



DIVERSITY, COUNSELING AND MINDFULNESS THAILAND

Division of Psychology and Counseling

Dates: January 3 – 16, 2020

Credits: 3 - COUN 7720, COUN 9920 or PSYC 3460

Cost: \$2,450*

Includes: hotel, local transportation, breakfast and some meals, 8 days of workshops, three night excursion, group dinner, international health insurance, faculty coordinators

**Not included: Tuition and fees (or auditing fee), international airfare (must be purchased by Nov. 1), most meals, transportation outside of workshops/excursions, personal expenses*

Synopsis of Program

GSU has been collaborating with Burapha University in Thailand to put on a two week conference on mental health and counseling the past 2 years. Workshops will be given by GSU and Burapha faculty as well as presentations by the students. GSU will be offering a study abroad program to two different departmentst at GSU. First, graduate students in the Counselor Education and Supervision programs are required to take a counseling diversity and lifespan development course. We would like to continue to offer doctoral and masters students the option of substituting an experience in Thailand (led by Dr. Lorelle) and the corresponding assignments.

The other course that will be offered in Thailand will be the undergraduate Mindfulness Studies course in the psychology program. This is a course that introduces the scientific literature on mindfulness as well as the practice and application of mindfulness to a variety of everyday problems ranging from anxiety, intimacy issues, to health problems. Special emphasis is given to applying mindfulness to the specific challenges students face in their personal lives. Students in psychology who are familiar with mindfulness in practice and theory are better equipped to enter a wide varied of areas including graduate school in psychology.

There will be approximately 8-12 students eligible for the trip. Students will be required to do presentations during the workshop. Students will also be expected to complete the following course activities/assignments: 1) Attending and reflection on the workshops and assigned readings and mindfulness activities; 2) Presentation in Thailand; 3) A paper on multiculturalism and the experiences they had. The students in the mindfulness course will be required to present on their experiences to GSU students when they return.

For the counseling students, this course is relevant to learning about multiculturalism in Thailand as there are currently very few counselors and counselor training programs in Thailand. Most people are trained in other areas (e.g., nurse, medical aides, and pharmacists) and become counselors without any training. There is a counseling psychology program at Burapha University, and they have requested to collaborate with GSU to have a conference at the beginning of their semester. The conference will be an exchange of knowledge of counseling in the US and Thailand. Conference topics will be given by GSU faculty Dr. Lorelle and Burapha faculty and students. There will be field trips to mental health providers such as a substance use treatment center.

For the psychology students, mindfulness is now one of the most researched topics in psychology. The empirical literature has supported its usefulness not only with regard to emotional well-being and the treatment of psychological disorders but also medical conditions such as heart disease and cancer. Mindfulness practices are being used in such areas as education, nursing and business. While mindfulness is becoming more relevant in the US, this practice and philosophy has been integrated in the Thai culture for a long time. Students will be exposed to how mindfulness is used in the Thai culture. During the class, students will live and travel like Thai people and have an opportunity to learn Buddhism, Mindfulness, and Thai culture during excursions.

Tentative Itinerary

January 3rd: Depart USA for Thailand

January 4th: Arrive in Bangkok

January 5th: Fly to Chiang Mai & Free Day in Chiang Mai

January 6th: Elephant Experience

January 7th: Chiang Mai Tour

January 8th: Fly to Bangkok

January 9-10th: Participate and present at Conference at Burapha University. Stay in Bangsaen 9-10th. Drive to Bangkok the evening of the 10th.

January 11th: Floating Market Tour Full Day

January 12th: Bangkok City, Temples & Grand Palace Tour Half Day

January 13-15th: Participate and present at Conference at Burapha University. Stay in Bangsaen 13-15th. Drive to Bangkok in the evening of the 15th.

January 16th Depart Thailand for USA

Associated course description

COUN 7720 and COUN 9920: Students will receive course credit for doctoral course, COUN 9920, or the master's course, COUN 7720. Counselors are required by accreditation and professional standards to have an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends for diverse groups. In addition, they should know theories of multicultural counseling, clinical interventions for working with diverse groups, and develop self-awareness to eliminate biases, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination. By experiencing a new culture directly, presenting and working with a translator the students will gain first-hand knowledge, awareness, and skills that are vital for becoming a multicultural competent counselor. It will also provide insight about how the counseling profession is developing in a different country. Students will be required to keep daily reflections of their experiences, write a paper on how culture is an important variable in counseling, present to an audience of Thai professionals and students.

PSYC 3460: Dr. Tim Pedigo, in the Psychology Program, teaches this course and will provide the assignments for this course. This course introduces the scientific literature on mindfulness as well as the practice and application of mindfulness to a variety of everyday problems ranging from anxiety, intimacy issues, to health problems. Special emphasis is given to applying mindfulness to the specific challenges students face in their personal lives.

Eligibility: This program is geared towards students in the Division of Psychology and Counseling, however, other GSU students may apply.

Application Procedure

1. Contact Amy Soub at asoub@govst.edu for an appointment.
2. Fill out the study abroad application and deposit form.
3. Receive notification of acceptance. *Faculty leaders make the final decision on the acceptance and may request references or an interview with the applicant.*

Application & Deposit Deadline: October 1 - \$500

2nd Payment Deadline: November 1 - \$1000

3rd Payment Deadline: November 15 - \$950

Study Abroad Scholarship Application Deadline: September 15 and October 15, 2018

Scholarship awards are typically between \$500-750.

To be considered for the scholarship, students must submit the following documents to the Office of International Services – GMT 165:

- Completed Study Abroad Scholarship Form (found in application packet)
- 2 Academic or Professional Letters of Recommendation
- 500-1000 Word Statement of Purpose Essay with Follow-on Project
- Resume