



S F S THE SCHOOL
FOR FIELD STUDIES

Language and Culture of Cambodia SFS 2080

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This syllabus may develop or change over time based on local conditions, learning opportunities, and faculty expertise.
Course content may vary from semester to semester.

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Course Overview

The Language and Culture course contains two distinct but related modules: Cambodian and Vietnamese society and culture, and Khmer language. This course will provide a basic introduction to spoken Khmer as well as the history and culture of Southeast Asia with an emphasis on Cambodia. During travels to southern Vietnam, students will also be introduced to the Vietnamese language, culture, and history of the country.

The socio-cultural module is designed to help students experience some immersion in the culture and become more adept at working effectively in their community-based directed research efforts. Though this course will primarily focus on Cambodia, Vietnamese culture, politics and history will also be addressed because of the shared politics and history of the region.

The Khmer language module offers listening and oral practice of the Khmer language at a beginner/basic level of proficiency to increase students' communication and comprehension skills. Students will learn and practice language based upon relevant everyday life experiences such as going to a restaurant, purchasing an item at the market, or asking for directions.

Both modules emphasize the understanding of and direct interaction with the local communities with which the SFS Center works. This exposure to culture and language will be reviewed and processed through occasional lectures, field visits to important cultural sites and festivals, community outreach, and classroom discussion.

Community activities include the following: an overnight home stay with a local family, workshops with the local community to exchange knowledge and skills, such as cooking, dancing, or playing sports, participating in community events, and sessions of community service. Assignments include journal entries, cultural discussions, cultural briefings, and community interactions.

Learning Objectives

Both modules are designed to help students learn about Cambodian culture and work more effectively in their community-based directed research efforts. We expect students to be proactive in taking advantage of the opportunities for community interaction created by the program, as well as by creating their own opportunities for positive community engagement.

Khmer Language Module

This component contains 21 contact hours with a native Khmer instructor, Dyna Rattanak. Students will engage in oral exercises to develop basic language skills required for community interactions. Through this component students will:

- Learn the basic structure of the Khmer language

- Learn greetings and commonly used phrases
- Construct and recite useful Khmer sentences
- Learn a practical set of vocabulary aimed at day to day use in the community as well as an operational vocabulary that may assist students while in the field.

Cambodian & Vietnamese Sociocultural Module

This component contains 21 contact hours. Through this component students will:

- Develop an understanding of Cambodian & Vietnamese culture
- Learn about the rich history of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and their position within the larger context of Southeast Asia
- Understand the current social and political issues of Cambodia as a result of the periods of conflict and colonization
- Understand social structure, family, and religion in Cambodia
- Develop an appreciation for Cambodian art and music

Assessment

We expect active participation in discussions and in classes, readings and field activities. Some of the classes presented below may change, but updated information will be given with sufficient notice. Student performance in this course will be evaluated based on the assessment items and their proportional weight to your final grade as described in the table below. Each assessment item will be evaluated on an individual basis. This is a 2-credit course whose hours are divided between community outreach, language classes, culture classes, and activities.

Assessment Item	Value (%)
Participation in Community Activities	10
Khmer Language Midterm Exam	20
Culture Discussions and Journal Entries:	15
<i>Journal 1. Entry into Cambodian Culture</i>	
<i>Journal 2. Khmer Rouge Genocide Sites</i>	
<i>Journal 3. Vietnamese Culture</i>	
Final Khmer Language Exam	25
Participation in Language Market Visits	15
Peer Cultural Briefing	15
TOTAL	100

Assessment Descriptions

Participation in Community Activities (10%): We expect students to be actively involved in community engagement and you will be graded not only on attendance, but level of participation in these events.

Participation in Language Market Visits: As part of the Khmer language portion and the cultural portion of the course students will undertake a number of excursions to local markets and events in connection with important festivals and performances. Students are expected to fully participate in these activities.

Reflective Journaling: Students will submit three journal entries throughout the semester to reflect on specific cultural events, activities or social experiences and interactions. These entries will be accepted in a variety of mediums such as drawing, photography, poetry, creative writing or prose. Students can choose to submit a digital or physical copy of their journal entries.

Khmer Language Midterm Exam (20%): A mid-term exam will be administered during the semester. This may include multiple methods of assessment including an oral and written portion.

Khmer Language Final Exam (15%): The final Khmer language exam must be completed in 2 hours. This may include multiple methods of assessment including an oral and written portion.

