the graduate level.

**Community Connections.** Although UWest has standing in Rosemead and the San Gabriel Valley, it is not as well known throughout Southern California as it needs to be in order to maintain a healthy balance of domestic undergraduate students. To achieve greater recognition, it is important to reach out in a wide variety of ways to like-minded institutions in order to create relationships and partnerships that will result in a higher profile and increased applications. Part of the challenge here is to “demystify” the Buddhist nature of the University’s educational program.

**Faculty.** In order to attract and retain the strongest possible faculty in the curricular areas offered by UWest, the new president will have the opportunity to continue current efforts focused on the standardization of the appointment and promotion procedures for faculty and also to seek appropriate ways to increase various of self-governance.

**Stable Leadership.** UWest has benefited greatly from the leadership of President Stephen Morgan, who will retire in 2018 after five years in office. His effectiveness owes much to the stability that has resulted from a term longer than those of earlier presidents. Especially for future success in accreditation, there is an important opportunity and challenge to seek and appoint a president with the potential for a significant term of service.

## **THE PRESIDENT: Professional Capabilities and Personal Qualities**

University of the West seeks a president with the professional background and the personal qualities that will enable him or her to lead and inspire the University in addressing the opportunities and challenges outlined above. Overall, UWest seeks a wise and modern visionary who respects Buddhist values and has the capability and drive to manage and direct all parts of a small but complex environment.

**Executive Experience and Capabilities.** UWest’s next president should have the professional background constituting an excellent fit with the University’s distinctive characteristics as a fledgling, Buddhist-related liberal arts university in the large Los Angeles metropolitan area. These include the following:

- Demonstrated understanding of faith-connected higher education.
- Deep commitment to the University’s mission and values, combined with the desire and capability to incorporate these values of character, compassion, and community into his/her leadership and into all aspects of UWest’s programs.
- The desire to help UWest grow and professionalize and in the process maintain its uniqueness and character.

- Sophisticated experience with managing the budget and finances of non-profit, religiously-based institutions and dealing effectively with limited resources.
- Demonstrated success in raising funds for and increasing the resources available to institutions of higher education, as well as in shaping a productive development office.
- Clear understanding of the importance of effective marketing in maintaining enrollment strength.
- Successful leadership experience in bridging the divides that can arise between segments of a community with different interests and backgrounds, and in uniting the efforts of these parties towards a common goal.
- Knowledge of and experience with Southern California demography, with the wide variety of educational institutions in Southern California, and especially with the challenges associated with the current status of DACA.

**Personal Qualities:** In addition to the above professional experience and capabilities, and in order that they may be most effectively used for UWest’s advancement, the president is also expected to possess—indeed exemplify—certain essential personal qualities that enable him/her to mentor, model, and motivate:

- Highly developed interpersonal skills enabling effective interaction with a wide variety of individuals and groups.
- Dedication to humanistic values common to all people: compassion, integrity, and service.
- A welcoming spirit and open-door policy that will invite conversation with all members of the UWest community, as well as their questions, participation, and contributions.
- A desire for frequent involvement with students and the willingness to be “out and about” on a regular basis and when appropriate to bend down and “be in the trenches” with them.
- The stamina necessary to meet the constant requirement for engaging with the University’s constituencies and outside groups and for sparking enthusiasm in others to give the best of themselves to the University’s cause.
- The diplomacy necessary to deal effectively with tensions and divides that can arise in a complex environment.
- A natural articulateness: effective and polished skills at speaking in public to many different audiences.

## **PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS**

Inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. Review of candidates will begin immediately, and expressions of interest will be welcomed until an appointment is made. To ensure full consideration, applications should be received by January 3, 2018. Application materials should include a letter of interest, a *curriculum vitae*, and names and full contact information for five professional references. Calls to references will occur only later in the search process and only with prior notification of candidates. All

submissions will be treated in confidence and must be sent electronically (MS Word or .pdf format) to:

[UWestPresident@academic-search.com](mailto:UWestPresident@academic-search.com)

The University and Search Committee are assisted by:

Dr. R. Stanton Hales, Senior Consultant  
Academic Search, Inc.  
[rsh@academic-search.com](mailto:rsh@academic-search.com)

It is the policy of University of the West to provide equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment as required by law without regard to age, race, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, mental or physical handicap, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other basis protected by law.