

## The University of Findlay

Spring 2026

**The mission of The University of Findlay is to equip our students for meaningful lives and productive careers.**

**Course Number:** BLMC 330.56: International Living/Study/Internship: Thailand Life and Culture

**Credit Hours:** 3 credits

**Class Time/Place:** Spring 2026 Loop Abroad Thailand TVSA

### **Prerequisites, Co-requisites and Course Description:**

This course is an introduction and orientation to Thailand - its culture, language, history. Students will be trained in practical skills for navigating the culture both during courses and in their free time. During this course, students will be exposed to Thai culture in a variety of ways, learn Thai conversation basics, become oriented to the city of Chiang Mai, and get to know their cohort in a meaningful way. This week will include hands-on cultural activities and conversational learning with a foundation in readings about culture shock, cross-cultural learning, and Thai culture and history.

Please note: Thailand does not have the same freedom of speech protections as the United States. Making disparaging remarks about the royal family is against the law. Many resources critical of the Thai government and/or the monarchy are illegal. We strongly advise that students avoid talking or asking about politics or the monarchy in public. Only when students are familiar with Thai customs and laws should they bring up these topics in private conversations. Students are always welcome to ask their instructors what is appropriate. We also strongly advise that students avoid attending or participating in any protests in Thailand, as they may be dangerous or illegal.

**Instructor:** Erica Ward, DVM; Professor Neeranath Tachumpa; Kitiya Pinmaneenopparat

**Instructor Contact Information:** erica@loopabroad.com; ninatachumpa@gmail.com; Kitiya@loopabroad.com

**Office Hours:** upon request

### **Course Objectives:**

The following Learning Objectives will be addressed or assessed as part of the course:

- **Remember** basic Thai phrases, conversation structure, and methods of successful cross-cultural communication
- **Understand** Thai cultural norms so that you can live respectfully as a student of Thai culture

- **Understand** the logistics of navigating Thailand, including transportation, food, and money
- **Understand** the political and social structure of Thailand today
- **Apply** Thai language to everyday interactions with locals
- **Analyze** the culture of Thailand, including food, arts and architecture, and religion
- **Analyze** the political and social history of Thailand
- **Evaluate** how the concepts we learn and discover relate to caring for animals in Thailand
- **Create** Thai dialogue between classmates, instructors, and locals.

### **Required Textbooks and Other Materials:**

Students are not required to purchase these texts. All required texts, research articles and information will be provided in class.

- Loop Abroad's: Thai Culture and Society Course Reader
- Cooper, Robert. 2012. *CultureShock!: Thailand*. 9th ed. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.
- Each day, students will bring the following materials in a day pack, backpack, or tote bag: full water bottle of at least 1L, one or two snacks, sunscreen, insect repellent, notebook, pen or pencil, course reader.
- Unless informed otherwise by the instructor, students must wear sneakers, a shirt that covers the shoulders (t-shirt is fine), and pants or long shorts that cover the knees. If they prefer, they may wear shorter shorts or a tank top and carry pants/long skirt and a tee shirt/long-sleeved shirt in their bag each day.

### Additional Resource Readings on Thailand

Students are not required to purchase or read these readings. This list is provided for students who are interested in reading more about the topics covered in this course.

1. Baker, Chris and Phongpaichit, Pasuk. *A History of Thailand, 3rd Edition*. Cambridge University Press. [978-1107420212]
2. Coffin, Jaed. *A Chant to Soothe Wild Elephants*. De Capo Press, 2008. [B00EDFZMEC]
3. Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History, and Practices, 2nd Ed*. Cambridge University Press, 2012. [978-0521676748]
4. McDaniel, Justin Thomas. *The Lovelorn Ghost and the Magical Monk: Practicing Buddhism in Modern Thailand*. University Press, 2011. [B005PYJVWY]
5. Rabinowitz, Alan. *Chasing the Dragon's Tail: The Struggle to Save Thailand's Wild Cats*. Island Press, 2002. [B005ECOUS2]
6. Storti, Craig. *The Art of Crossing Cultures, 2nd Ed*. Nicholas Brealey, 2007. [978-1931930536]
7. Wyatt, David. *Thailand: A Short History, 2nd Ed*. Yale University Press, 2003. [978-0300084757]

### **Instructional Strategies:**

Case Analysis	x	Library and Internet Research	x
Debate	x	Practice/drill	x
Discovery/Independent Research	x	Problem-solving	x
Discussion/Questioning/Interviewing	x	Reading assignments	x
Experiential Learning	x	Role-playing/simulation games	x
Field Experience	x	Service Learning	
Group Presentation		Video/Audio Review and Critique	x
Laboratory Experiences		Other	
Lecture	x		