Grading Scheme

A	95.00 – 100.00%	B+	86.00 – 89.99%	C+	76.00 – 79.99%	D	60.00-69.00%
A-	90.00 – 94.99%	B	83.00 – 85.99%	C	73.00 – 75.99%	F	0.00 – 59.99%
		B-	80.00 – 82.99%	C-	70.00 – 72.99%		

General Reminders

Readings: The suggested readings and films are optional, but are valuable resources to expand your understanding of culture and society in Cambodia and Vietnam. The readings and films might also be useful for you in preparing your cultural briefing. Some of the films might be shown by the Student Affairs Manager as optional cultural activities throughout the semester.

Plagiarism: Using the ideas and material of others without giving due credit is cheating and will not be tolerated. A grade of zero will be assigned if anyone is caught cheating or aiding another person to cheat actively or passively (e.g., allowing someone to look at your exam). All assignments unless specifically stated should be individual pieces of work.

Deadlines: Deadlines for written and oral assignments are instated for several reasons: They are a part of working life to which students need to become accustomed and promote equity among students. Deadlines allow faculty ample time to review and return assignments before others are due. Late assignments will incur a 10% penalty for each day that they are late.

No assignment will be accepted after three days. Assignments will be handed back to students after a one-week grading period.

Participation: Since we offer a program that is likely more intensive than what you might be used to at your home institution, missing even one lecture can have a proportionally greater effect on your final grade simply because there is little room to make up for lost time. Participation in all components of the program is mandatory because your actions can significantly affect the experience you and your classmates have while at SFS. Therefore, it is important that you are prompt for all activities, bring the necessary equipment for field exercises, and simply get involved.

Course Content

History & Culture Component

Lecture Title and Description	Time (hrs)	Further Learning Materials
Topic 1: History of Cambodia I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A condensed timeline of events from the Angkorian era to the present 	1.5	Chandler, D. (2007).
Topic 2: Introduction to Khmer Language, Culture and Religion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural norms and behaviors briefing Introduction to the Language and Culture course 	1	Kent, A. (2003).
Topic 3: Modern Cambodian Culture and Religion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current-day Cambodia Q&A with PUC university students 	1.5	
Topic 4: History of the Angkorian Empire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit Angkor Archeological Complex with a professional guide to explain the historical and cultural features of the sites 	3	Petrotchenko, M. (2014). National Geographic. (2009). Angkor interactive. Retrieve at http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/07/angkor/angkor-animation .
Topic 5: Community/Cultural Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overnight homestay at the floating village of Prek Toal on the Tonle Sap lake 	1.5	
Topic 6: Community/Cultural Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and participating in World Clean Up day with Pannasastra University students 	Various	

<p>Topic 7: History of Cambodia II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on the Khmer Republic, the Cambodian civil war, the Khmer Rouge Regime, and recent Cambodian political history <p>Field Exercise: Understanding Cambodia's Genocide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit Choeung Ek Memorial and Toul Sleng (S-21) Group debriefing on visits to genocide sites 	5	<p>Boreth Ly (2003).</p> <p>Hinton, A. L. (1998).</p> <p>Hughes, R. (2008).</p>
<p>Topic 8: Historical Phnom Penh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional visit to the National Museum of Cambodia and the Royal Palace 		
<p>Topic 9: Community/Cultural Engagement II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mangrove reforestation in the Gulf of Thailand 	1	
<p>Topic 9: Introduction to Vietnam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vietnam briefing Introduction to Vietnamese language 	2.5	Schwenkel, C. (2006)
<p>Topic 6: The American War & Contemporary Vietnam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of the Vietnam War & reconstruction War Remnants Museum 	3	<p>Kwon, H. (2006).</p> <p>Ninh, B. (1996).</p>
<p>Topic 12: Khmer Music & Dance Performances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phare, the Cambodian Circus Optional Apsara traditional dance performance 	1	Pirozzi, J. (2014).
<p>Topic 13: Contemporary Cambodian poetry (optional events)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoken word poetry by Cambodian-American poet Khieu Kosal Screening of Cambodian Son, a documentary based on Khieu Kosal's story. 		Sugano, M. (2014).
<p>Total Hours for Culture/History Component</p>	21	

Language Component

Lecture Title and Description	Time (hrs)
Class 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course introduction • Pronunciation basics • Sentence structure • Greetings Basic phrases	2
Class 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronouns Basic phrases II	1
Class 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeting & giving a Buddhist monk a gift Giving directions	1
Class 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places Common verbs	1
Class 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common nouns and particles • Basic question structure • Question terms 	1
Class 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negatives • Bargaining 	1
Class 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers • Age 	1
Class 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjectives & animals • Teach them how to use <i>jiang</i> for comparisons 	1
Class 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food & markets • Restaurant phrases 	1
Class 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food & restaurants 	1
Class 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local market visit in Kratie 	2

Class 12 • Describing families	1
Class 13 • Common Khmer phrases	1
Class 14 • Midterm Review	1
Class 15 • Midterm Exam	1
Class 16 • Natural environment terms	1
Class 17 • Markets refresher • Bargaining role play • Market visit	2
Class 18 • Time vocabulary • Time & environment	1
Class 19 • Final Exam Review	1
Class 20 • Final Exam	1
Total Hours for language component	23

Reading List

Asian Studies Center, MSU. Cambodia – Religion Facts. Retrieved from http://asia.isp.msu.edu/wbwoa/southeast_asia/cambodia/religion.htm.

