

## Sexual allegations shut down Zen retreat

*No UNM students among those allegedly groped by Zen master*

By John Tyczkowski | New Mexico Daily

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Bodhi Manda Zen Center in  
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A UNM summer seminar was canceled after multiple allegations emerged accusing its instructor, 105-year-old Zen master Joshu Sasaki Roshi, of molesting female students at sites in New Mexico and California.

For the past decade, Sasaki and his religious order hosted UNM students at the Bodhi Manda Zen Center in Jemez Springs for a two-week seminar on Buddhism, according to the summer seminar's website.

The UNM philosophy department canceled the seminar for summer 2013 after learning of multiple allegations against Sasaki on SweepingZen, a website that provides biographies of Zen teachers and archives of their teachings. This latest round of allegations included statements from high-ranking teachers in Sasaki's order.

UNM interim Chief Marketing and Communication Officer Cinnamon Blair said a member of Sasaki's order informed the philosophy department in 2007 of one allegation of sexual molestation.

Because of this, department staff directed that UNM students at the center would not have any personal access to Sasaki.

Blair said the department chose not to close down the program after receiving the one tip because of the nature of the allegation and Sasaki's physical condition.

"It was just one person saying these things, it wasn't anything written or official," Blair said. "Also, (Sasaki) needed help moving from room to room by that point."

Blair said there have been no allegations that link Sasaki to sexual molestation of female UNM students at these summer seminars run by the philosophy department.

"The department has categorically stated that they have never received any reports of (sexual molestation) happening to UNM students (at Bodhi Manda Zen Center)," Blair said. "The allegations we've heard about happened 30-40 years ago."

Blair was unable to comment on whether the program, which would have been in its 30th year, might resume at a later date.

"It's awfully soon to talk about it ... this has been a very big blow to morale of the community here," Blair said. "It was a wonderful opportunity for students to learn from and talk to scholars from all over the world."

John Taber, who was the chair of the department in 2007 when the first tip was received, declined to comment. Richard Hayes, the department's current chair, also declined to comment.