

**SIMPSON COLLEGE**  
**2009 MAY TERM OFF-CAMPUS TRAVEL COURSE PROPOSAL**

Date: January 10, 2008

**Completed forms should be submitted to the Office of International Education no later than January 15, 2008 for international travel courses and no later February 15, 2008 for domestic travel courses.**

<b>Name of proposer(s):</b>	<b>Department(s):</b>
Jack Gittinger	Education
Lora Friedrich (will be in Thailand with semester students)	Social Science

**Please check one of the following:**

**INTERNATIONAL Off-Campus Travel Course**

**DOMESTIC Off-Campus Travel Course**

**I. Course Information**

- A. Course number, if course has been offered previously:  
Soc/Educ/Hist 197
- B. Course title:  
(*Note: The name of the place of study should appear in the title*)  
Thailand: the Culture and People of a Developing Nation
- C. Transcript Course Title (max. 21 characters):  
Thai Culture/History
- D. Course level (100/200/300): What is the rationale for offering the course at this level?  
This course has been traditionally offered as 197.
- E. Minimum enrollment:  
(*For 1 instructor, must be at least 10 students; for 2 instructors, must be at least 20 students.*)  
If proposed minimum is less than the requirement, provide a rationale for receiving variance.  
15 (for May Term only)  
One instructor will already be in Thailand. This course will join us with the SC students who have been studying in Thailand for the semester. One of the important course objectives is to allow the students who have been in country to provide peer teaching to the May term students. The semester students will help the May term students with language and cultural understanding.
- F. Maximum enrollment: 15

**II. Course Description**

- A. Course goals and objectives: Given that Simpson May Term Off-Campus Travel Courses aim to provide students with an active learning curriculum that integrates a rigorous academic program with experiential immersion activities, please outline the learning objectives for your course.
  - 1. Students will be exposed to a developing nation in economic transition. As a group we will explore the way that the people live in poverty in both urban and rural areas. We will tour the Grand Palace, work with middle-class children in a camp setting and spend an afternoon doing a work project in the poorest slum in Bangkok. Students will be asked to write an essay in their journal comparing these experiences.
  - 2. Students will be introduced to non-western lifestyle. Students will have a guided tour of a Buddhist temple followed by an interactive session with a Buddhist monk. Students will also interact with rural school children.
  - 3. Students will develop an understanding of the historical role Thailand has played in the stability of Southeast Asia. Students will walk the ruins of the Khmer capital, tour the Freedom Railroad built by

WWII prisoner of war, held by the Japanese, and talk with a Thai history professor about Thai support of the United States during the Viet Nam conflict.

4. Student will experience the social and environment concerns facing Thailand today. Students will complete a work project at an orphanage for children living with HIV/Aids or a preschool that is located in one of the poorest areas of Bangkok.

B. Rationale for the course: Please explain how the course fits in with your department and/or the college's curriculum.

This experience is, clearly, closely connected to the goals and objectives of the College's Global Awareness cornerstone. Not only will the students on the Thailand May Term trip learn about the history and culture of a non-European culture through immersion, but they will have experiences that will help them better appreciate the needs and aspirations of the people in a developing Asian nation. In addition, the semester students move from being cultural novices to knowledgeable practitioners as they share their newly gained understanding of Thailand with the May Term students.

C. In-country activities: Describe how the planned immersion activities (these could include home stays, service learning opportunities, interviews with locals, Q & A sessions with local guest lecturers/speakers, etc.) will be integrated into educational goals of the course.

This trip will be divided into three sections and focused on three different areas within Thailand. The first third of the trip will use the province of Kanchanaburi as "home base". Kanchanaburi is about 90 miles west of Bangkok and will provide students with a more realistic picture of the life that most Thais live. It is the home of the "Bridge over the River Kwai" and the museums that inform us about what it was like to live in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in Southeast Asia during World War II. Kanchanaburi shares a natural mountain border with the country of Myanmar (Burma). There is an ever growing population of ethnic, political and religious refugees in the area. Students will be exposed to the issues related to political unrest and refugee resettlement. Last, as Thais have grown more ecologically aware, there was been a decline in Teak harvesting. As a result, there are elephants who worked in the industry that have been forced in to retirement. To earn their keep, they are now used to provide elephants treks into the surrounding rain forest.

The middle part of this study abroad experience will be in Nakorn Ratchasima, located in the Northeast part of Thailand. This province is home to Khmer style ruins constructed during the Angkor period. In addition, this part of Thailand is the land forgotten by time in many ways and functions as a workaday Thai city and not as a tourist hub. There is a cottage industry of silk and cotton weaving, still done by hand on looms. There is also the oldest national park located here. Korat was also home of a U.S. Airbase during the conflict in Viet Nam.

