

Thai Language and Society: Beginning Thai 1

Culture, Ecology, and Community Program

Spring Semester, 2023

Course Description

This course is focused on learning Thai language and culture. This includes both competency in the Thai language, as well as developing cultural competency and an understanding the sociohistorical context of broader Thai society.

THAI LANGUAGE: The majority of the course is focused on the Thai language, both written and spoken. The course uses a competency based approach and is designed for beginners for whom Thai is a second language. The emphasis on this course is on speaking, listening comprehension, and reading and writing skills. Students will develop fundamental language skills in Thai helping students to practice and build vocabulary, use Thai in daily life, as well as use Thai during courses and independent learning during their time in Thailand.

THAI CULTURE AND SOCIETY: During the first month weekly seminars on Thai history and society, along with experiential learning actives, will help the students to develop cultural competency and an understanding of Thai society and social issues.

The schedule and topics of the language portion of the course are flexible and depend on student progress and comprehension.

Assessment includes assignments, as well as essays, and written and oral exams.

Course Objectives

The objectives for this course are that:

- Students will have a core working vocabulary and fluency sufficient for daily life in Thailand
- Be able to carry out basic conversations in Thai with good comprehension and understanding
- Will have the capacity to be independent learners of Thai, adding contextually appropriate vocabulary and phrases as needed in their studies and independent learning
- Will understand the social, cultural, and historical context of Thai culture and language

Methodology

Classes are in small groups primarily in Thai, with some discussion of cultural or related issues in English as needed. The instruction uses several language teaching methods to help student progress quickly to a basic and useful level of Thai language competency.

The weekly seminars will be in English, setting the context for the semester, including reading, essays, and field studies.

Grading and Assessment

Course Component Details	Total
Class Attendance and Participation	10
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.	
Homework and Assignments	10
Homework will be assigned for you to review and practice on learned topics that relate to your daily living. This will include reading and writing assignments, and speaking in class about daily activities, interactions with Thai people and cross-cultural experiences.	
Tone Test	10
This test focuses on analyzing the word and correct pronunciation. You will have 20 minutes to write the tone that corresponds with the given words. Following this, one at a time students per time, will then pronounce the words to an instructor who was not his/her primary language instructor.	
Reading Test	15
This test focuses on comprehension of Thai vocabulary, conjunctions and question words. You will have one hour to complete the test.	
Oral Presentation	15
The presentation is a 10 minute individual presentation with Thai instructors assessing the presentation. The Thai language instructors will give students the topic rubrics during the course. The grade is based on the presentation content, organization, and language proficiency.	
Final Oral Exam	20
The final oral exam is a 30 minute conversational interview with a Thai language instructor who is not the student's primarily language instructor. Assessment is based on conversational ability, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, and tones.	
Writing	
Field Study Notes: A more structured way of taking notes and learning outside the classroom, notes on each Field Study are an important way to record and analyze your observations and learning during experiential learning studies. Field Study Notes need to be structured as follows for each Field Study:	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Field Study Notes" and the title / study and the date on the TOP of the page. • "Where" – describe the location of the field study. If multiple locations note that as well. • "When" – both the date as well as the time of day/duration. • "Description" – describe the activities and learning during the field study. This should be detailed and clear about what the activities were. • "Analysis" – write out what you learned during the Field Study. How did the field study help you understand Thailand's culture and history, or other topics? • "Questions" – write three (3) questions that you would like to learn more about based on this Field Study. 	
Essays: For this course essays are longer reflections and analysis. There are two (2) essays during the course, due on Friday of the second week and the Friday of the 4th week. Choose a topic that you studied during those two weeks that you're interested in and take some time to reflect on what you've learned. Essays should be 4-5 pages long in your journal, and cover the following points:	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How this issue or topic links to understanding Thai culture and language. • Why you are interested in this specific issue or topic? • An analysis of a specific issue observed or learned about during that week – describe this and why it is important. • Reference to a reading either from the course readings or outside sources. • Other questions that this issue raises for you to explore further. 	
Total	100

Course Materials

Thai Speaking for Beginners Book: The purpose of this book is to supplement what you learned in class with more speaking practice. It includes vocabulary, sentence structure, 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. This includes a review of 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.

Thai Culture and Society Texts: The primary text for this part of the course is *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Thailand* (RHCT), Pavin Chachavalpongpun, Editor, Routledge, 2020. You are encouraged to read other chapters in RHCT that are not assigned for your seminar, as well as use RHCT as a resource in your other courses later in the semester. Additional readings are in the course reader or will be handed out in advance.

Course Topics and Schedule

Thai language classes are Monday through Thursday when on campus.

Block 1

Thai Language Classes:	Morning sessions	9:00 AM - 11:30 AM
	Afternoon sessions	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Seminar	Monday	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
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Block 2/3/4	Monday-Thursday	9:00 AM - 11:30 AM
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BLOCK 1

Week 1 – January 16-20

THAI LANGUAGE FOCUS: Thai language course orientation, literacy, introductions, numbers, money, food

Monday – January 16

9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language
1:00 - 4:00 PM	Seminar

SEMINAR – Overview of History of Thailand

- Introduction: a timeless Thailand, Pavin Chachavalpongpun, *RHCT*, 3-14
- Thai historiography, Charvut Kasetsiri, *RHCT*, 26-35
- Economic development of post-war Thailand, Peter Warr, *RHCT*, 36-52
- Thailand in the longue durée, Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit, *RHCT*, 15-25
- “Territorialization and state power in Thailand,” Vandergeest, Peter, and Nancy Lee Peluso, in *Theory and Society* 24: 385-426, 1995.