**Methods of Assessment:** Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Abstracts		Participation	x
Attendance	x	Peer Evaluation	
Capstone Project		Portfolio	
Case Study		Portfolio Lab Performance	
Exams	x	Presentations	x
Group Projects		Professional Evaluation	x
Homework Assignments	x	Quizzes	x
Internet Research		Research project	
Journaling		Other	
Lab Performance			
Oral/written review of literature			

**Grading:** Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Written Reflection: 15%

Assignment: 10%

Thai Language Quizzes: 35%

Thai Language Final: 10%

Participation: 30%

**Grading Scale/Distribution:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Grading Scale</b>
A	4.00	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	83-86
B-	2.67	80-82
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	73-76
C-	1.67	70-72
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	63-66
D-	0.67	62-60
F	0.00	below 60
U	0.00	

**University Honor Code:**

Each and every student of the University will adhere to the following Honor Code:

“I will not knowingly engage in any dishonorable behavior, cheat, steal, lie, or commit any act of plagiarism during any academic work, course, or endeavor. If I observe an act which I believe violates the University’s Honor Code, I may, at my discretion, report it to the appropriate personnel.”

**Student Acknowledgement of University Honor Code:**

“I acknowledge that I have fully complied or will comply with all aspects of the University’s Honor Code in submitting this work.”

**Student Rights and Responsibilities Statement, Article VIII-Academic Integrity:**

<http://catalog.findlay.edu/en/current/Undergraduate-Catalog/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities-Statement/VIII-Academic-Integrity>

**University Diversity Statement:**

As part of our commitment to achieve excellence, the University of Findlay values and actively promotes a welcoming and supportive environment that honors the many aspects of diversity. We aspire to foster acceptance of, respect for, and appreciation of all persons in our campus community. We celebrate our commonalities and unique differences, and we acknowledge that diversity broadens learning, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and prepares our students for meaningful lives and productive careers.

### **Course Policies and Practices:**

#### Attendance and Participation Policy

Students are expected to attend all class meetings for which they are registered. This is regarded as a matter of individual student responsibility. The only excused reasons for absences will be illness that impairs the ability to attend and function within the classroom setting or an unavoidable personal emergency.

Students are expected to attend all class sessions on all days of class. It will be the responsibility of the student to contact the course instructor or site director, preferably before the absence, to provide the appropriate documentation and verification for the reason for the absence, and to make arrangements with the course instructor for missed work. Students are responsible for all missed class material. Students may be subject to limited participation in hands-on practice at the instructor's discretion if they have missed the underlying material needed to safely perform the task at hand.

**Final Exam Date:** TBD, Please see Loop Abroad Schedule

**Special Services:** If you are a student with a disability, it is your responsibility to inform your instructor and register with the Office of Disability Services ([ods@findlay.edu](mailto:ods@findlay.edu)) at least one week prior to a needed service so reasonable accommodations can be made.

**Course and Instructor Evaluation:** Each student is expected to complete the course and instructor evaluation which is sent electronically to the student by the Office of the Registrar. The electronic notification comes in the form of an e-mail from the UF Registrar's Office with the following subject line: Online survey for the designated course (e.g., BIOL 102).

**Last Date of Attendance Policy:** Instructors are required to indicate the last known date of attendance when a final grade of "F" or "U" is assigned to a student.

### **Tentative Course Outline:**

#### **Thai Lectures**

- Wai, Greetings, Introductions
- Yes/No Questions and Numbers
- Food and Taste
- What and Where: Question and Answer Structures
- Ordering Food and Beverages

- Food, Fruits, Taste, Describing Preferences
- Family Terms, Possessive Adjectives
- Bargaining, Prices, and Classifiers
- Describing your Abilities
- Comparisons and Sentence Structure
- Focusing on “How?” Questions
- Focusing on “Why?” Questions
- Thai Language Final Interview

### **Cultural Lectures**

- Basic Skills for Navigating Chiang Mai
- What is culture and culture shock
- Three Worlds Theory and the socio-political influence on Ethnicity, Agriculture, and Development
- Ethnicity, Agriculture, and Development in Northern Thailand
- Kings, Coups, Development, Democracy, and Values
- Monastic Life and Meditation 101 with Buddhist Monk at Suan Dok Temple
- Thai Social Values
- Reflecting on Thai cultural experiences this week

### **Labs**

- Thai Cooking Class
- Hike exploring urban and rural cultures
- Thai Fruits tasting
- Urban and rural culture: exploring local hill-tribe
- Cross-cultural Learning: Analyzing Others and Being the Other

During the Thai Vet Semester abroad, students will also learn vocabulary specific to the locations, animals, and activities during their courses. For each course, you will receive a course-specific vocabulary list that instructors will review with you in context. Our approach is that you will make the most of each and you are always encouraged to ask questions and be active in your own language learning.