The third phase of the May term will be spent on Ko Samet (Samet Island). Ko Samet under the protection of the National Park Department and includes a turtle conservation center. It is central to a classical Thai epic poem about the travels of a prince and his relationship with a mermaid.

Important Note: As stated earlier in this document, one of the important objectives for the Thai semester abroad and the May term is to allow the students who have been in country for the Spring 2009 semester to provide peer teaching to the May term students. Because of this, some elements of the in-country activities will be developed and finalized during Spring 2009.

D. Required course assignments and evaluation

1. Explain specific course requirements and indicate when they would occur (e.g., P=during the on-campus spring semester prep course, O=off-campus, and D=during the de-briefing portion of the off-campus experience; it's possible that some assignments will happen in all of the periods, e.g., Readings could be P-O-D)

a. Participation

(P) Each student will be expected to attend and participate in pre-trip seminars during the Spring 2009 semester.

(O) Students will make every effort to actively engage themselves in Thai culture and history during the trip, while displaying an open-minded attitude

b. Readings (please specify what these will be)

(P) Students will read and discuss *Travelers' Tales Thailand: True Stories* by James O'Reilly (Editor), Larry Habegger (Editor)

Winner of the Lowell Thomas Award for Best Travel Book, this newly designed collection paints a unique portrait of a complex and captivating land. One contributor lives as a monk for a month, gaining an inside look at monastic life. Another discovers Bangkok's riverine pleasures, a world away from its car-choked streets. Yet another finds refuge as the houseguest of an isolated tribesman. Through these engaging personal stories, readers witness how Thailand satisfies just about any traveler's hunger for the exotic, the beautiful, the thrillingly different. Writers include Pico Iyer, Norman Lewis, Diane Summers, Simon Winchester, Ian Buruma, Thalia Zepatos, and Tim Ward. "The breadth and color of the collective portrait [the contributors] provide of Thailand is remarkable." — Los Angeles Times

c. Journal reflections

(O) Each student will keep a daily journal while in Thailand.

d. Exams

N/A

e. Papers/Presentations/Field reports, etc.

(P) Pre-Trip Orientation Presentations

Objective: Maximize the value and enjoyment of our trip to Thailand by gaining some valuable background knowledge of the country and region.

Task: Each team of two students will use Power Point to prepare a 15 minute multimedia presentation on a selected topic related to the history, geography, or culture of Thailand.

f. Other assignments

N/A

2. Approximately what percentage will each of the above course requirements contribute toward the final course grade?

Participation 60%

Reading 10%

Journal 20%

Presentation 10%

E. Catalog course description of about 100 words which includes a statement of expected course work (papers, exams, journal writing, presentations, etc.)

Thailand is the home of an ancient culture; it is also vibrant 21st century society that is in the throes of massive change. This trip will introduce students to the broad spectrum of the Thai culture through a variety of activities.

In Thailand we will visit numerous Buddhist temples and historic/cultural sites, visit the rural and less-traveled northeast region of Thailand, ride elephants and bamboo rafts, attend Thai cooking school, walk along the railway immortalized in *Bridge on the River Kwai*, visit an aquatic national park and related animal conservation projects, and complete a short service project working with students at a Thai English-language school.

F. Are there prerequisites for this course? NO

### III. Other Information

A. Has this course been offered in a previous May Terms? YES

If yes, please indicate *when* it was offered and the approximate enrollment.

May term '99, 20 students,                      May term '02, 30 students,

Summer '04, 12 students                      May term '05, 25 students

May term '07, 29 students

- B. Department(s) in which credit is to be awarded: Education and Social Science
- C. If this course will meet requirements for a departmental major or minor, please explain briefly: N/A
- D. Proposed dates of the travel course, including dates you anticipate being abroad:  
Sunday, April 26 through Thursday, May 14
- E. Proposed location(s) and how the site location(s) relate to the core objectives of the course:

Location One: Kanchanaburi Province (90 miles west of Bangkok)

“Bridge over the River Kwai” and the museums that inform us about what it was like to live in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in Southeast Asia during World War II.

Kanchanaburi shares a natural mountain border with the country of Myanmar (Burma). There is an ever growing population of ethnic, political and religious refugees in the area.

Attend a Thai cooking school.

