



NAROPA UNIVERSITY

Draft Institution and Position Profile

The Board of Trustees of Naropa University invites nominations and applications for the position of President. Located in the vibrant community of Boulder, Colorado, Naropa is a distinctive liberal arts university committed to contemplative education based on the world's wisdom traditions. The University community seeks an inspiring and pragmatic leader, committed to the mission of contemplative education and also possessing the executive experience to enhance the institution's financial strength and realize its aspirations.

Naropa's origins are as unique as its educational philosophy. Founded in 1974 by renowned Tibetan Buddhist meditation master, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, the university is named after the 11th century abbot of Nalanda University, a great center of Buddhist learning in India, who understood that wisdom was more than knowledge. The university's Sanskrit motto, *Prajna Garba* means "Womb of Wisdom," and at Naropa, "contemplative education" refers to a learning process by which knowledge is transformed into wisdom through deepened personal understanding and insight.

Naropa University, inspired by its Buddhist heritage, is the seat of nonsectarian contemplative education in North America. As such, Naropa provides a unique environment for the skillful enrichment of personal mindfulness and awareness. Combined with traditional academic proficiencies and learning, these skills—self knowledge, discipline, personal, interpersonal, and social engagement—provide an exceptional opportunity to marry competence with compassion for the betterment of individuals and local and global society. In short, contemplative education at Naropa transforms individuals so that they are prepared and motivated to transform the world.

Throughout its history Naropa has continued to evolve and mature, paying close attention to its contemplative roots. During the past eight years, under the leadership of two presidents, Dr. Thomas Coburn and Dr. Stuart Lord, Naropa has taken a number of important steps forward, bringing its distinctive form of contemplative education into a broader educational arena, sharing its wisdom and, in turn, strengthening its own institutional practices.

In 2008, the Board approved an important strategic plan, "Deliver Distinction with Excellence," the culmination of an extensive and inclusive self-study process, which both articulated university goals and outcomes, and described the steps needed to achieve them. Foundational elements within this plan were encapsulated in development of an "Initiative for Mission Impact,"

implemented during the years 2009-2011 and incorporating adjustments in response to changing national and international economic circumstances. These steps included design and implementation of comprehensive organizational restructuring, including:

- An Academic Plan which developed a university-wide view of the curriculum and was designed to give greater coherence to the undergraduate curriculum and stronger alignment between both graduate and undergraduate curricula and the University's Mission Statement. This plan resulted in consolidation and realignment of Academic Affairs and restructuring 14 academic departments into five colleges;
- A multi-year Enrollment Management Plan to achieve the initial phases of the enrollment and revenue growth targets;
- Realignment of the Presidential Cabinet and administrative divisions that featured substantive adjustments and significant reductions in the staff complement; and
- A review and restructuring of the Board of Trustees' committees and enhanced communications system between the board, cabinet and president

In 2009-10, this planning coincided with and was furthered by the Comprehensive Institutional Self-Evaluation and ten year Evaluation Visit undertaken by the Higher Learning Commission. As a result of this process the University received continued accreditation for a period of five years and direction to prepare for a focused visit in April 2012 intended to assess progress on recommendations and continued progress towards organizational objectives. The university has continued to make appreciable progress towards these objectives and looks forward to the upcoming focused visit.

BACKGROUND

Mission. In 2008, as a dimension of the strategic planning process, Naropa University revised its mission statement, as follows:

Inspired by the rich intellectual and experiential traditions of East and West, Naropa University is North America's leading institution of contemplative education.

Naropa recognizes the inherent goodness and wisdom of each human being. It educates the whole person, cultivating academic excellence and contemplative insight in order to infuse knowledge with wisdom. The University nurtures in its students a lifelong joy in learning, a critical intellect, the sense of purpose that accompanies compassionate service to the world, and the openness and equanimity that arise from authentic insight and self-understanding. Ultimately, Naropa students explore the inner resources needed to engage courageously with a complex and challenging world, to help transform that world through skill and compassion, and to attain deeper levels of happiness and meaning in their lives.

Drawing on the vital insights of the world's wisdom traditions, the University is simultaneously Buddhist-inspired, ecumenical, and nonsectarian. Naropa values ethnic and cultural differences for their essential role in education. It embraces the richness of

human diversity with the aim of fostering a more just and equitable society and an expanded awareness of our common humanity.

A Naropa education – reflecting the interplay of discipline and delight – prepares its graduates both to meet the world as it is and to change it for the better.

