

## Memorandum

To: Mark Juffernbruch, Chair, Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee  
Steve Griffith, Academic Dean

From: Lora Friedrich, Department of Social Science  
Jack Gittinger, Department of Education  
Nick Proctor, Department of History

Cc: Mark Freyberg, Patti Woodward-Young, Patricia Calkins, Jay Wilkerson  
Members of the International Study Work Group

Date: September 6, 2007

RE: Biannual Semester in Thailand Program

This study abroad experience has been designed in accordance with the guidelines suggested by the international study action group. There is a **language component**, there is **significant interaction** with host country nationals and there is a strong **service experience**.

Another advantage of this proposal is the **independent study component**. By allowing a discipline-related independent study to count toward requirements for a major or minor (perhaps as an elective), the semester in Thailand would be even more attractive to a wider variety of students.

The program would be located in and focused on the **developing world**. Consequently, students would be learning not just about Thailand, but about many of the issues that shape the lives of the vast majority of the world's population. A semester in Thailand would allow students to live in a developing country, in a rapidly changing and economically vital region of the world. Additionally, Thailand and the United States have had a co-mingling of history especially related to World War II, the Korean War and the Viet Nam Conflict.

Finally, this program will allow students to progress through a microcosm of the college experience. They will begin as **novices** with very little experience or understanding of the topics they are about to investigate. By the end of the semester, they will become **practitioners** because the semester program would be linked to a May Term course. This linkage will allow SC students to demonstrate their cultural literacy and language skills to their peers. Hopefully this will deepen the in-country experience for the May students while reinforcing the accomplishments and progress of the semester students.

## **Staffing**

Lora Friedrich has extensive experience in Thailand. Nick Proctor has team taught two May term travel courses to Thailand. Jack Gittinger has team taught one May term travel course to Thailand. Two additional faculty members have expressed an interest in "doing a Thailand semester" with students.

## **Enrollment**

The initial program would be limited to 15 students; however more students could be accommodated. It might be possible that students from other educational institution would participate in this program through Simpson. It is possible that some students might come for only part of the program. For example, an education student might want to do part of their student teaching in Thailand or a DAL student might want to do the Buddhist immersion part of the program or a service project.

The Thailand travel course has been offered 6 times since 1999. Each time the course has filled and sometimes there has been a long waiting list (as many as 47 students), even with the threat of terrorism, bird flu and SARS. Students return to Simpson College and report that their worldview has widened significantly as a result of being exposed to the developing world. Some students have gone on to serve in the Peace Corps after this experience. Others have changed their career paths and decided to teach or be involved in development work. All students have developed a stronger sense of what it means to be a global citizen.

## **Logistics and Institutional Support**

Simpson College has an institutional relationship with Christian University of Thailand (CTU), a United Church of Christ of Thailand school. The presidents of Simpson College and CTU have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in order to facilitate these kinds of learning experiences. CTU was started as a nursing school and has good lab facilities (for Thailand) and could accommodate at least some science courses that might be offered if this semester were headed up by someone in the natural sciences. CTU has also established partnerships with Azusa Pacific University and Texas A & M. It might be possible to invite students from these institutions to share this educational opportunity with Simpson students. Instructors and administrators at the University of Iowa (Social Work program, Des Moines center) has also expressed an interest in having their students participate in all or part of this program.

**Proposed plan:**

Pre departure Seminar (At Simpson College, Fall 2008)		
Course	credits	delivery
Soc 197	2	<p>Topics to be taken up in this course will include survival Thai phases and expressions, social customs, food and cultural norms, folkways and mores. Students will consider what it means to be seen as “An Ugly American” and how to prevent that from happening. Also, the creation of a “Reacting to the Past” game focused on the introduction of western thinking to Thailand (think the King and I) is in the beginning developmental stages.</p> <p>Possible Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thai Ways by Denis Segaller</li> <li>• Culture Shock by Robert and Nanthapa Cooper</li> <li>• The Thaksinization of Thailand by Duncan McCargo</li> </ul>
Unit One (3 weeks based in Bangkok and Chiang Mai)		
Anth 210(CS 3)	3	<p>Social problems and issues related to globalization, human trafficking, changing gender roles, poverty and environmental issues will be examine and measured against the backdrop of traditional Thai culture, history and values and the overall changes and modernization of South East Asia. Students will go on field trips to such places as the National Museum, Royal Palace, Buddhist temples, “red light” district in Bangkok, schools, and historic ruins. Students will be exposed to Thai music and dance.</p> <p>Possible Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam by Sumet Junsai.</li> <li>• The Balancing Act: History of Modern Thailand by Joseph Wright Jr.,</li> <li>• The Bridge over River Kwai by Pierre Boulle,</li> <li>• The Four Reigns by Kukrit Pramoj,</li> <li>• The Diary of Bua Geow by JC Shaw,</li> </ul>
Unit Two (5 weeks of language based at CTU in Nakorn Pathom)		
FL 101 FL 102	3 3	<p>Students would meet daily for three hours for 5 weeks with a Thai language instructor. The instructor would be recommended by (CTU) and might already be a faculty member at CTU. Students will also be assigned a conversation partner selected from among the CTU students studying English or Tourism. Language partners will be required to meet 10 hours a week. Thai partners will be encouraged to invite their SC partner for a home stay.</p>

