

Vietnam National University

Paññasastra University of Cambodia

fall / spring / academic year



art history / asian studies / economics / foreign relations / history / khmer language / sustainable development / vietnamese language / vietnamese studies



program snapshot

- Exploration of issues concerning post-conflict reconstruction and nation building; development, urbanization and globalization; and social/environmental issues
- CIEE classes in English; five weeks field study in English at a Phnom Penh university; language tutoring program; volunteer and internship opportunities; choice of on-campus accommodations or homestay
- Educational excursions throughout Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos; reimbursement for cultural events, activities, and performances

what you'll learn

The Language and Culture program is designed to give students the opportunity to learn about the region's rich history and to study the language and culture of Vietnam and its closest neighbor, Cambodia. In Vietnam, students explore the challenges of sustainable development in a time of rapid globalization and urbanization and travel throughout the country and explore its rich and diverse heritage. During five weeks of field study in Cambodia, students explore the problems of development, reconciliation, and civil society following the Khmer Rouge.

thoughts from abroad

The CIEE Language and Culture program gives you the opportunity to experience two societies in the midst of sweeping transition. Vietnam and Cambodia are case studies in different models of development. Ho Chi Minh City has changed profoundly since the socialist period following the Vietnam War, with the country adopting market-oriented reforms and opening up to the rest of the world. Today, Vietnam is poised to become one of the leading Asian economies, yet its development has come with many social and environmental costs. Your five weeks in Cambodia will be an experience in sharp contrast with your studies in Vietnam. There, the perpetrators of the Khmer Rouge atrocities are finally being brought to justice, while Cambodia is still struggling to handle the shocks of rapid transformation and growth. Globalization has brought both countries the hope of new prosperity, along with new challenges for their impoverished, mostly rural populations. By studying with CIEE and immersing yourself in the cultural life of these two countries, you will learn about the challenges of rapid development in post-conflict countries, while having an unforgettable 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 Other CIEE Staff

Mr. Tran Ky Phuong is the Academic Coordinator of the CIEE Study Center in Ho Chi Minh City. He graduated from Van Hanh University, Saigon in 1974, and was the curator of the Museum of Champa Sculpture in Danang from 1978 through 1998. He was a Henry Luce Fellow at the Asia Society Museum in New York from 1996 through 1998, as well as a Visiting Fellow at Asia Research Institute (ARI), National University of Singapore, from 2003 to 2004. Mr. Tran Ky Phuong has written numerous books and articles on the art and history of Champa.

Ms. Kim Sokny coordinates the CIEE homestay program and civic engagement projects while students are in Phnom Penh. She is currently the coordinator of the International Study Programs and secretary of the Peace and Conflicts Studies Institute at Pannasastra University of Cambodia, where she also received her B.A. in Business Administration and is currently working on an M.B.A.

about ho chi minh city

A riverine society that formed a natural meeting point between the great world civilizations of China and India, Ho Chi Minh City has for centuries been a melting pot of ethnic Chinese, Khmers, Viets, Indians, and Chams. Over the past hundred and fifty years, colonialism and the Cold War brought heavy French and American influences to the city. The result today is a bustling, multilingual metropolis where, amid modern skyscrapers and exquisite French colonial architecture, you can enjoy espresso and croissants alongside Vietnam's famous pho noodle soup.

academics

Academic Program

The CIEE Study Center at Vietnam National University was established in 1991 at the Hanoi campus, then relocated to its Ho Chi Minh City campus in 2007. The Language and Culture program offers students a unique opportunity to gain insight into Vietnam and its neighboring countries. Students are required to enroll in a Vietnamese language course, and Khmer language is offered as an elective. Students must also take a required core course during the final five weeks in Cambodia. Elective courses taught by CIEE include such subjects as development, foreign relations, history, art, and society. Some local students also participate in selected classes taught by CIEE.

In their second semester, academic year students have the option of enrolling in a wide variety of courses offered by VNU, including business and economics (taught in English) and the humanities and social sciences (taught in Vietnamese). Students wishing to enroll in VNU classes taught in Vietnamese must first pass a language proficiency examination. Academic year students may also complete a directed independent study project.

Academic Culture

Students attend CIEE classes from Monday through Friday. Language classes are a mandatory and key component of the curriculum. CIEE elective courses in Ho Chi Minh City meet two or three times weekly for nine weeks, while courses in Cambodia normally meet daily for five weeks.