Academic Programs. The University offers undergraduate and graduate programs, including the B.A., B.F.A., M.A., M.F.A., and M. Div. degrees. Naropa's four-year undergraduate program offers eleven majors: Contemplative Psychology, Early Childhood Education, Environmental Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, Music, Peace Studies, Religious Studies, Traditional Eastern Arts, Visual Arts, Writing and Literature, and Performance (B.F.A.).

On-campus M.A. degrees are offered in Environmental Leadership, Religious Studies, Religious Studies with Language, Psychology: Contemplative Psychotherapy, Somatic Counseling Psychology, and Transpersonal Counseling Psychology. The M.F.A. degree is offered in Theatre: Contemporary Performance and in Writing and Poetics, the latter through The Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, founded in 1974 by Allen Ginsberg and Anne Waldman.

Naropa also offers a number of on-line courses and three low-residency master's degrees: M.A. in Contemplative Education, M.A. in Transpersonal Psychology: Ecopsychology and the M.F.A. in Creative Writing.

Grounded in the Buddhist tradition and including studies in interfaith pastoral care, the Master of Divinity degree is designed for students pursuing professional careers in pastoral care, chaplaincy, community development and dharma teaching.

Naropa is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Continuing and Professional Studies. The School of Extended Studies (Continuing Education), now being restructured, offers a wide variety of programs, including professional development certificates in Authentic Leadership, a new on-line Contemplative CPE program for chaplains starting Summer 2012, and an on-line Wisdom Teachers courses. Extended Studies also houses innovative Conferences such as Wisdom 2.0, the Legacy of Wisdom Conference, and Continuing Education programs for counselors and psychologists. A limited number of seats from Naropa's regular academic classes are also offered through Extended Studies.

Faculty and Staff. Naropa's faculty consists of approximately 55 full-time, core faculty members and more than 120 adjunct faculty members, enabling small class sizes and low student-faculty ratios. In addition to these faculty members, the University is supported by 145 staff members who, like the faculty and students, are attracted to Naropa's mission and culture. In addition, an international array of artists and scholars are consistently drawn to Naropa to engage with this distinctive community.

Students and Alumni. Approximately 1100 students were enrolled at Naropa during the fall 2011 academic semester, of whom 61% were enrolled in graduate programs and 39% in

undergraduate programs. These students came to Naropa from 47 states, the District of Columbia, and 19 other countries. The average age of Naropa's undergraduates is 25 years, and graduates, 33 years. 65% of all students are female and 13% are students of color. Naropa has approximately 5,700 alumni/ae who have received degrees, and countless others have benefited from the University's non-credit programs and seminars. The University is in the early stages of developing an outreach and communications network with alumni to more effectively engage them and stimulate their support on behalf of Naropa.

Board of Trustees. The University is governed by a Board of Trustees, a group of up to twenty-eight (currently twenty-two) members. The Board is by intent drawn from a variety of backgrounds, regions, professions, and connections with Naropa, including both a faculty and student member. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche is a Tibetan Buddhist and spiritual leader who offers continuity of relationship to the institution's founding and lineage. The Board has a strong history of aligned collaboration with the President, cognizant of its governance, fiduciary, and philanthropic responsibilities.

Setting and Campuses. Nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and approximately 25 miles northwest of Denver, Boulder is a cosmopolitan city of 100,000 that offers a variety of cultural resources. Naropa University is located on three campuses, the Arapahoe campus of slightly less than four acres in the center of town, the Paramita campus in the north part of town (two acres), and the Nalanda campus in East Boulder (5.5 acres). Student housing is located at the Snow Lion Apartments, a freshman housing facility near the Arapahoe campus. The newest building on the Arapahoe campus, the Administration Building, was completed in 2001.

Finances. Naropa's operating budget for the year ending June 30, 2012 is \$19.5 million, up from \$17.4 million for the year ending June 30, 2011. Naropa experienced a significant improvement in net assets from operations in fiscal year 2011 as compared to fiscal year 2010. Naropa's endowed and quasi-endowed assets combined approximate \$4.8 million.

Strategic Planning. Naropa's Strategic Plan, *Deliver Distinction with Excellence*, was developed through a highly participatory process over a two-year period and was endorsed by the Board of Trustees in September 2008. The plan outlines several key goals and objectives, and the steps needed to attain them, to ensure that Naropa will attain new levels of distinctive educational excellence in the years ahead. These objectives include: *building community*, including a new Student Center of Excellence and Engagement and additional student housing; *strengthening the educational experience*, including broadening the undergraduate curriculum, upgrading academic facilities, and exposing students to a wide range of perspectives and cultures; *investing in faculty and staff* by raising salaries against benchmarked institutions and providing training and development; and, *growing the institution* through residential enrollment and online low-residency programs. The plan also includes pursuing several avenues to make the university stronger financially, including modest increases in average class sizes and significantly increasing revenues from fundraising and other forms of resource development.

