

Center for Khmer Studies Paññasastra University of Cambodia

cambodian history and culture / khmer language / nation building



program snapshot

- Witness the ongoing Khmer Rouge tribunal and learn about justice and reconciliation in a post-conflict country
- Excursions to Siem Reap, the Angkor World Heritage Site, Khmer Rouge genocide memorial sites, and a rural Khmer village
- Three-week homestay in Phnom Penh with the family of a Cambodian university student; classes with Cambodian students

what you'll learn

The Cambodian Studies summer program helps students understand Cambodia's history and culture from ancient times to the present, with particular focus on the Khmer Rouge regime and its aftermath. Students study the challenges of nation building, reconciliation, and democracy in post-conflict countries while exploring Cambodia's economic and cultural transformation as it opens up to the world.

thoughts from abroad

The tragic events of Cambodia's past continue to haunt it today. Many Cambodians and international observers are eager to see leaders of the Khmer Rouge, a brutal regime responsible for the deaths of millions from 1975 to 1979, finally brought to justice in an ongoing UN and Cambodian tribunal. Although most agree this is a necessary step to help put this traumatic past behind them, the path to reconciliation is not an easy one, especially since only a handful of top Khmer Rouge leaders will stand trial.

At the same time, Cambodians are looking ahead to a bright future. Despite ongoing problems, Cambodia has a multiparty democracy, and its economy, not long ago ravaged by war and isolation, is growing at an astounding pace as the country integrates with the global community. Unfortunately, the country is still slow in developing the institutions needed to help handle the shocks of rapid transformation and growth. Globalization has brought the hope of prosperity, along with new threats, for Cambodia's impoverished, mostly rural population.

Studying abroad in Cambodia will give you the chance to learn about life in a rapidly-developing post-conflict country, explore a culture that is likely very different than your own, and also discover much about yourself in the process. On behalf of CIEE, I invite you to challenge yourself and join what will be an incredible learning and life experience.

— Brian Zottoli, Resident Director

About the Resident Director

Dr. Brian Zottoli completed his M.A. in Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and completed his Ph.D. in history from the University of Michigan in 2009. Dr. Zottoli joined CIEE after serving as a director for another study abroad organization in Vietnam. He speaks fluent Vietnamese and has been living and working in Southeast Asia since 2000. He has worked with UNESCO in Hanoi and Bangkok, where he served as program officer for cultural heritage conservation programs, including the preservation of Vietnam's World Heritage Sites. Dr. Zottoli is also the Resident Director for the CIEE summer program in Cambodia and frequently teaches in both programs.

about siem reap and phnom penh

Siem Reap, Cambodia's third largest city with a population of 100,000, lies adjacent to the Angkor World Heritage Site, the ruins of a massive temple city that was the center of the ancient Khmer empire. Steeped in Cambodian history and Khmer culture, Siem Reap is a favorite destination of both scholars and tourists. Cambodia's capital city, Phnom Penh, lies on banks of the Mekong River. Phnom Penh's grand French and Khmer architectural monuments, including the Royal Palace and National Museum, remain standing amid recent construction, creating a unique atmosphere that combines the ancient and the modern.

academics

Academic Program

The Cambodian Studies program offers students the opportunity to explore Cambodian culture, history, and contemporary political and social issues through coursework, cultural exchange with Cambodian students, and extensive field visits.

Academic Culture

Classes are held Monday through Friday, with some weekend days on field excursions. Most classes are similar in style and structure to American university classes, but students should be flexible in adapting to new teaching styles and ways of organizing academic material when appropriate. The class format typically includes lectures, discussions, visits to field sites, and individual projects.

Nature of Classes

Classes are composed of CIEE students and a small number of CIEE-invited Cambodian students.

Grading System

Students are graded on participation in classes and field visits, class discussions and presentations, projects, essays, and exams. Letter grades of A, B, C, D to F are given with pluses or minuses.



where you'll study

The Cambodian Studies summer program is hosted by the Center for Khmer Studies, a member of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers. The mission of the Center for Khmer Studies is to promote research, teaching, and public service in the social sciences, arts, and humanities as they relate to Cambodia. During a three-week visit to Phnom Penh, classes are held at Paññasastra University of Cambodia, the country's premier English language university, which offers degrees in fields including business, economics, international relations, and law.

living

Housing and Meals

Housing is included in the program fee. In Siem Reap, students live in a guest house with air conditioning, hot water, private bathroom, and refrigerator. Meals are not included in the program fee and are the responsibility of the student. Students will find a wide range of food in Siem Reap, from inexpensive food stalls and Khmer restaurants to trendy international pizza joints, cafés, and bistros. Vegetarian food is available in many restaurants throughout the country.

For the three weeks in Phnom Penh, students live in an urban homestay with the family of a Cambodian university student attending Pannasastra University of Cambodia. This is an opportunity to experience Cambodian culture and everyday life, as well as make lasting friendships. Homestay families provide a bedroom, sometimes shared with a Cambodian student. Students are invited to join the family for dinner, and are responsible for all other meals, which can be taken at the University canteen or food stalls.

