

## **Deakin University Exchange and Study Abroad Program Final Evaluation**

With this evaluation the Education Abroad Office hopes to learn more about your exchange or study abroad experience. The information you provide is important as it will help the Education Abroad Office improve its programs and it will also give other students interested in participating in the programs more information about your exchange or study abroad destination.

The evaluation is confidential and we appreciate honest and frank responses as your answers help other students decide on their exchange or study abroad destination. It also helps us improve the programs for future students.

Please attach extra sheets if the space provided is not enough. We appreciate long and detailed answers!

Thank you in advance for completing the questionnaire.

### **PLEASE RETURN THE EVALUATION BY EMAIL TO:**

#### **Education Abroad**

[Education-abroad@deakin.edu.au](mailto:Education-abroad@deakin.edu.au)

**Course at Deakin:** Arts/Law

**Major(s) at Deakin:** Commercial Law/Journalism

**Age:** 21

**Gender:** Female

**Semester(s) and year of exchange/study abroad program:** Semester 1, 2008

**Host University:** Payap University

**Host Country:** Thailand

### **ACADEMIC**

#### **1. Please list the units you took at your host university.**

- Thai Language
- Intercultural Understanding
- Thai history/culture
- The History of Laos

#### **2. Compared to Deakin, what kind of teaching methods did the lecturers at your host university use (e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials etc)?**

My Thai Language classes were conducted in a classroom in a tutorial style. The classes were small and were similar to classes at high school. Questions could be asked at any time and the class was very interactive. The teacher catered to everyone's different needs and skill levels, he would not move on and leave a student behind if they did not understand something, however he also did not make the more gifted students wait behind for the slower students. There was a very good balance within the class and as a student who had never before learnt Thai I never felt rushed or overwhelmed.

Intercultural understanding is a compulsory unit (which we did not get credited for) which highlighted the difficulties we would be/were facing within the non-english speaking environment. It was similar to the Deakin pre-departure session except it was a series of 10 lectures. In my opinion these classes were a bit unnecessary as they seemed to focus more on our differences as outsiders rather than make us feel included in the university, however the teachers in Thailand think this is very beneficial so you can't get out of it even though it is not assisting your grade point average.

Both of my history subjects were taught in lecture form for about 3 hours a week each but were broken up by numerous field trips around the country (both for 1 day and up to 9 days) and this really enhanced the way the subjects are taught – and you spend a lot less time in the classroom than you would at Deakin.

#### **How did this affect your academic experience?**

The interactivity of the teaching was great – the trips also made the exchange even better than it already was as you got to see places that you would never consider visiting as a tourist.

#### **3. Compared to Deakin, what was the workload (e.g. class hours per week, assignments, field work, labs etc.) and the level of difficulty like?**

The workload was quite low in comparison to the work I do at Deakin – more like year 9 or 10 at high school. Little 400 word assignments were set each week on different topics, and you were expected to use your language as much as possible – but you had to do this anyway in order to get around the country.

#### **4. How was your course work assessed (e.g. exams, essays etc.)?**

There were exams and assignments, but both were straightforward and not nearly as difficult as Deakin exams are – they were more like tests that you may experience in tutorials here.

#### **5. Overall, were you happy with the academic component of your exchange/study abroad program?**

At the start I struggled a bit trying to learn the language as I had no prior knowledge of Thai – I couldn't even say hello when I arrived, but overall everything was catered to my needs – and the teacher judged me on how much I had improved from the start – not how good I was in comparison to other students (some of whom had already lived in Thailand for years). Because of this I was very happy with the academic component of my exchange – my marks were much better over there than they have ever been at Deakin!

**COST**

**6. How did you finance your exchange/study abroad program? Please list by percentage (%).**

Deakin University Travel Grant	_____
Deakin Scholarship	_____
UMAP Subsidy	_____ 60% _____
Personal Savings	_____ 10% _____
OS-HELP Loan	_____
Other Loans	_____
Family Contribution	_____
Income from working while studying at host university	30% income from Centerlink
Outside scholarships (please specify scholarship)	_____

**7. How did your living expenses abroad compare with your living expenses when in Australia?**

Much less

**8. Were you successful in keeping to a budget? Yes**

**If yes/no, what were the reasons for this?**

Thailand is a very cheap country to live in, my residence cost just over \$600 for the whole semester which included most of my meals and I rode my bike to school everyday. Travel, food and shopping are all very cheap in Thailand, and if you are receiving centerlink youth allowance whilst over there this will cover everything (well it did for me)

