



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES PROGRAM

International Sustainable Development Studies Institute

สถาบันการศึกษาการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืนนานาชาติ

# Foundations: Thai Language and Society

Thai 300: 6 Credits

Spring Semester, 2018

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Thai Language and Society course provides skills and knowledge about Thai language, culture, history and society. Language is a critical component of understanding a culture and its people, and studying Thai history and social issues helps to place the language in context. For example, words and pronouns denoting hierarchy are grammatically important in the Thai language, but have specific sociocultural meanings beyond their dictionary definitions.

There are two sections to this course. The first section is the intensive study of Thai. This will take place throughout the semester, with the bulk of the instruction in the first six weeks. The second section is composed of a series of seminars and field studies about selected topics in Thai history, sustainability, development and other issues. The seminars take place during the first five weeks of the semester, and will be important throughout the semester for understanding the other courses.

During the first five weeks of the program students are in Thai home stays. The purpose of the home stays is to give students an understanding of Thai cultural practices, a unique insight into Thai daily family life, and an opportunity to use Thai on a daily basis. Once on the Expedition Field Courses for the remainder of the semester, Thai will be used by students to talk with local villagers and to learn about and understand the specific topic under consideration. Daily life skills learned during the first five weeks will also be important in the variety of home stays that take place in other courses in the villages where students will be studying.

Proficiency in Thai is critical not just to your grade in the Language and Society class, but also to your ability to participate in and complete field assignments in the other classes. Practice as much as you can, and take advantage of your home stay, Thai student counterparts, and other opportunities to work on your language skills. Thai has a high initial barrier because it is a tonal language and uses a non-Western alphabet. However, with diligent practice the basics can be mastered, and even with a limited vocabulary you will be able to communicate in a meaningful way.

When in Chiang Mai “Culture Learning” sessions will help students to reflect on and analyze what they are learning about Thai culture.

Throughout the semester, students will participate in an “Integrative Seminar” that will make connections between the various subjects studied, as well and help students to understand the specifics of the courses and the overall program design within the context of Thai society.

## OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to hold meaningful conversations in Thai, read and write Thai, and understand the wider historical, cultural and social issues in Thailand. Students will be able to apply what they have learned in the course to specific issues and topics that they study in other courses.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Conversational proficiency in spoken Thai
- Basic ability to read and write Thai
- Understanding of the broader social and cultural context of the Thai language
- Understand major social, cultural and political issues in Thailand and their historical roots
- Ability to place other issues studied on the program in Thailand in the appropriate social and historical context

- Be able to function in Thai society, knowing culturally appropriate ways of acting, speaking and behaving both in homes stays and on your own
- Understand cultural norms and values, and their application to different contexts

## GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

<b>Class participation:</b> Class participation in this course means on-time attendance, active involvement in the classroom and during other activities, being responsive and active in peer teaching/learning, exhibiting culturally appropriate dress and behavior, and regularly bringing personal experiences from outside the classroom to class for focused discussion.	10%
<b>Thai language homework:</b> Homework will be assigned for you to focus on topics that relate to your daily living. This will include reading and writing assignments, and speaking in class about daily activities, interactions with your host family and cross-cultural experiences.	10%
<b>Tone test:</b> This test focuses on analyzing the word and its correct pronunciation. You will have 15 minutes to write the tone that corresponds with the words given. Individual students will then pronounce the words with an instructor who was not their primary language instructor.	5%
<b>Language quizzes:</b> Throughout the course, quizzes will be given to test comprehension and recall of vocabulary and culture.	10%
<b>Reading test:</b> This test focuses on your comprehension of Thai vocabulary, conjunctions and question words. You will have one hour to complete the test.	10%
<b>Mid-term oral exam:</b> 30 minute interview with an instructor who was not your primary language instructor.	10%
<b>Final oral exam:</b> 30 minute interview with an instructor who was not your primary language instructor.	15%
<b>Culture learning:</b> Weekly groups discussions focused on analyzing intercultural learning and understanding of Thai cultural issues. Each week students will complete an experiential learning triangle and share in the group.	5%
<b>Experiential Learning Workbook:</b> There will be a series of field studies throughout the first five weeks of the course. These are to be completed in the ELW and will be reviewed during the course. ELWs will be a significant part of the other courses and this is a chance to learn how to make detailed observations and analysis.	5%
<b>Analytical Field Essays (3):</b> Due each Monday morning after seminar week, each student will write a 4 page essay connected to the course material. Take a specific issue or topic from the week that you found interesting and write 4 pages analyzing what you found interesting and its place in the context of Thai culture, history and/or society. The essays should include citations from at least one academic article e.g. (Ostrom, 1999). Analytical Field Essays need to be clearly labeled as such at the top of EACH page.	10%
<b>Reflectional Essays (3):</b> Due each Thursday morning (starting on seminar week), each student will write a 2 page essay reflecting on any challenging or interesting cross-cultural experiences related to their understanding of the course topic. Reflection Essays need to be clearly labeled as such at the top of EACH page.	5%
<b>Market ethnography:</b> This is a project combining language, cultural and field research skills to study a new environment. After the ethnography students will return to write an essay about what they learned. The specifics of the assignment will be handed out the day before.	5%
TOTAL	100%

## LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVEL

In addition to the grade for the course, each student will be assessed on their level of proficiency in Thai. Using the same assessment tools as the US Peace Corps, the language proficiency level is an excellent way to understand what progress you've made in functional language skills. Your grade in the course is based on your effort and a demonstration of your commitment to diligently studying the language. Language proficiency is related but not entirely based on effort, as some people find it easier than others (or

harder than others) to learn a new language. What that means is that you may get a high proficiency level if you are good at learning languages, but if you do not demonstrate effort in the class, you will not earn a good grade. Details of the Language Proficiency Assessment are at the end of this syllabus.

## READINGS

Thai language readings will include the following as well as handouts:

**Alphabet Book:** The purpose of the alphabet book is to learn the Thai alphabet, the names for each letter, how to write it and a few words that begin with each letter. At the end of the book students learn how to write the tone markers, vowels and Thai numerals.

**Thai Speaking for Beginners Book:** The purpose of this book is to supplement what you learned in class with more speaking practice. It has vocabulary, sentence structures, examples of how to use question words, conversations, language notes and culture notes.

**Thai Reading for Beginners Book:** The purpose of this book is to supplement what you learned in class with additional reading about Thai language rules. You can study and review basic Thai grammar, consonant classes, tone rules and vowels. There are also exercises in the back of the book.

**Thai Workbook for Beginners:** The purpose of this workbook is to practice and review what you learned in class. There are various exercises and each lesson corresponds to what your Thai language instructor has taught in class. Your assignments in this workbook will be graded by your Thai language instructor. Additional assignments may be given through at the course and will also be graded by your Thai language instructor.

## SCHEDULE

The schedule for the language section is based on a week by week progression. Specific topics on specific days will change based on the pace of the class. All of the same topics will be covered, but individual classes may cover different topics on different days.

Language classes are Monday through Thursday 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM.

Seminar is 1 PM to 4 PM.

Other sessions will be announced.

### Week 1 (January 8 - 12)

Language Topics: Literacy, Introduction/Greeting, Number & Money, Review, Food. Please note: The language instructors will be rotating through classes and re-assigning students to different classes during this week based on learning styles to balance each class.

Monday: Orientation to program policy, health and safety / Introduction to experiential learning

Tuesday: Goals, hopes and fears, culture shock  
Reading:  
Hess, Daniel. "The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning" *Intercultural Press*, 1994, Chapters 24 and 25.

Wednesday: Orientation to Chiang Mai city

Thursday: Integrative seminar on semester / Principles of experiential learning / Gear check / Culture Learning Session  
Reading:  
Kolb, David. "Experiential Learning" *Case Western Reserve University*, 1984, pp. 21-22, 26-29.

Friday: Field study: Doi Suthep Forest hike

## Week 2 (January 15 - 21)

Language: Literacy, Beverages, Fruit, Taste, Describing People/Things.

Thai market and cooking class on Wednesday.

