

# **Job Description of the Spiritual Program Coordinator of Kopan Monastery**

## **Job Title:**

Kopan Monastery Spiritual Program Coordinator (SPC)

## **Job Summary:**

The SPC is responsible for developing and organizing an annual program of courses, retreats, and daily talks for students and visitors. The SPC generally plans the program six months in advance to ensure a well-structured program.

## **Job Qualifications:**

- Experience in organizing and coordinating spiritual programs and events.
- Strong communication skills (the SPC needs to be able to work well with Kopan staff, course teachers, and students)
- Good organizational skills (the SPC needs to be able to plan and run Dharma programs suitable to a variety of students)
- Familiarity with the teachings and practices in the Gelug tradition of Tibetan Buddhism and in particular in the FPMT.
- Ability to work collaboratively with the monastic communities of Kopan Monastery and Kopan Nunnery.

## **Key Responsibilities:**

### **1. Develop the Course Program together with the Kopan Managers**

- Create an annual schedule of courses (ensure there is a seven-day break between courses and take into consideration Nepali national holidays and Buddhist holy days)

The program includes:

- Introductory courses (varying between 5, 7, and 10 days, approximately two per month with one of them being a ten-day course)
- Intermediate courses (occasional 5 or 7-day courses that follow an introductory course)
- One-month course every November
- Three-month annual Vajrasattva retreat (January-April)
- Light of the Path (LOP) and other retreats for older students of varying duration
- Short and long retreats (lamrim and tantra deity retreats) for beginners and older students
- Annual Nyung Ne with the Kopan monks on the full moon of Saka Dawa
- Daily morning Dharma talks during periods of private stay

### **2. Publicize the Course Program**

- Ensure the course program on the Kopan website is kept up to date (such as deleting courses after they have been held and adding information about new courses).

### **3. Arrange Teachers, Meditation Leaders, and Umdzes**

- Organize regular courses with the approved Kopan course teachers (These include Namgyal Rinpoche, Geshe Tengyur, Ani Karin, and Ani Joan. Other senior monks may also be invited to teach as needed.)

- Organize teachers of additional courses with guidance from Khen Rinpoche. (see #4 below for details)
- Organize meditation leaders for the regular courses and the November course (ideally meditation leaders would stay for 3-5 months). Clarify their responsibilities prior to coming to Kopan. Review their responsibilities with them upon their arrival. Clarify the costs that Kopan will cover (such as travel expenses, visa expenses, room and board) and the offering that will be made to them.
- Organize Q&A sessions and evening talks with senior monks and visiting FPMT teachers as needed (including Namgyal Rinpoche and Geshe Nyendak). Arrange an offering as suitable.
- Organize suitable chant leaders (in Tibetan and English) as needed for specific events with guidance from Khen Rinpoche.

#### **4. Invite International FPMT Teachers**

- Discuss the invitation of international FPMT teachers with Khen Rinpoche.
- As needed, provide Khen Rinpoche with a list of potential teachers for regular courses, the November course, and retreats for older students (Khen Rinpoche typically appoints the November course teachers and leaders of retreats for older students, such as LOP).
- Communicate with potential teachers regarding the period they are needed for, what types of courses they are being asked to teach, and what their responsibilities will be.
- Arrange dates and topics of courses with the teachers (ideally visiting teachers would teach for 3-5 months with a break of seven days between courses)
- Clarify the teacher's responsibilities prior to their coming to Kopan and, if necessary, review their responsibilities with them upon their arrival. Also, clarify the costs that Kopan will cover (such as travel expenses, visa expenses, room and board) and the offering that will be made to them.
- Coordinate with reception regarding the teacher's accommodation, airport pickup, and other logistical needs.
- Discuss the daily schedule, gumpa setup, course materials, and other logistics (whiteboard, projector and screen, etc.) with the teacher upon their arrival.
- Arrange someone (usually a course student familiar with Kopan) to provide for the needs of the November course teacher, including bringing meals to their room, doing their shopping, taking care of their needs if they are unwell, etc.

#### **5. Prepare Course Materials**

- Prepare materials for students during regular courses including a free book, photocopies of course materials, the Kopan dress code, and Kopan rules and regulations.
- For the November course, course materials also include a daily schedule, *Kopan Prayer Book*, a reading list, and an extensive course outline.
- Organize photocopies of course materials as requested by the teacher.
- Post schedules in appropriate places such as outside the doors of the Chenrezig Gumpa and on the board outside the dining room.

