



INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES INSTITUTE  
 SEMESTER IN CHIANG MAI:  
 SOCIETY AND CULTURE OF THAILAND

The Society and Culture of Thailand (SCT) Semester is an **immersive program** designed for students who want to **engage deeply with Thailand’s history, traditions, and contemporary society**. Based in Chiang Mai, a city known for its rich **cultural heritage** and **vibrant modern life**, the program combines academic coursework and experiential learning, **taking students beyond the classroom** to explore Thailand’s diverse communities, cultural traditions, and historical landscapes.

The SCT Semester is built on hands-on learning and engagement with Thai society through field experiences, **independent research projects**, and **direct engagement** with local communities. Students explore Thailand’s history, political structures, religious traditions, and cultural heritage, from ancient temples and historic capitals to the evolving arts and media shaping Thai culture today. By studying in Chiang Mai and participating in experiential studies, students gain a dynamic perspective on both **traditional** and **contemporary** Thai life.

**Experiential Learning Opportunities**

Students step outside the classroom to engage in **real-world cultural learning** that connects their academic learning with Thailand’s living traditions, including:

- **Historical and Religious Exploration** – Visits to ancient temples, city walls, and historic sites to study Thailand’s Buddhist heritage and evolving cultural landscapes.
- **Cultural Heritage and Creativity** – Engagement with local artisans, traditional handicrafts (silverwork, weaving, and woodcarving), street art, and Thailand’s contemporary arts scene.
- **Markets and Urban Life** – Field studies in bustling street markets, fresh food stalls, and night bazaars that reflect Thailand’s dynamic mix of tradition and modernity.

**Field-Based Learning**

While Chiang Mai remains the program’s home base, students take part in three **multi-day experiential studies** to gain firsthand insights into Thailand’s diversity:

- **Northern Thai Village** – A homestay experience in a rural farming community, where students gain insight into daily life, agricultural practices, and village traditions.
- **Karen Hill Tribe Village** – Time spent in a Karen community on Doi Inthanon, Thailand’s highest peak, exploring indigenous knowledge, sustainable living, and cultural preservation.
- **Coastal Community** – A visit to a coastal village, where students study ecotourism, marine ecosystems, and coastal livelihoods, providing a broader understanding of Thailand’s diverse cultures and communities.

SEMESTER COURSES	TOPIC	CREDIT
<b>Thai Language:</b> Students develop essential Thai language skills through immersive classes that support deeper cultural understanding and meaningful local interactions.	Foreign Language	4
<b>Thai History and Politics:</b> This course traces Thailand’s historical development and governance, helping students understand the country’s diverse populations and social changes.	History	4
<b>Sustainability in Thailand:</b> Examining sustainability through local and indigenous knowledge, this course introduces students to community-based conservation, sustainable agriculture, and resource management.	Sustainability	4
<b>Society, Culture, and the Arts of Thailand:</b> A deep dive into Thai culture, focusing on temple architecture, arts, and contemporary artistic expression. Students explore Buddhist and animist influences, social movements and social change, and the evolution of Thai identity in an increasingly globalized world.	Sociology	4

**Program Length:** 16 week semester  
**Eligibility:** Students currently enrolled in college or university in good academic standing  
**Deadlines:** Fall Semester: March 15 / Spring Semester: October 15

**For more information, see [www.isdsi.org](http://www.isdsi.org)**  
**Interested? Email [admissions@isdsi.org](mailto:admissions@isdsi.org) today to learn more!**