		<p>The SC rule has been 2,100 minutes of “seat time” equals one 3 credit class. Meeting 3 hours a day for 5 weeks equals 4,500 minutes of seat time. In addition, the conversation partners will provide at least another 50 hours (or 3,000 minutes) of Thai language use and practice.</p> <p>The Dept. of World Languages and Cultures has seen this proposal and supports this idea (see attached e-mail).</p>
Unit Three (Buddhist Immersion Program, 2 weeks based in Chiang Mai)		
Rel 232 (CS 4)	3	<p>Students would spend the first week looking at Buddhism from an academic perspective. Then students would move on to a Buddhist immersion experience that would include a meditation course while living in a temple or a home stay. Either way, volunteers experience the day-to-day activities of the temple through observation and participation. The living conditions at the temples are very basic, including rooms with a straw mat and blanket to sleep on, as well as a fan and mosquito net. Typically only two meals are eaten during the day. Morning chanting usually begins at 5:00 am after which the monks visit the nearby village to collect food from the community.</p> <p>Students observe the daily routine of the temple and its laity, while joining in on meditations, chantings, or ritual celebrations. Students will also participate in a meditation course.</p> <p>This course on Buddhism will be designed and coordinated by Kenneth Dobson, PhD (theology, Princeton). Dr. Dobson has been a missionary, instructor, and academic administrator in Thailand for nearly 40 years. Dr. Dobson is the Vice President for International Relations at CTU.</p> <p>Possible Reading List:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddhism in Thailand by Dr. Katuna Kusulasaya</li> <li>• A History of Buddhism by Dr. George Storis</li> </ul>
“Spring Break”--one week for student travel in the region.		
Unit Four (4 weeks.) Depending on what students choose to do they may be located at their service site or at CTU for 3 weeks. Students will be supervised by their mentor at their placement site. The SC instructor may travel to the placement site. During the 4th week the group will be in retreat (at a Baptist Missionary Camp in Hua Hin).		

<p>ESS 290, 319 Or as assigned by the student's academic department</p>	<p>3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option A</b></p> <p>Students will have a work/service/hands-on experience. Sites include a Karin Refugee Camp, an orphanage serving children living with HIV, a Leprosy Hospital, schools, an HIV hospice program, programs related to human trafficking, an English language newspaper, a travel agency, and an elephant refuge center. Some placements may happen in partnership with the Peace Corps.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option B</b></p> <p>Students will develop a proposal for a directed independent study, integrating topics from their major (or minor) discipline of study at Simpson within the context of Thailand or southeast Asia.</p> <p>Before leaving for Thailand, students will identify a faculty member in their major/minor who will agree to work with them via distance communications (Internet, voice, etc.) as they develop and implement their proposal in Thailand. The Simpson faculty member onsite in Thailand for that semester would serve as a resource as well, however, content expertise would be provided by the faculty member in the U.S. and faculty members at C.T.U.</p>
<p>ESS 190</p>	<p>1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reflection and Assessment</b></p> <p>A required element of the semester will be a time of reflection and evaluation. All students will spend 5 days at the Baptist Retreat Center at Hua Hin. During this time they will be asked to reflect on their time spent in Thailand, be involved in group processing exercises, do a presentation on their service learning experience or their research project and to plan for the incoming May term students.</p>
<p>Unit Five (May term)</p>		
<p>SOC/Hist 297</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>The semester students would be joined by a May Term group. The students completing the semester in Thailand will coordinate a workshop, introducing the newly arrived May Term visitors to Thailand, presenting their independent projects, and teaching a bit of the language. The large group will travel to Kanchanaburi, Korat and Ko Samet.</p> <p>The semester students will not have traveled to the above mentioned places however, it is imagined that their</p>

		<p>familiarity with Thai language and culture will allow them to be helpful to their May term peers.</p> <p>Semester students will return to Simpson College with the May Term group.</p>
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Budget  
(based on 15 students)

Adjunct Instructors Cost		Cost per student (rounded up to nearest \$)
• Thai	\$3,000.00	\$ 369.00
• Buddhism	\$2,000.00	
• Conversation partners	\$ 525.00	
<b>Student Costs</b>		
• Airfare	\$1,000.00	\$4322.00
• Room	\$1,000.00	
• Meal Allowance	\$ 750.00	
• In-country transportation	\$ 500.00	
• Entrance Fees	\$ 200.00	
• SC Program Fee	\$ 500.00	
• Visa	\$ 150.00	
• International ID card	\$ 22.00	
• Emergency Fund	\$ 200.00	
<b>Simpson Instructor Cost</b>		
• Airfare	\$1,000.00	\$ 428.00
• Room	\$1,000.00	
• Meal Allowance	\$ 750.00	
• In-country transportation	\$ 500.00	
• Entrance Fees	\$ 200.00	
• Phone	\$ 300.00	
• Adjunct replacement at SC	\$2,500.00	
• Visa	\$ 150.00	
• International I.D. Card	\$ 22.00	