Orientation

A three-day orientation session, conducted by the Resident Director, introduces you to the country, the culture, and the academic program, and provides practical information about living in Cambodia. Students explore Phnom Penh and learn where they can find Khmer and international food, banks, shops, and pharmacies, and also learn about Cambodian customs and family life. The Resident Director holds regular meetings throughout the program for ongoing orientation to Cambodian culture.

The orientation also includes an introduction to the Khmer language, including useful conversational words and phrases.

Internet

For those who bring a laptop from home, wireless Internet access is available in the lobby of the student guesthouse, at the Center for Khmer Studies, and on the Paññastra University campus, as well as in some local cafés. Wireless hotspots cover many areas of downtown Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.



immersion

Volunteering

Students visit development projects together with Cambodian students, and may choose to volunteer with local NGOs. Past students have taught English at an educational NGO, worked with street children living in a Phnom Penh orphanage, interned with an English language newspaper, or found opportunities to volunteer with NGOs working in education, environment, or health.

culture

Cultural Activities and Field Trips

The academic program includes visits and guided lectures at the Angkor World Heritage Site. Students visit the ongoing Khmer Rouge war crimes tribunal, the "Killing Fields" of Choeung Ek and the Tuol Sleng (S-21) prison, the National Museum, the Royal Palace, and a rural Khmer village. CIEE students join Cambodian university students for academic and cultural activities in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. The Resident Director or another professor leads all excursions.

Cultural Reimbursement Program

To provide students with opportunities to enrich their study abroad experience, CIEE offers a Cultural Reimbursement Program. CIEE students are reimbursed for a variety of cultural events such as passes to Angkor and other heritage sites, local movies, theater and concert performances, and visits to local museums.

costs

CIEE Fees

Summer 2009: \$4,900
Summer 2010: available 12/15/09

The CIEE fee for 2010 includes an optional on-site airport meet and greet, tuition, housing, orientation, full-time program leadership and support, cultural activities, local excursions, local registration fees, field trips, pre-departure advising, and a CIEE iNext travel card, which provides insurance and other travel benefits.

Estimated Additional Costs (Summer 2009)

Transportation	\$ 1,600
(round-trip based on U.S. West Coast departure)	
Personal Expenses	\$ 400
Meals	\$ 500
Books and Supplies	\$ 50
Local Transportation	\$ 100
Visa Fee	\$ 33
Total Estimated Additional Costs	\$ 2,683

Check our website for current fees.

eligibility

- Overall GPA 2.75

duration

7 weeks: late June–early August

coursework

Program Requirements

Students are required to take Cambodian History and Culture and one elective course.

Credit

Total recommended credit for the summer program is 6 semester/9 quarter hours.

Course contact hours are 45 hours and recommended credit is 3 semester/4.5 quarter hours per course.

Language of Instruction

English

Faculty

Courses are taught by the Resident Director as well as international and local scholars affiliated with the Center for Khmer Studies and Cambodian universities.



courses

Required CIEE Course

HIST 3001 SRPU

Cambodian History and Culture

This course examines aspects of history and culture in Cambodia from pre-Angkorean times to the present. Chief topics include the Angkorean Empire, French colonialism, nationalist and communist movements, the American secret bombing, the rise and fall of the Khmer Rouge, the Vietnamese-backed regime and international embargo, and the UN peacekeeping mission. Site visits include the Angkor temple complex, genocide memorial sites near Phnom Penh, and a rural Cambodian village.

Elective CIEE Courses

ASIA 3001 SRPU

Special Topics in Cambodian Studies

This course focuses on a topic related to Cambodian society and culture. A common topic is visual anthropology of Cambodia, which offers an anthropological approach to understanding Cambodian society and culture by exploring visual media ranging from religious art, contemporary Cambodian film and photography, and images from popular culture, with particular attention to indigenous voices and colonial and post-colonial representations of society. Students meet Cambodian filmmakers and participate in a visual media project for disadvantaged youth. The final topics are announced in advance of each program.

KHMR 3001 SRPU

Beginning Khmer Language and Culture

This course gives students the opportunity to gain basic proficiency in conversational Khmer. Students learn to conduct conversations on common topics like greetings, eating and drinking, giving and asking directions, and talking about family life.

POLI 3002 SRPU/SOCI 3002 SRPU

Nation Building after the Khmer Rouge

This course examines the efforts to rebuild Cambodia following decades of war and isolation, drawing on approaches from economics, political science, and sociology. Chief topics include the Khmer Rouge war crimes tribunal, reconciliation between former Khmer Rouge and their victims, building democratic institutions and civil society, sustainable economic development, and environmental, human rights, and public health crises including HIV/AIDS and human trafficking. Students visit the joint UN and Cambodian war crimes tribunal and a center for documentation of Khmer Rouge war crimes, meet and interview survivors of the Khmer Rouge, and visit non-governmental organizations.