For all students, each academic course requires approximately six to eight hours of reading and other preparation per week. Class sessions normally consist of lectures, discussions of readings, field trips, field reports, and presentations. Students are encouraged to be flexible in adapting to new

teaching styles, especially when lectures are given by local scholars.

Vietnamese language classes are offered at all levels, from beginning through advanced. Students are placed in appropriate language classes based on a proficiency examination given in Ho Chi Minh City at the beginning of the program. Area studies courses, taught in English, include a variety of study trips, usually organized to take place on free days or on weekends.

Due to the Vietnamese semester calendar, academic year students who enroll in VNU electives in the spring semester start and finish VNU courses several weeks later than the CIEE-taught courses. A VNU academic year calendar, which includes start and end dates for VNU-taught spring courses, is available at the beginning of each academic year.

Nature of Classes

CIEE courses are primarily taken with other CIEE students, but CIEE invites some local Vietnamese and Cambodian students to participate in selected CIEE classes. Local students also accompany CIEE students on many educational excursions.

Participants in the academic year program may enroll directly in VNU classes, which are offered in a wide variety of subjects, and study alongside Vietnamese students. They may also enroll in CIEE-taught courses.

Grading System

Students are graded on the basis of attendance, quizzes, exams, presentations, and sometimes a final paper. In the language courses, assessment is based on a mid-term and final exam, quizzes, homework, and participation. Final examinations or term papers count for up to 40% of final grades. Letter grades of A, B, C, D to F are given with pluses or minuses.



where you'll study

The Vietnam National University (VNU) is the premier higher education institution in Vietnam. CIEE classes are offered at a downtown campus of the VNU branch called the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH). USSH is within easy walking distance of many major shopping centers and cultural attractions and offers convenient on-campus student accommodations. During the last five weeks of the semester, students are based at the prestigious Pannasastra University of Cambodia (PUC), an English-speaking university located in downtown Phnom Penh.

living

Housing and Meals

Housing is included in the program fee. In Ho Chi Minh City, students either live in basic on-campus student accommodations with a CIEE roommate in the same area as local Vietnamese students, or in a homestay with the family of a Vietnamese university student. University accommodations have air conditioning, hot water, a refrigerator, television, and telephone. There is inexpensive bus and taxi service throughout the city, and for homestay residents, the cost of daily travel to and from campus on public buses is paid for by CIEE.

Students living in the on-campus student accommodations must budget for all meals, as none are included in the program fee. Students living in homestays have evening meals included in their program fee, but must budget for all other meals. A meal at a local restaurant usually costs from \$1.50-\$3.00, while a meal at an international restaurant usually costs from \$4-\$8. Students are given a small stipend for sharing coffee and snacks with their local student language exchange partners.

In Phnom Penh, students have the option of a three-week homestay with the family of a Cambodian university student. This is an opportunity to experience Cambodian culture and everyday life, as well as make lasting friendships. Most students choose—and enjoy—this experience. Homestay families provide a bedroom, sometimes shared with a Cambodian student of the same gender. Students are invited to join the family for dinner. When not eating with the family, students can choose from a variety of local and international food options. During the remainder of the program in Cambodia, students live in an international-standard guesthouse, sharing a double room with a CIEE roommate. The guesthouse rooms include a private bathroom, hot water, television, air conditioner, and refrigerator.

Academic year students have expanded housing options during the spring semester as they may choose to enroll in electives at the main VNU campus in the suburban Thu Duc District. If they choose this option, they receive a bus pass in the spring semester to facilitate transportation to and from the city center. Academic year students are advised that CIEE covers their housing costs (in a double room) during the winter break only if they choose to stay in the Ho Chi Minh City student accommodations.

Orientation

A four-day mandatory orientation retreat, held at the beginning of the program, introduces students to the country, the culture, and the academic program, as well as provides practical information about living in Vietnam. CIEE staff leads a similar, two-day orientation at the beginning of the Cambodia-based component. Students receive ongoing orientation on various topics through weekly group meetings, courses, and individual appointments with the Resident Director.

