Sustainable Development in Emerging Southeast Asia:
The Challenge of Sustainable Development in the Greater Mekong Subregion

Credits: 6

Program Duration
Five weeks

Program Description
The Greater Mekong Subregion is one of the most exciting and dynamic on the planet. It is growing economically at a rate that is unprecedented. Yet, economic progress rarely comes without cost and there exists great tension in terms of the change being experienced in the cultures, politics and environments of the region. This field course will allow students to experience and critically reflect upon these challenges. Starting in China, this 5-week program will move along the Mekong River from China to Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam exploring the development patterns and imperatives that face the region. With an emphasis on the need to foster sustainable development, students will study the interaction of economic, political, cultural and environmental processes. In particular, students will be introduced to the theories and concepts of development, globalisation and sustainability and witness these in action in particular places. This will be attained through the provision of detailed expert academic opinion at educational and other institutions and informative field study visits en route. Among other things students can expect to gain an understanding of globalization in the region, water resources and utilization, cross-border issues, traditional cultures faced with economic development, and the importance of maintaining biologically diverse habitats. In producing a sustainable development plan for the region students will be facilitated to synthesise the various theoretical and empirical threads in an applied way. This exciting and unique course will allow students to cross borders and leave with an integrated understanding that will leave them in good stead for work in the social sciences in general.

Objectives
On this course students will:

1) acquire a working appreciation of the theories of development, globalization and concepts of sustainability;
2) attain an appreciation of the geography of the region and the role of globalisation in creating such patterns;
3) learn about the diverse economies and polities of the region, how they differ and how they are linked to each other and the outside world; and,
4) apply the theories and concepts in objective 1 in order to suggest ways that sustainable development might be promoted in the region in the era of globalisation.

Assessment
This course has four elements of assessment

1) Fieldwork diary – *Daily observations during fieldwork* (15%). Fieldwork requires that a detailed record is kept. Each student is expected to submit a fieldwork diary outlining the day's activities and major observations for that day
2) *Participation* (15%) – reading and taking part in discussions will be assessed for each student
3) Group presentations – *Challenges facing the countries of the Mekong* (30%). Students will be placed in groups and each will be assigned a country. In this presentation they will outline the main characteristics of that country and the development challenges it faces. These presentations will take place during the trip.
4) Final assignment – *Sustainable Development Plan for the Greater Mekong Subregion* (40%). In this assignment students will need to outline the nature of sustainable development and relate this to the unfolding of globalization in the region. They will discuss the challenges facing the region in terms of its future development in general. They will then select one site that they have visited as a case study and outline the ways in which the dilemmas in terms of the search for sustainable development, is taking place there.

Required Texts
McGregor A (2008) *Development in Southeast Asia*, Routledge, London. ISBN: 0415384168; Cost: To Be Determined. This text provides an overview of development theory, sustainable development and geopolitics and economics of the region

Further reading
A list of items available on the internet will be provided. These will include items from the following collection of sites:

ADB: Journal of GMS Development Studies
http://www.adb.org/Documents/Periodicals/GMS-Dev-Studies/default.asp
Mekong Resource Centre - Sydney University
http://sydney.edu.au/mekong/publications/centre_publications/index.shtml
ADBI resource centre
http://www.adbi.org/catalog/?tab=3&modid=334&breadcrumblabel=Greater%20Mekong%20Subregion
Mekong Institute – Publications
http://www.mekonginstitute.org/publication.html
ADB – GMS publications
http://beta.adb.org/publications/search?keyword=greater%20mekong%20subregion

The Challenge of Sustainable Development in Emerging SE Asia: Tentative Itinerary 2013

Dates	Location	Focus of visit
Day 1	**Kunming (total 3 nights)** Kunming 1	Arrival and briefing from Arcadia
Day 2	Kunming 2	Morning: Introductory session for the course:

		Development Theories ; An overview of the GMS; course outline, expectations and assessment Afternoon: Site visit in around Kunming Evening: Panel session with researchers attending the GMSTEC symposium on "Balancing FDI and Sustainable Development: The Challenges to Chinese Investment in GMS" followed by a joint dinner.
Day 3	Kunming 3	Overview of Yunnan development issues by Yunnan University. Visit Yunda Pharmaceuticals
Day 3-7	**Vientiane (5 nights – including overnight visit to Paksan)** Vientiane 1-5	Fly to Vientiane, Lao PDR Presentations on development issues from National University of Laos; NGOs etc Visit Lao Women's Union Beer Lao Factory Visit a hydropower site in Lao (Nam Thuen 1/Paksan) (overnight) Tourism sites: That Luang, Patumxai
Day 8-9	**Luang Prabang (3 nights)** Luang Prabang 1-3	Fly to Luang Prabang (Lao Aviation) Visit World Heritage Tourism site.
Day 10	Vang Vieng (1 night) Vang Vieng 1	Bus to Vang Vieng Overnight Vang Vieng
Day 11-12	**Nong Khai (1 nights)** Nong Khai 1	Vientiane to Nong Khai Cross the border to Thailand: Friendship Bridge Visit border/markets
Day 13	**Khon Kaen (1 night)**	Visit KKU Nong Khai

		Campus Nong Khai agriculture projects. Presentation by Khon Kaen University.
Day 14	**Vientiane (1 night)**	Bus Khon Kaen to Vientiane
Day 15	**Pakse (1 night)**	Vientiane – Pakse (plane) Overnight Pakse
Day 16	**Kratie (1 night)**	Pakse – Stung Treng – Kratie Visit Mekong Tourist centre and Mekong Dolphins.
Day 17	**Siem Reap (2 nights)** Siem Reap 1	Kratie – Siem Reap Morning: Visit Royal University of Agriculture Afternoon: Visit Rice production area (Kampongthom Province)
Day 18	Siem Reap 2	Visit Angkor Wat Overnight Siem Reap.
Day 19	**Phnom Penh (2 nights)** Phnom Penh 1	Siam Reap – Phnom Penh Visit Tonle Sap – learn about development issues on the Tonle Sap.
Day 20	Phnom Penh 2	Visit NGOs, development agencies, Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Killing Fields, the Royal Palace and the National Museum.
Day 21-25	**Can Tho (5 nights)** Can Tho 1- 5	Phnom Penh – Can Tho (bus) Join Can Tho University Tropical Semester Programme: Learn about impacts of climate change and development on the delta and its ecosystems. Presentations from University of Economics HCMC on development issues in the delta.

Day 26	**HCMC (4 nights)** HCMC 1	Can Tho – HCMC
Day 27-28	HCMC 2-4	Visit to Special Export Zone in HCMC and learn about regional investment in Saigon. Visit War Tourism site. War Remnants Museum; Reunification Palace Briefings from the University of Economics HCMC Group presentations at VUW's HCMC campus.
Day 29	**Hanoi (4 nights)** Hanoi 1	HCMC – Hanoi (plane)
Day 30-31	Hanoi 2-3	Briefings from National Economics University Hanoi on the economy and development framework in Vietnam. Briefing from Hanoi University of Technology on environmental management. Visit Vietnam Museum of Ethnology. Visit Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum
Day 32	Hanoi 4	Wrap up session
Day 33		Connect to international return flights