



## **The University of Colorado Denver announces the establishment of the Bhagwan Suparshvanatha Endowed Chair in Jain Studies**

*Dr. Steven M. Vose will become the inaugural holder of the chair, which is made possible by members of the Jain community. It is the **first endowed chair of Religious Studies at CU Denver**, opening doors for students, faculty, and the public to learn more about this ancient religion with a strong focus on nonviolence.*

The University of Colorado Denver is pleased to announce the establishment of the Bhagwan Suparshvanatha Endowed Chair in Jain Studies, marking a significant step forward in our mission to engage with the most pressing global issues of our time. The university is grateful to members of the Jain community throughout the U.S., who provided the funding required to elevate an existing endowed professorship in Jain Studies, which they established in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) in 2021. CU Denver also continues to partner with local communities, like the Jain Samaj of Colorado, which is also very supportive of this position.

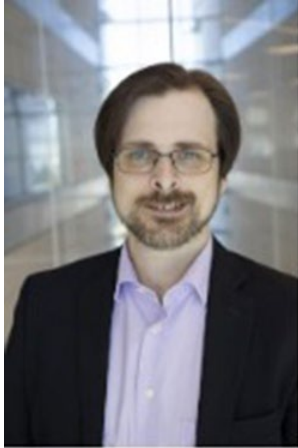
“We are extremely grateful to this generous group of donors for creating the **first endowed chair in the history of our college**,” remarked CLAS Dean Pam Jansma. “Endowed chairs are essential to maintaining academic excellence, and this position ensures that CU Denver continues to benefit from the vision, scholarship, and exceptional teaching of one of the nation’s leading scholars of Jainism. We look forward to the impact it will have on our campus and beyond.”

With its focus on the history and practice of nonviolence and human rights, the Jain Studies program at CU Denver has already become a vital force on campus. Since its establishment, students have demonstrated significant interest in the program’s courses, through which they gain a deeper understanding of Jainism and nonviolence as well as knowledge and tools that help them to consider creative, nonviolent solutions to contemporary challenges.

The Endowed Chair in Jain Studies will develop an interdisciplinary Jain Studies curriculum, offering a wide range of undergraduate and graduate courses, including thesis supervision for master’s degree students, helping students to connect with Jain scholars around the world. This work will not only continue to enhance our academic offerings but also open new opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration across CLAS and with the university’s seven schools and colleges.

In addition, the Endowed Chair will establish an on-campus lecture series to help people learn more about Jainism and Jain communities, and to explore how Jain ethics can contribute to the most pressing issues we face in the world today. These events will provide the university community and the broader public with deeper insights into the tradition’s principles of nonviolence, social justice, and support for climate change and animal rights.

The Endowed Chair will also provide study abroad scholarships for students, grants for faculty to pursue research in India, and a two-year fellowship for a self-designed MA in Jain Studies and related fields, further reinforcing CU Denver’s strengths in social justice. Through interdisciplinary degrees offered by our master’s in humanities and master’s in social sciences programs, the Jain Studies program will contribute to a broader dialogue on ethical solutions to global challenges. The Endowed Chair in Jain Studies will also support seed grants to encourage faculty and students to explore Jainism and conduct research that aligns with Jain values.



Dr. Steven Vose, who has led the Jain Studies program at CU Denver as an endowed professor since its inception, will become the inaugural holder of the Bhagwan Suparshvanatha Endowed Chair. Dr. Vose is a leading scholar in Jain Studies with a deep commitment to advancing the understanding of Jainism, its ethics, and its impact on society. He holds a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania and has taught extensively on Jainism, South Asian religions, and the intersection of religion and politics. His research spans the history of Jainism, focusing on how Jains articulate their identity during periods of political transition, construct religious authority, and play key roles in shaping the social and political landscapes of India despite comprising less than 0.5% of its population. Dr. Vose's forthcoming first book, *Reimagining Jainism in Islamic India*, won the Edward C. Dimock, Jr. Book Prize in the Indian Humanities from the American Institute of Indian Studies. His current research examines how transnational Jain communities navigate India's rapid growth in recent decades.

"I am thrilled that CU Denver has received this support from the Jain community and even more humbled to have the trust of both the community and the university," said Dr. Vose. "At CU Denver, I have everything a scholar hopes for: passionate students, inspiring colleagues, and a visionary administration—all in a city and state that embraces our responsibility to face the many challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. All the opportunities the Endowed Chair makes possible are for everyone who calls Denver home. I hope to help our students, colleagues, and the public learn from the past, understand our present, and imagine a future in which all of us can thrive. I became a scholar because I am deeply interested in the wisdom we gather and transmit in our religious traditions, which, at its best, challenges us to be better—more generous, more forgiving, more patient, and more truthful with others and ourselves. I have learned from studying with and about Jains for nearly 25 years that our greatest accomplishments come when we look beyond ourselves to see the world from other perspectives, to think about the consequences of our actions on multiple levels from the person in front of us to the planet as a whole. These consequences include ourselves, which inspires me to help students and others to look for the bigger picture—our immediate concerns often find their best solutions when we help others to solve those same problems. The success of the Jain Studies Program at CU Denver will be measured in the way it inspires us to learn from and about others honestly and openly. I'm excited to get to work!"

The University of Colorado Denver expresses its deepest appreciation to the following for their support of the Bhagwan Suparshvanatha Endowed Chair in Jain Studies:

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