### SEMINAR: HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THAILAND

**Monday:** **Integrative seminar / History and Geography of Thailand and Southeast Asia:** An in-depth overview of the physical and cultural geography of Thailand and Southeast Asia as well as an overview of ancient Thai history and periods, paying particular attention to regional variation within Thailand as well as ethnic diversity in Northern Thailand. The broader social and physical geography of Southeast Asia and the changes to the Thai state and its role in the development of the kingdom will also be covered, especially the Mekong Region, and the place of Thailand within this broader context.

#### Readings

- Regional Community Briefing Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 1-2 June 2016. Human Capital Outlook: Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). World Economic Forum UNODC, December 2013.
- Southeast Asian Economic Outlook 2013: With Perspectives on China and India@OECD 2013. Structural Policy Challenges for Southeast Asian Countries: Structural Policy Country Notes Thailand.
- Winichakul, Thongchai "Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of A Nation", *University of Hawaii Press*, 1994, pp. 81-89, 95-101.

**Tuesday:** **Contemporary Issues and Politics in Thailand:** Focusing on recent history of the end of the 20th century and the start of the 21st century, this seminar will focus on understanding current issues around social movements from the 70s onwards. Special attention will be to the series of military governments and coups, as well as rural/urban differences and the emergence of the split between "red shirts" and "yellow shirts" and the contemporary political situation.

#### Readings

- Warr, Peter "Thaksinomics and Thai Populism Redux" *Global Asia*, Vol.6, No.3, Fall 2011.
- Chambers, Paul, "Economic Guidance and Contestation: An Analysis of Thailand's Evolving Trajectory of Development" *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 2003, 32, 1, pp. 81-109.
- Voranai, Vanijaka "The dust under their feet" *Khaosod English*, Dec 10, 2017. <http://www.khaosodenglish.com/opinion/2017/12/10/voranai-dust-feet/>
- Voranai, Vanijaka "Do you know who my daddy is?" *Khaosod English*, Dec 31, 2017. <http://www.khaosodenglish.com/opinion/2017/12/31/voranai-know-daddy/>

**Wednesday:** **History of Lanna and Chiang Mai:** Chiang Mai and the North of Thailand has unique and specific history distinct from that of the rest of contemporary Thailand. This session will focus on the history of the Chiang Mai kingdom, ethnic groups in the North, and the broader history of the city states of Northern Thailand. Special focus will be on the role and importance of kham müng ethnicity and language.

#### Readings

- Urban Development Institute Foundation, Cartoon "Chiang Mai History"
- Ongsakul, Sarassawadee "History of Lan Na" *Silkworn Books*, 2005, 'Chapter 1 - The Study of Lan Na History'

**Thursday:** Study Session / Culture Learning Session.

**Friday:** Swimming assessment / Student retreat

**Saturday:** Student retreat

**Sunday:** Student retreat (return to the city after lunch)

### Week 3 (January 22 - 26)

Language: Literacy, Places, Family, Daily Activities/Time & Calendar

Tone test is on Wednesday

#### SEMINAR: SELECTED TOPICS

Monday: **Overview of Ecology:** This session will explain basic ecological concepts from a scientific standpoint, with a special emphasis on understanding ecosystems in the changing global context. Organisms and their role in ecological communities will be explained, as well as the impact of ecological change and the principle of ecological resiliency. An overview of the different ecological regions of Thailand will be a part of this session.

##### Reading

- Thomas et al. "Response Diversity, Ecosystem Change, and Resilience" *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 2003, pp. 488-494.

Tuesday: **Principles of Sustainability:** The development of the concept of "sustainable development" will be discussed, with an emphasis on understanding the principles of ecological sustainability as well as economic sustainability. The concept of "sufficiency economy" in the Thai context will be described as well as its application to both rural and urban contexts.

##### Readings

- Hardin, Garrett "The Tragedy of the Common" *American Association for the Advancement of Sciences*, pp. 1243-1248.
- Heinberg, Richard and Lerch, Daniel "The Post Carbon Reader: Managing the 21st Century's Sustainability Crises", *Watershed Media*, 2010.
- Naipinit, Aree et al. "Sufficiency Economy for Social and Environmental Sustainability: A Case Study of Four Villages in Rural Thailand", *Asian Social Science*; Vol. 10, No. 2; 2014.

