

2018

# Honorary Degree Award Citation for Dirck Vorenkamp

Lawrence University

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## Dirck Vorenkamp

DIRCK VORENKAMP, you have served Lawrence University with devotion, introducing students to the tenets and practices of Asian religions. You came to Lawrence in 1997 with a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from the University of Wisconsin at Madison; your research interest in theories of time and faith in Chinese Buddhism have resulted in numerous publications, including a 2004 translation of Fa-Tsang's *Commentary on the Awakening of Faith*.

Your expertise in the writings of Chuang Tzu helped usher thousands of students through the subtleties of his work when it was a feature of *Freshman Studies*, and your dedication to *Freshman Studies* has been a signal aspect of your career: you served as director of the program, and in 2000 you received the *Freshman Studies* Teaching Award. More recently, the addition of the *Bhagavad-Gita* to the curriculum has allowed you to continue this record of distinguished service, delivering the *Freshman Studies* lecture on Krishna's *Counsel in Time of War*.

You have offered courses in Indian, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese Buddhism; on systems of Buddhist philosophy; on Gandhi; and on Zen Buddhism. You have also modeled for our students one of the signal features of the life of the mind: an eagerness to take on unexpected questions. When a reader questioned your approach to the Madhyamaka Buddhist notion of "emptiness" in your translation of Fa-Tsang's *Commentary on the Awakening of Faith*, you chose to explore the issue through a second project translating his *Commentary on the Treatise of the Twelve Gates*, which you elected to publish on the internet in 2015 so as to make the work as widely available as possible.

In recognition of your many contributions to Lawrence and its students, I am pleased to award you the degree of Master of Arts, *ad eundem*, on the occasion of your retirement from the faculty.

June 10, 2018