Back in the 1980s, the Dalai Lama offered the suggestion that a dialogue between Buddhist contemplatives and Western scientists interested in the nature of mind might lead to new ideas and be of benefit to both Buddhist and scientific communities. This dialogue has grown to become a nearly annual event between the Dalai Lama and various scientists and educators. As part of enlarging this conversation, educational programs are evolving in which Tibetan monks and nuns engage in the study of science. While the dialogue between Buddhism and science has opened up interesting new arenas of investigation, certain topics of potential great import remain unaddressed. These include deep questions about the nature of consciousness and the limitations of Western science, as it is conventionally practiced, to address such questions.

David Presti has taught neurobiology and cognitive science at the University of California in Berkeley for 22 years. For the past 8 years, he has also been teaching neuroscience to Tibetan Buddhist monastics in India. His educational background is in physics, molecular biology, and psychology, and his primary research interest is in the connection between mental experience and brain-body physiology, the so-called mind-body problem.

Contemporary Conversations between Buddhism and Science

Thursday, October 25, 2012, 5:00 pm
IEAS Conference Room, 2223 Fulton Street, 6th floor

For more information, visit http://buddhiststudies.berkeley.edu/events or call 510-643-5104.