Wednesday: **Introduction to Field Research part 1:** This seminar looks at how to gather data in the field, primarily drawing on rural development research. Specific issues will include how to make and record field observations.

##### Reading

- Patton M. and Cochran M. "A guide to use Qualitative Research", *Medicines sans frontieres*, 2002.

Thursday: Study Session / Culture Learning Session

Friday: Field Study: Rural development aquaculture and village study

##### Reading

- Roderburg J., "Marine Aquaculture: Impacts and International Regulation", *25 Austl. & N.Z. Mar. L.J.* 161, 2011, pp. 161-168.

### Week 4 (January 29 - February 2)

Language: Literacy, Daily Activities/Time & Calendar

Tone Test on Tuesday

#### SEMINAR: DEVELOPMENT

Monday: **Development and NGOs:** The history of development from colonialism through modernization to the contemporary era of globalization will be discussed. The development and role of NGOs and GOs will be discussed, as well as the history of the

development of NGOs in Thailand during the 1970s until now. Special emphasis will be on the contemporary roles of NGOs in Thai society.

Readings:

- Mulder, Niels. "The NGO Movement in Southeast Asian Images Towards Civil Society". *Silkworm Books*, 2003. pp 384-394
- Dinyar Godrej, NGOs - do they help?, *New Internationalist*, December 1, 2014. <https://newint.org/features/2014/12/01/ngos-keynote>

Tuesday:

**Social Structure and Ethnicity in Thailand:** Thai social structure will be examined, with a special emphasis on how Thai society deals with hierarchy and social relationships. Ethnic groups within Thai society will be analyzed, including the history of migration through Southeast Asia, and contemporary differences in ethnic groups in different regions of Thailand.

Readings:

- Winichakul, Thongchai. "The quest for 'siwilai': A geographical discourse of civilizational thinking in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-Century Siam." *Journal of Asian Studies* 59.3, 2000, pp. 528-549.
- Winichakul, Thongchai, "The Presence of Nationhood, Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-body of a Nation", *University of Hawaii Press*, 1994, pp. 1-19.

Wednesday:

NGO Visit: Urban Light / HUG Project / Mekong Migration Network (all tentative based on availability of NGO partners)

Thursday:

Study Session / Culture Learning Session

Friday:

Field Study: Ecotourism and community development

Reading

- Kontogeorgopoulos, Nick "The Role of Tourism in Elephant Welfare in Northern Thailand" *Journal of Tourism*, Vol X, No. 2, 2009. pp. 1-19.

## **Week 5 (February 5 - 9)**

Language Topics: Literacy, Daily Activities/Time & Calendar, Social Relationships

### SEMINAR: RELIGION AND FIELD RESEARCH II

Monday:

**Religions of Southeast Asia and Thailand:** This seminar will provide a broad overview of the various religions of Southeast Asia and Thailand, including the major world religions in the region (Buddhism, Islam and Christianity), as well as other religious practices such as animism and folk religions. Specific emphasis will be on regional variation and ethnic affinity within religious groups.

Reading

- Suksamran, Somboon "Buddhism and Political Legitimacy" *Chulalongkorn University* 1997, Chapter 2 - Buddhism, Society and Politics'.

Tuesday:

Field Study: Temple Visit

Wednesday:

**Introduction to Field Research part 2:** This second part of the seminar will cover ethnographic, rapid rural appraisal and participatory research. Specific issues will include how to generate interpretations and analysis of field data.

Reading

- Patton M. and Cochran M. "A guide to use Qualitative Research", *Medicines sans frontieres*, 2002.