Tuesday – January 17

9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language
1:00 - 3:00 PM	Thai language

Wednesday – January 18

9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language
1:00 - 4:00 PM	Maejo University

Maejo University Introduction: Maejo University is Northern Thailand’s leading agriculture university, focused on sustainability, a “green campus” and other important initiatives.

Thursday – January 19

9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language
1:00 - 3:00 PM	Thai language

Friday – January 20

Field Study – Markets, Chiang Mai Old City, Temple Studies

The morning will be spent at the Friday market at the gates of Chiang Mai’s largest mosque, with a diversity of ethnic hill tribes, Burmese, Yunnanese and other vendors. This field study will include studying the market, a visit to Masjid Attqwa, as well as a market study at Wararot Market (Kat Luang), and Buddhist temples in the old city.

Week 2 – January 23 - 27

THAI LANGUAGE FOCUS: Literacy, food (continued), beverages, fruit

Monday – January 23

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language

1:00 - 4:00 PM Seminar

SEMINAR – Thai Economy, Politics, and Development

- The two faces of democracy, Michael K. Connors, *RHCT*, 55-70
- The development of the hybrid regime: the military and authoritarian persistence in Thai politics, Surachart Bamrungsuk, *RHCT*, 86-101
- The monarchy and succession, Kevin Hewison, *RHCT*, 119-133
- Thailand's foreign policy, Arne Kislenko, *RHCT*, 397-407
- Beyond bamboo diplomacy: the factor of status anxiety and Thai foreign policy behaviours, Peera Charoenvattananukul, *RHCT*, 408-419

Tuesday – January 24

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language

1:00 - 3:00 PM Thai language

Wednesday – January 25

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language

1:00 - 4:00 PM Maejo University

An important part of MJU's mission is to promote and train students in ecotourism as well as gastronomy, with a focus on Northern Thailand.

Thursday – January 26

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language

1:00 - 3:00 PM Thai language

Friday – January 27

Field Study – Patara Elephant Farm and Veterinary Clinic

The Patara Elephant Farm and Veterinary Clinic is one of the best examples in the world of breeding and conservation of the Asian elephant.

- Hilary Cadigan, "The Human Cost of Elephant Tourism" in *The Atlantic*, May 19, 2016
- Ingrid Suter, "In Defense of Elephant Tourism" August 9, 2020, The Elephant Collaborative

ESSAY #1 DUE

Week 3 - January 30 - February 3

THAI LANGUAGE FOCUS: Literacy, tastes, place, telling time, family

Monday – January 30

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language
1:00 - 4:00 PM Seminar

SEMINAR – Thai Society and Social Structure

- Thai identity and nationalism, Saichol Sattayanurak, *RHCT*, 241-252
- Secularisation, secularism, and the Thai state, Tomas Larsson, *RHCT*, 278-290
- Class, race, and uneven development in Thailand, Jim Glassman, *RHCT*, 305-317
- Frye, Zachary, “One nation, many religions: Thailand needs to fully embrace its diversity” in *ASEAN Today*, June 27, 2019

Tuesday – January 31

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language
1:00 - 3:00 PM Thai language

Wednesday – January 25

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language
1:00 - 4:00 PM Maejo University

As a part of MJU’s mission is to help conserve and support Thai traditional culture, including dance, music, handicrafts, and other cultural heritage.

Thursday – January 26

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language

Extended Field Study – Northern Thai Village Day 1

This extended field study will travel to a Northern Thai village to learn more about village life, social structure, rural lifeways and traditions. We will leave after lunch on Thursday and return Saturday morning.

Friday – February 3 – Northern Thai Village Field Study Day 2

Saturday – February 4 – Northern Thai Village Field Study Day 3

Week 4 - February 6 - 10

THAI LANGUAGE FOCUS: Literacy, family (continued), describing people, describing things, health

Monday – February 6

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language
1:00 - 4:00 PM Seminar

SEMINAR: Social Issues in Thailand

- The state of human rights in the aftermath of the 2014 military coup d'état, Titipol Phakdeewanich, *RHCT*, 330-339
- NGOs and civil society in Thailand, Kanokwan Manorum, *RHCT*, 366-378
- Scott, James C., "Hills, Valleys and States: An Introduction to Zomia," in *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, Yale University Press, 2009

Tuesday – February 7

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language
1:00 - 3:00 PM Thai language

Wednesday – February 8

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language
1:00 - 3:00 PM Thai language

Thursday – February 9

9:00 - 11:30 AM Thai language
Afternoon: Self study

Friday – February 10

10:00 - 11:30 AM Thai Tone Test
1:00 - 3:00 PM Block 1 Wrap Up

ESSAY #2 Due

FIELD NOTEBOOK DUE including Field Study observations

BLOCK 2**Week 5 — February 13 - 16**

THAI LANGUAGE FOCUS: Literacy, daily activities, time, calendar, vocabulary related to field course

Monday through Thursday	9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language
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BLOCK 3:**Week 6 — March 13 - 16**

THAI LANGUAGE FOCUS: Literacy, daily activities, time, calendar (continued), vocabulary related to field course

Monday through Wednesday	9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language
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Thursday	9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language and oral presentation
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BLOCK 4**Week 7 — April 17 - 20**

THAI LANGUAGE FOCUS: Literacy, daily activities, time, calendar (continued), place (continued), vocabulary related to field course

Monday through Wednesday	9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language
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Thursday	9:00 - 11:30 AM	Thai language and reading test
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Friday	9:00 - 12:00 PM	Final oral exam
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Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes. If you are ill or otherwise need to miss a class, please inform your instructor or teaching assistant.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in ISDSI courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action.

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing an academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Grading Standards

Letter grade	Score or percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B	83–86	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C	73–76	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C-	70-72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	67-69	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D	60-66	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
F	0-59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an Incomplete.