#### **6. Organize the Course Venue (usually Chenrezig Gumpa)**

- Make sure the gumpa caretaker has prepared sufficient cushions and chairs
- Make sure the sound system is setup and working (including a microphone for the teacher and meditation leader, and a roaming microphone for students to use when asking questions)

- Make sure there is a singing bowl and clock on the teacher's table
- Organize whiteboard, projector and screen, etc. as needed for specific teachers.
- Arrange something to drink for the teacher as needed.

## **7. Introduce Courses and Other Events**

(see the document: *Administrative Introduction to Kopan and the Course*)

Meet with course students the first day of a course or event, usually at 5.30 PM, to:

- Introduce the FPMT and the lineage of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche
- Introduce Kopan and give a brief history of its founding
- Introduce the course teacher/s and meditation leader
- Explain the general rules and regulations of Kopan
- Explain the specific rules of the course (silence from the evening to after lunch during the course, silence all day long during retreat days, punctuality at sessions, etc.)
- Explain the daily schedule
- Explain monastery etiquette and gompa etiquette
- Organize discussion groups consisting of a maximum of ten people and arrange suitable locations for the discussion groups to take place, taking into consideration the weather.
- Organize karma yoga – dish washing after meals, turning the audio system and lights on and off, mics, hot water/tea for teachers and bell ringing before sessions.

## **8. Coordinate Visits to Kopan Nunnery, Lama Zopa Rinpoche's Room, the Relic Room, and the Animal Sanctuary**

- Together with the course teacher identify a suitable time to take course students to Lama Zopa Rinpoche's room and the relic room (usually the day before the retreat day/s).
- In general, together with the meditation leader accompany students to Lama Zopa Rinpoche's room and the relic room and answer their questions.
- Organize visits of the course students to Kopan Nunnery either toward the end of the course or at the end of the course.
- Organize visits to the Animal Sanctuary as suitable or as requested by course students.

## **9. Organize Refuge Ceremonies**

- Organize a refuge ceremony at the end of the November course and as needed at the end of regular courses
- Find a suitable refuge preceptor (these include Khen Rinpoche Chonyi for the November course; Namgyal Rinpoche, Geshe Nyendak, Geshe Sherab, and Geshe Tashi Dondrup for other courses)
- Find a suitable translator when needed (Geshe Kunkhen is available).
- Coordinate with the course teacher regarding explaining the refuge ceremony and how to do prostrations, kneel, make an offering with envelope and kata at the end of the ceremony, etc.
- Coordinate setting up the place for the refuge ceremony with the gompa caretaker (throne for the refuge preceptor, cushions for the people taking refuge, etc.)

## **10. Organize the Annual Vajrasattva Jenang**

*(A Vajrasattva jenang is usually held at the end of the November course as the majority of people who will do the Vajrasattva retreat usually come from this course)*

- Coordinate with Khen Rinpoche Chonyi, who will probably confer the initiation, to decide upon a suitable date and time.
- Organize a suitable image of Vajrasattva to be hung in the gumpa.
- Organize the making of tormas etc. together with the reception manager and/or Lama Gyupa manager.

## **11. Organize Pilgrimages**

- Organize pilgrimages to Boudha Stupa and Swayambunath Stupa at the end of every November course.
- Organize pilgrimages to Boudha Stupa, Swayambunath Stupa, Pharping, Namobuddha, etc. at the end of LOP and other events for older students.
- Find someone qualified to lead the pilgrimage and the recitation of prayers.
- Coordinate transport with the reception manager.
- Train monks as pilgrimage leaders as needed (a Kopan monk usually accompanies each bus for the pilgrimages held at the end of the November course).

## **12. Organize Daily Dharma Talks**

- Schedule daily Dharma talks during periods of private stay and update the website with this information.
- Print and post the schedule of the daily talks in suitable places around Kopan.
- Organize a roster of suitable teachers to give the daily talks.

## **13. Coordinate Personal Retreats**

- Ensure that anyone wanting to do a personal retreat corresponds with or speaks directly to Ani Karin or, in her absence, Ani Joan.
- Coordinate the specifics of the retreat, such as type and length, with Ani Karin or, in her absence, with Ani Joan.
- Arrange suitable accommodation for the retreaters with the reception manager.
- Coordinate the bringing of meals to the retreaters with the reception manager.

## **14. Provide Psychological and Emotional Support to Students**

- Ideally work with the course teacher to provide for the emotional needs of students and in particular to deal with any mental health issues that may arise during courses.

## **15. Handle Email Correspondence**

- Manage email communications with students and teachers on an ongoing basis (answering emails forms the bulk of the SPC's day-to-day work).