Thursday:

Study Session / Culture Learning Session

Friday: Market Ethnography / Integrative Seminar Summary

### **Week 6 (February 12 - 16)**

Language: Literacy, Feelings & Expressions, Health, Course specific vocabulary

Wednesday: Mid-term Oral Exam

Thursday: Culture Learning Session

### **Week 7 (February 19 - 23)**

Language: Directions, Course specific vocabulary

Wednesday: Language Reading Test

Thursday: Culture Learning Session

### **Week 8 (February 26 - March 2)**

Language: Geography/Weather, Course specific vocabulary

Thursday: Culture Learning Session

### **Week 9 (March 9)**

Language: Friday: Final Oral Exam

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## **THE ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW AND THE PROFICIENCY SCALE**

The oral interview is a test of a person's ability to speak a second language or a foreign language. The interview is a test of functional language ability, not of passive skills or knowledge about the language.

### **The rating scale**

The interview consists of a face-to-face conversation with a trained interviewer for a period of approximately 5 minutes to 20 minutes. The speech of the interviewee is then rated on the following scale:

- Novice-Low
- Novice-Mid
- Novice-High
- Intermediate-Low
- Intermediate-Mid
- Intermediate-High
- Advanced
- Advanced-High

The rating scale is the heart of the Oral Proficiency Interview. The rating given to a student on an oral interview is based on the scale and defined by the scale.

Interviewers are very familiar with the scale. They will refer to it constantly both before interviewing (as an aid to carrying out an interview that will provide a ratable sample) and after an interview (in order to give an appropriate rating).

**Novice:** The Novice level is characterized by the ability to communicate minimally with learned material.

### **Novice-Low**

Oral production consists of isolated words and perhaps a few high-frequency phrases. Essentially no functional communicative ability.

**Novice-Mid**

Oral production continues to consist of isolated words and learned phrases within very predictable areas of need, although quality is increased. Vocabulary is sufficient only for handling simple, elementary needs and expressing basic courtesies. Utterances rarely consist of more than two or three words and show frequent long pauses and repetition of interviewer's words. Speaker may have some difficulty producing even the simplest utterances. Some Novice-Mid speakers will be understood only with great difficulty.

**Novice-High**

Able to partially satisfy the requirements of basic communication by relying heavily on memorized expressions but occasionally expanding these through simple recombinations of their elements. Can ask questions or make statements involving learned material. Shows signs of spontaneity although this falls short of real autonomy of expression. Speech continues to consist of learned utterances rather than of personalized, situationally-adapted ones. Vocabulary centers on areas such as basic objects, places, and most common kinship terms. Pronunciation may still be strongly influenced by first language. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, some Novice-High speakers will have difficulty being understood even by sympathetic interviewers.

**Intermediate:** The intermediate level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:

- Create with the language by combining and recombining learned elements, though primarily in a reactive mode;
- Initiate, minimally sustain, and close in a simple way basic communicative tasks; and
- Ask and answer questions.

**Intermediate-Low**

Able to handle successfully a limited number of interactive, task-oriented and social situations. Can ask and answer questions, initiate and respond to simple statements and maintain face-to-face conversation, although in a highly restricted manner and with much linguistic inaccuracy. Within these limitations, can perform such tasks as introducing self, ordering a meal, asking directions, and making purchases. Vocabulary is adequate to express only the most elementary needs. Strong interference from native language may occur. Misunderstandings frequently arise, but with repetition, the Intermediate-Low speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic listeners.

**Intermediate-Mid**

Able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated, basic and communicative tasks and social situations. Can talk simply about self and family members. Can ask and answer questions and participate in simple conversations on topics beyond the most immediate needs; e.g., personal history and leisure time activities. Utterance length increases slightly, but speech may continue to be characterized by frequent long pauses, since the smooth incorporation of even basic conversational strategies is often hindered as the speaker struggles to create appropriate language forms. Pronunciation may continue to be strongly influenced by first language and fluency may still be strained. Although misunderstandings still arise, the Intermediate-Mid speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic listeners.

**Intermediate-High**

Able to handle successfully most uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations. Can initiate, sustain, and close a general conversation with a number of strategies appropriate to a range of circumstances and topics, but errors are evident limited vocabulary still necessitates hesitation and may bring about slightly unexpected circumlocution. There is emerging evidence of connected discourse, particularly for simple narration and/or description. The Intermediate-High speaker can generally be understood even by people not accustomed to dealing with speakers at this level, but repetition may still be required.