For further information on Naropa's programs, philosophy, faculty, students and values, please visit its website at www.naropa.edu.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Naropa University is a dynamic institution that sustains a distinctive mission in contemplative education and has built high-quality academic programs, an active, cooperative, and caring community culture, highly dedicated faculty and staff, and a continuing tradition of innovation. Naropa will need to address both opportunities and challenges for the future, as it seeks to continue its growth and development consistent with that mission. Listed below are several challenges and opportunities that relate to the leadership role of the new President.

- **Visioning and Securing the Future.** Naropa approaches the years ahead with extraordinary strengths, but also as a community committed to further enhancing its mission and programs and achieving a more sustainable economic future—this represents a central leadership opportunity and challenge. As the University proceeds, the new President and the entire Naropa community will benefit from the guidance and outcomes contained within the Strategic Plan, which sets goals for enrollment, academic programs and fundraising; the Initiative for Mission Impact; and the leveraging of recent organizational and structural adjustments.
- **Deepening and Extending Leadership in Contemplative Education.** In view of society’s growing interest in contemplative education and practices, Naropa will have the opportunity to expand and extend its educational reach to new audiences and through new domains of teaching and learning. Additionally, the University will work to further enhance the breadth and strength of its undergraduate curricula and professional and graduate offerings. In all of this work, the campus community will need to maintain its commitment to excellence in contemplative education while also probing more fully the meaning and significance of its distinctive mission.
- **Fundraising and Shepherding Resources.** Naropa has strengthened its finances and resources over the past decade, but with growth and progress also have come new fiscal and investment challenges. Key issues for the next several years will include, among others, increasing compensation for faculty and staff, renewing existing or building new campus facilities, and growing the endowment. Strengthened fundraising will be an essential activity for the University community as a whole and for the new President.
- **Reaching out to its Community.** Naropa has an important reciprocal relationship with the larger Boulder community, both benefiting from and contributing to its dynamism, culture, and educational landscape. Naropa has the opportunity over the coming years to further enrich this relationship through broader outreach and service, and by communicating more widely what the University has to offer to the community as a whole and to its people.
- **Reaching External Audiences.** Naropa has developed a truly distinctive mission and set of valued practices, and it has the opportunity to reach outward to attract learners and participants who can benefit from its programs and services. Whether locally or on a broader stage, within the wider academic community and other sectors of activity and ideas, Naropa can increase external awareness of its mission and programs while also

broadening understanding of the meaning, purpose and value of contemplative education and practices.

- **Investing in its People.** In addition to its students, Naropa’s extraordinarily dedicated faculty and staff are the heart of its enterprise. For all personnel but especially its faculty, compensation levels need to be elevated over the coming years, and the University and its mission will benefit substantially from enhanced investments in professional development, service and outreach opportunities, and scholarship.
- **Strengthening Diversity.** Naropa continues to strengthen its institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion which we see as critical moral and pragmatic issues – and essential to the enrichment of our learning environment. We are progressing through recruitment and retention efforts, academics, campus community education, external relations, and institutional policies and procedures. Naropa has a positive reputation as an open, affirming culture. However, working to further engage diversity in the years ahead needs to be a priority as Naropa strives to extend both the vitality of its community and its mission, responding to unmet and changing needs for education and development.
- **Leading in Sustainability.** Naropa University is a signatory of the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment and seeks to reduce its carbon footprint and to pursue “green” building standards, among other ongoing efforts to create an environmentally sustainable campus. Other current initiatives include recycling, use of 100% wind power offsets, xeriscaping, and organic gardening, among others. Modeling and leading toward a sustainable future is central to Naropa’s mission and is critical to both attracting and educating the next generation. Naropa strives to continue its leadership and innovation this area.
- **Expanding and Upgrading Facilities.** While improvements have been made, much work remains to upgrade campus facilities and to provide support services for faculty, staff, and students. Priorities include the library, classroom and other academic facilities, and acquiring additional student housing. Additionally, Naropa needs to create spaces that will enable students, faculty and staff to convene and engage more fully as a true community. Currently housed on three distinct campuses within the City of Boulder, the university has a goal to consolidate facilities over time into two and possibly one integrated campus.
- **Evolution and Tradition: A Creative Tension.** Cultural diversity, spiritual pluralism, and openness to change are keys to Naropa's success and history. This open and inclusive orientation builds upon and invigorates Naropa's tradition, heritage and culture. Our next President must lead Naropa in creating a university that continues to be socially and spiritually inclusive, as key aspects of its core mission.