Boreth Ly (2003). Devastated Vision(s): The Khmer Rouge scopic regime in Cambodia. *Art Journal* 62(1), 66-81.

Chandler, D. (2007). *A history of Cambodia: Fourth edition*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Davis, E. (2006). *The pretas are coming!* Ghostly metaphors of city and country in modern Cambodia. Unpublished conference paper for the MCAA at University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Graceffo, A. (2008). Feeding the ancestors: The Cambodian Pchum Ben festival. Mekong.net. Retrieved from <http://www.mekong.net/cambodia/pchum.htm>.

Hinton, A. L. (2004). *Why did they kill?* California: University of California Press.

Hinton, A. L. (1998). A head for an eye: Revenge in the Cambodian genocide. *American Ethnologist*, 25(3), 352-377.

Hughes, R. (2008). Dutiful tourism: Encountering the Cambodian genocide. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 49(3), 318-330.

Kent, A. (2003). Recovery of the collective spirit: The role of the revival of Buddhism in Cambodia. University of Gothenburg. Retrieved from <http://www.gu.se/english/research/publication?publicationId=71410>.

Kwon, H. (2006). *After the massacre: Commemoration and consolation in Ha My and My Lai*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Petrotschenko, M. (2014). *Focusing on the Angkor temples: The guidebook (3rd Edition)*.

Schwenkel, C. (2006) Recombinant history: Transnational practices of memory and knowledge production in contemporary Vietnam. *Cultural Anthropology* 21(1), 3-30.

Zucker, E. (2014). *Forests of struggle: Moralities of remembrance in upland Cambodia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Nonfiction Works and Novels

Asma, S.T. (2006). *The gods drink whiskey: Stumbling toward enlightenment in the land of the tattered Buddha*. London: HarperOne.

Brinkley, J. (2011). *Cambodia's curse: The modern history of a troubled land*. New York: Public Affairs.

Carmichael, R. (2015). *When clouds fell from the sky: A disappearance, a daughter's search and Cambodia's first war criminal*. Bangkok: Asia Horizons Books.

Chanrithy, H. (2000). *When broken glass floats: Growing up under the Khmer Rouge*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Kaplan, R.D. (2012). The Vietnam solution. *The Atlantic Magazine* May 21, 2012. Retrieved from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/06/the-vietnam-solution/308969/>

Ninh, B. (1996). *The sorrow of war: A novel of North Vietnam*. Riverhead Books.

O'Brien, T. (1990). *The things they carried*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Panh, R. (2013). *The elimination: A survivor of the Khmer Rouge confronts his past and the commandant of the killing fields*. New York: Other Press.

Ratner, V. (2013). *In the shadow of the banyan: A Novel*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Ryman, G. (2006). *The King's last song*. New York: HarperCollins.

Ung, L. (2000). *First they killed my father*. New York: HarperCollins.

Ung, L. (2005). *Lucky child: A daughter of Cambodia reunites with the sister she left behind*. New York: HarperCollins.

Popular Films

Fitzgerald, S. (2006). *Bombhunters*. Spin Film.

Jolie, A. & Panh, R. (2017). *First They Killed My Father*. Netflix & Bophana Production.

Mam, K. (2013). *A River Changes Course*. Migrant Films & the Documentation Center of Cambodia.

Panh, T. (2013). *The Missing Picture*. Catherine Dussart Productions (CDP), Arte France, & Bophana Production.

Pirozzi, J. (2014). *Don't Think I've Forgotten: Cambodia's Lost Rock and Roll*. Primitive Nerd, Harmony Productions, & Pearl City.

Roper-Jones, D. (2017). *A Cambodian Nature Film*. Siem Reap: Fauna in Focus.

Sugano, M. (2014). *Cambodian Son*. Studio Revolt.

Vogal, C. & Socheata, P. (2006). *New Year Baby*. Broken English Productions & Dark Matter Creative, Center for Asian American Media (CAAM).