**Advanced:** The Advanced level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:

- Converse in a clearly participatory fashion;
- Initiate, sustain, and bring to closure a wide variety of communicative tasks, including those that require an increased ability to convey meaning with diverse language strategies due to a complication or an unforeseen turn of events;
- Satisfy the requirements of school and work situation; and
- Narrate and describe with paragraph-length connected discourse.



### **Advanced**

Able to satisfy the requirements of everyday situations and routine school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility complicated tasks and social situations, such as elaborating, complaining, and apologizing. Can narrate and describe with some details, linking sentences together smoothly. Can communicate facts and talk casually about topics of current public and personal interest, using general vocabulary. Shortcomings can often be smoothed over by communicative strategies, such as pause fillers, stalling devices, and different rates of speech. Circumlocution which arises from vocabulary or syntactic limitations very often is quite successful, though some groping for words may still be evident. The Advanced-level speaker can be understood without difficulty by native speakers.

### **Advanced-High**

Able to satisfy the requirements of a broad variety of everyday, school, and work situations. Can discuss concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. There is emerging evidence of ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize. The Advanced-High speaker often shows a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some grammatical forms with confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing and circumlocution. Differentiated vocabulary and intonation are effectively used to communicate fine shades of meaning. The Advanced-High speaker often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech but language may break down or prove inadequate.

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## **RUBRICS FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Analytical Essays**

Purpose: To integrate academic readings and class discussions with field experience to make insights into connections and patterns beyond what is learned directly. Use the Experiential Learning Triangle to outline your essay.

Expectations:

- Approximately 4 pages (no more than 4)
- Intro/hypothesis: Reflect and assert a hypothesis. Introduce the student's experience(s) so that the student can make a hypothesis connecting these highlighted experience(s) with prior experiences, academic readings, discussions, and/or seminars. Hypotheses should challenge or support concepts relating to semester and/or course themes.
- Analysis: Connect. Include defense/evidence/explanation of the hypothesis. Must cite evidence from readings, field notes, ELW activities, discussion notes, and/or seminar notes. Be sure to clearly state how the different sources relate (i.e. agree or disagree) with each other.
- Further evidence: Apply. Discuss limitations of the argument(s). Propose how to move forward and test the hypothesis with new experiences. Thoughtfully consider how future experiences may challenge or support the argument.
- Organization: The essay should be structured coherently and thoughtfully in paragraph form. Handwriting must be legible. Essays should be concise so that all information can be included and defended clearly. Each essay should have a TITLE describing the subject, written in the Table of Contents.

Grading:

✓+ = Exceeds expectations. The essay is organized around a implications towards greater themes; it goes a step beyond and demonstrates how the hypothesis is meaningful to other people. The analysis will provide new, in-depth discoveries not found in readings and seminars.

✓ = Fulfills expectations

✓- = Below expectations

50 = Late or significantly below expectations

0 = Incomplete

### **Citations**

Citing sources gives credit to the published and unwritten (verbal, observed, experienced) sources that contribute to develop an essay. Besides citing written sources, it is especially important in field based courses to acknowledge the people who have contributed to the formulation of new ideas in the learning process.

*Format for citing written sources in text:*

(Last-name, Year),            example -> (Carroll, 2007)

Format for citing Field Notes (FN) in text:  
(FN Page#).            example -> (FN 23)

## **Reflectional Essays**

Purpose: To explore a challenging or interesting experience and relate it to cultural values.

### Expectations:

- Approximately 2 pages (no more than 2)
- Student clearly describes a unique experience or pattern
- Student provides critical thought about the topic and relates it to cultural values
- Organization: The essay should be structured coherently and thoughtfully Handwriting must be legible

### Grading:

- ✓+ = Exceeds expectations. The essay explores underlying cultural values that demonstrates a high level of cultural awareness and sensitivity
- ✓ = Fulfills expectations
- ✓- = Below expectations
- 50 = Late or significantly below expectations
- 0 = Incomplete