POSITION AND QUALIFICATIONS

The new President of Naropa University will have both the opportunity and challenge to enhance Naropa's unique mission and distinctive education, build its financial stability, strengthen its community and diversity, and broaden its impact and reach.

As the leader and chief executive officer of Naropa University, the President exercises broad responsibilities for all aspects of the academic, student, financial, and administrative dimensions of the institution. Presidential leadership calls for the incumbent to demonstrate wide latitude in judgment and creative action. The President reports to Naropa University's Board of Trustees.

In addition to other duties, the President:

- Embodies, articulates, progresses and safeguards the University's unique and significant mission;
- Provides leadership for a high-quality, innovative, and responsive academic programs;
- Exercises overall leadership for the University's resource development and fundraising initiatives;
- Advances the University's commitment to diversity and maintains a strong affirmative action and equal opportunity program in the recruitment and retention of students, faculty, and staff;
- Provides effective leadership and management of responsibilities in fiscal management, in development, marketing, and public relations, and in strategic planning to utilize fully the human and physical resources of the campus; and
- Represents and serves as chief spokesperson with key constituencies, including, among others, alumni, the communities within which University properties and facilities are located, the schools, institutions, and agencies who serve as partners with Naropa, the Boulder region, and higher education, both locally and nationally.

Naropa seeks for its presidency an individual who will be an inspiring leader, team builder, and ambassador for the University, one who possesses both an insightful understanding and passion for its mission and the skills and capacity to advance that mission both within and beyond the University. The ideal candidate for the presidency of Naropa University will have the following experience and qualities:

- Commitment to contemplative practice in the candidate's own life and the ability to talk publicly about its meaning and impact;
- Ability to develop a vision for the future and to communicate that vision with a wide range of audiences in a personally inspired way;

- Ability to work effectively with all constituents in the Naropa community – to listen, to engage, to foster individual and collective development – and not be too quick to impose one’s own views;
- A demonstrated commitment to strengthening diversity within the workforce, programs, and culture of an institution or organization; and
- Substantial experience and demonstrable success in fundraising;
- Administrative experience that demonstrates the capacity to manage, effectively and efficiently, complex institutions or organizations;
- Entrepreneurial sensibility and competence, hence the capacity to explore, assess and innovate opportunities in advancing the business, educational, marketing and outreach elements of the University;
- Background and capabilities appropriate to lead the academic community and to build academic programs of high quality. A Ph.D. or other terminal degree is preferred, but applicants from other professional backgrounds should apply who have comparably strong credentials and experience, and credible ability to translate that experience into the academic setting;
- Capacity to lead an effective university team, to delegate effectively, to foster collaboration and shared purpose and to make fair, difficult and timely decisions;
- Ability to articulate the vision and mission of Naropa in ways that are compelling to prospective donors, public officials, media, community members and other friends of the university;
- Capacity to understand, appreciate and have affinity for Naropa’s Buddhist heritage and the transformative value of integrating Buddhist educational values and pedagogies with the traditional Western liberal arts model (recognizing that the candidate may be a practitioner in any spiritual or religious tradition)
- Experience and capacity to work effectively with a board of trustees.

With respect to personal qualities, the ideal candidate will:

- Be inspired and motivated by Naropa’s mission.
- Have the highest personal integrity;
- Be a visionary and imaginative leader;
- Have entrepreneurial drive, spark and a sense of daring;

- Have demonstrated skills and success in executive level management in similarly complex organizations (within or beyond higher education);
- Be energetic and authentic;
- Have a history of building collaborative, well-functioning, motivated and positive teams;
- Be committed to academic freedom and the full exchange of ideas;
- Be passionate about learning, caring for students and teachers;
- Be a ‘listener’ who will enjoy interacting with diverse members of the Naropa community, including students, staff, faculty trustees, neighbors and critics;
- Be willing to examine one’s own biases, be committed to dialogue with all with respect to issues of privilege, power and difference, and be able to disagree with others while regarding them with genuine respect and esteem;
- Be a life-long learner; and
- Be able to maintain a sense of humor while carrying out the demanding role of a university president.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The Board of Trustees has named a Presidential Search Committee including representatives of the College’s Board, faculty, staff, and students. The executive search firm Isaacson, Miller, led by Alan Wichlei, Vice President & Director, and Phillip Petree, Consulting Associate, is assisting in the search. Please direct all inquiries, nominations, and applications in confidence to: Alan Wichlei or Phillip Petree at NaropaPresident@imsearch.com.

Review of candidates will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. To ensure full consideration, materials should be submitted by March 15, 2012.

For more information about Naropa University, please refer to its website: www.naropa.edu

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