Thais have grown more ecologically aware, there was been a decline in Teak harvesting. As a result, there are elephants who worked in the industry that have been forced in to retirement. To earn their keep, they are now used to provide elephants treks into the surrounding rain forest. Students will visit the elephant rehabilitation center and participate on an elephant ride through nearby rainforest.

Significance to course:

- Students will reside far enough from the Bangkok metropolitan area to provide them with a more realistic picture of the life that most Thais live.
- Students will be exposed to the issues related to political unrest and refugee resettlement.
- Students will learn more about the complex role that Thailand played in World War II.

Location Two: Nakorn Ratchasima Province (Located about 160 miles northeast Bangkok, Korat is essentially the gateway to a region Thais refer to as Isan, an area with its own distinct culture and cuisine.)

Tour Khmer style ruins constructed during the Angkor period in Nakorn Ratchasima.

Also in the Nakorn Ratchasima region, there is a cottage industry of silk and cotton weaving, still done by hand on looms. Students will visit several sites representative of this industry. There is also the oldest national park located here, as well.

Significance to course:

- This part of Thailand is the land forgotten by time in many ways and functions as a workaday Thai city and not as a tourist hub, so, again, students will be immersed in aspects of the Thai culture relatively unaffected by tourism.
- It was in this region that the U.S. based much of its forces during the Vietnam War, allowing students to examine the effect of that influence on Thais.

Location Three: Ko Samet (Samet Island in southern region)

Visit Ko Samet National Marine Park, including the turtle conservation center.

Significance to the course:

- The national park represents Thailand's efforts to sustain and develop "green tourism."
- This is the one province we will visit that is heavily influenced by global tourism, offering a contrast to the previous two regions visited and thereby allowing students to observe the effects of this industry.

Notes:

In all three regions, students will have time to informally in small groups visit local points of interest, including museums, temples, market places, and businesses and industries unique to the region.

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F. Indicate your level of familiarity with the site(s) visited during the course.

Lora lived in Thailand for three years during her service as a Peace Corps volunteer. She knows the country well, has traveled to all of the learning sites and speaks the language. Jack has extensively read about Thailand and has co-designed and taught the 2007 Thailand May term

G. Will the off-campus component of this course require a significant amount of physical exertion on the part of the course participants? On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being little physical exertion and 5 being a tremendous amount of physical exertion, please rate the anticipated activities related to this course. Do you anticipate that the course activities would pose any significant challenges for someone with physical disabilities?

Physical exertion = 3 (in very high humidity)

Physical Disabilities: Access for the disabled is not consistently available at hotels, restaurants, and public sites of interest; will not be able to participate in rafting and elephant riding; Thai transportation is not designed to accommodate those with disabilities

**V. Proposed Budget for the Course**  
**(A more precise estimate is not due until September 2, 2008)**

First, estimate expenses for instructor(s) and course assistant(s), if any, (in total, not per student)

Air transportation	\$ 1200
In-country transportation	\$ 250
Lodging	\$ 900
Meals	\$ 300
Events: tickets, admissions, excursions, etc.	\$ 50
Any necessary entry visas	\$
Misc.	\$
Other (explain):	\$
<b>Total instructor(s) and course assistant expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2700</b>

Next, estimate the cost per student, based upon the minimum enrollment number (15) from page 1 of this document:

Air transportation	\$ 1200
In-country transportation	\$ 250
Lodging	\$ 900
Meals	\$ 300
Events: tickets, admissions, excursions, etc.	\$ 50
Honorariums	\$
Tips	\$
International Student I.D. card	\$ 22
SC Study Abroad Program Fee	\$ 100
Any necessary entry visas	\$
Contingency fund (\$100 recommended)	\$ 100
Other (explain):	\$
<b>Subtotal per student expenses (based upon minimum enrolled #)</b>	<b>\$ 2922</b>

Finally, divide the "Total instructor(s) and course assistant expenses" by "the minimum enrollment number (15) from page 1 of this document" to get a "per student instructor cost." Then add

Subtotal per student expenses (based upon minimum enrolled #)	\$ 2922
+ per student instructor cost	\$ 180
<b>= Total per student cost</b>	<b>\$ 3102</b>

Additional expenses not covered by the program for which students need to budget:  
*For example, passport @ \$97, books, meals, immunizations, trip cancellation insurance, etc.*

Total estimated additional expenses not covered by the course:           \$200          

Instructor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept Chair approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(department(s) in which credit is to be awarded)*

Dept Chair approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(department(s) in which credit is to be awarded)*

Div. Head approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(division of the instructor)*

Div. Head approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(division of the instructor)*