**9. Please outline your approximate monthly budget whilst overseas**

Housing	\$ 160
Food	\$ 80
Text Books	\$ 40
Local Transport	\$ 50
Entertainment	\$ 100
Clothing	\$ 80
Phone	\$50
Other Expenses	\$ 100
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 640</b>

**10. Please outline your approximate travel costs (if any)**

Travel	\$ _____
Accommodation	\$ _____

Meals \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### ACCOMMODATIONS

**11. Was accommodation arranged for you by the host institution?** Yes

**12. If the host university arranged accommodation, did you have a choice of housing?**

Yes

**13. What kind of accommodation did you live in?** Dormitory – sharing a room.

**(Please rate your level of satisfaction with each setting on a scale of 1 = lowest to 5 = highest)**

University accommodation with meals 4

**14. For most of the program, did you live**

Whilst in dorm I lived with hosting country students

Whilst travelling on school based trips I lived with other exchange or international students

**16. Please indicate arrangements you made for meals**

Mon-Fri/Breakfast-Dinner Provided by university accommodation

Lunch and weekends Eating out/take away

For 2 weeks of homestay Provided by host family

### WORK

**17. Did you work while participating in the exchange/study abroad program?** No (on Visa this is impossible)

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

**22. Did you host university provide information and services to exchange/study abroad students on health and safety and legal issues relevant for your stay in the host country?**

Yes

**23. Did your host university have appropriate emergency/crisis response measures in place?**

Yes

**24. Did you need medical attention at any point by the host university?** No

**25. Did you need medical attention at any point during the program?** No

**26. If you needed medical attention, please describe how easy or difficult this was to obtain.**

Some students got mild food poisoning and had to go to the hospital (this is where you must go in order to see a doctor in Thailand). The hospitals are clean and english speaking, the university has a partner hospital where they do not charge students for consultations.

**27. Did you claim anything on your insurance whilst on the program?** No

### **LIFE AT YOUR HOST UNIVERSITY AND IN YOUR HOST COUNTRY**

**29. How easy or difficult was it to meet and interact with host country students?**

I shared a room with a Thai girl so I spent quite a bit of time with her and her friends who all spoke good english and were a lot of fun. In your first weeks in the country the university organises 'buddies' for you from their english speaking faculty and these became good friends of ours throughout our stay.

**30. With whom did you spend most of your time with (e.g. host country students, Australian students, other exchange/study abroad or international students?)**

**What were the reasons you spent most of your time with those students?**

I spent most of my time with the other exchange students as we were all enjoying the same experience and all of our classes/travelling was organised together. I was lucky having a thai room mate because many students were a bit scared to talk to you as a westerner – however in the dorm there are a wide variety of nationalities and everyone got along fine. I now have friends from all over the world.

**31. What aspects of the host university stand out in your mind?**

It is a very 'well off' university – all of the students are quite rich by Thai standards and I wasn't expecting this. The teachers were all wonderful and the facilities were very modern and really clean. I really loved my University.

**32. What aspects of the host culture stand out in your mind?**

The Thais are lovely people and will do anything to help you, particularly because you are embracing their culture by studying it.

### **SUMMARY AND COMMENTS**

**33. Thinking back about what you packed, list those things which you didn't take abroad and later wished you had – and vice versa – those things which you took and didn't need or could have purchased on site.**

#### **TAKE ALONG:**

- Your favourite clothes (it is sometimes difficult to find things that fit)

- One ‘going out’ outfit – there are good clubs etc in Chiang Mai to experience – but everyone there will be in the same boat and be ‘outfit repeaters’ – don’t take too many good clothes
- A laptop (wireless in dorm made it very easy to communicate home)
- Chocolate (it isn’t as good over there)

**LEAVE BEHIND:**

- Half of your suitcase – you will shop a lot whether you like shopping or not
- All of your toiletries – everything you can get here you can get there – but much cheaper – same brands and everything
- All warm clothes – it’s HOT over there, just take 1 pants and 1 jumper for village stays.
- All of your jewelry – there is heaps to buy over there.

**34. What changes would you make to your exchange/study abroad program?**

**What would you preserve?**

I would have learnt basic language (hello/goodbye) before I left – I felt overwhelmed on my first day when I arrived as I didn’t know anything. I would also plan to see more of the neighbouring countries as travel is very easy/cheap in south east asia – plan this before you go and organise your flights.

**35. What kind of advice would you give to students who are thinking about going on this program? Is there anything else you would like to tell students about your experiences?**

It’s a really wonderful program as it is tailored especially for exchange students, there are only exchange students in your classes but you will also meet thai students – you get the best of both worlds. It’s a cheap way to go on exchange and you will never have the chance to experience/see the things that this program allows you to – I had a great time and am already planning a visit back to my ‘second home’ – Chiang Mai.