Internet

Internet access is available at the Ho Chi Minh City on-campus student accommodations, and there are wireless hotspots on or near the campus. Ho Chi Minh City homestay families may have Internet connections, though students typically use a local Internet café. Students are encouraged to bring a wireless-enabled laptop. Internet shops and cafés with wireless hotspots (either free to customers or accessed with a prepaid Internet card) are now ubiquitous in Ho Chi Minh City and Phnom Penh.

culture

Cultural Activities and Field Trips

The academic program includes day trips and longer excursions to places of historic and cultural interest throughout Vietnam and Cambodia. In the Vietnam-based component of the program, the four-day program orientation is typically held in either the Mekong Delta (usually in the fall), or the mountain resort town of Dalat (usually in the spring).

A weeklong field trip to central Vietnam and Laos allows students to explore the cultural variations in other regions of the country. Group travel includes visits led by Vietnamese scholars to the imperial capital of Hue, the My Son sanctuary and the ancient town of Hoi An, and the former demilitarized zone (DMZ), before crossing the border into Laos to visit the colonial trading outpost of Savannakhet and the World Heritage Site of Wat Phu in Champasak.

In the Cambodia-based component, students spend one week in Siem Reap, including a three-day visit with guided lectures at the Angkor World Heritage Site. Students also visit and observe the ongoing Khmer Rouge war crimes tribunal, as well as see the “Killing Fields” of Choeng Ek, the Tuol Sleng (S-21) prison, the National Museum and Royal Palace, and a rural Khmer village.

Cultural Reimbursement Program

To encourage students to enrich their study abroad experience, CIEE offers a Cultural Reimbursement Program. This program reimburses students for their participation in local cultural activities, such as local movies, theater performances, traditional music concerts, and visits to local museums and historic places of interest.

Non-Credit Internships and Volunteering

CIEE students are encouraged to participate in volunteer activities organized by the host University student unions, which usually include special weekend visits to orphanages and centers for disadvantaged children. In addition, CIEE maintains relationships with several organizations and may be able to offer a limited number of non-credit internships and volunteer opportunities for qualified students. Past students have taught English at a school for disadvantaged children, assisted child victims of Agent Orange at the Peace Village Medical Center, or interned as copy editors for a local English-language newspaper. Although CIEE does not guarantee positions, CIEE staff offers assistance and advice to students interested in pursuing these opportunities. Some positions may demand more time than is feasible with a full course load. Internships are limited in number.

immersion

Language Exchange Partners

As a supplement to classroom language instruction, program participants have the opportunity to meet with local students and exchange help with conversational practice and reviewing classroom material and assignments.

costs

CIEE Fees

Fall 2009: \$13,500
Spring 2010: available 8/15/09
Academic Year 2009–10: \$24,300

The CIEE fees for 2009–10 include an optional on-site airport meet and greet, tuition, full-time program leadership and support, housing, orientation, cultural activities, local and regional excursions, a weeklong field trip to central Vietnam and Laos, a three-day visit to the Angkor World Heritage site, local bus pass, a comprehensive student handbook, pre-departure advising, and a CIEE iNext travel card, which provides insurance and other travel benefits.

Estimated Additional Costs (Fall 2009)

Transportation (round-trip based on U.S. West Coast departure)	\$ 1,600
Personal Expenses	\$ 1,300
Meals (on-campus option)*	\$ 900
Books and Supplies	\$ 50
Local Transportation	\$ 250
Total Estimated Additional Costs	\$ 4,100

*No meals are provided for students living in the on-campus student accommodations. Evening meals only are provided for students placed in homestays. Students in the homestay option should budget \$500 for meals per semester.

Check our website for current fees.

eligibility

- Overall GPA 2.75

duration

Fall
17 weeks: early September—late December

Spring
18 weeks: early January—late May

Academic Year
45–49 weeks: early-September—late-May or early July



coursework

Program Requirements

Students are required to take one Vietnamese language course and three electives, as well as the required core course, Nation-Building in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge. Vietnamese language courses meet one hour per day, five days each week while in Ho Chi Minh City. Students wishing to complete the equivalent of two semesters of Vietnamese language study may choose the Intensive Vietnamese option; students complete two 3-credit language courses (e.g., Beginning Vietnamese I and II) plus two electives. Intensive Vietnamese courses meet two hours per day. Students practice outside class hours through a language lab and a language exchange program with local Vietnamese students.

In their spring semester, academic year students have the option of directly enrolling in a wide range of courses offered by VNU for Vietnamese students. They may also enroll in CIEE-taught courses. Students who demonstrate advanced proficiency in Vietnamese may enroll in some classes taught in Vietnamese, while students who are not proficient in the local language may only enroll in courses taught in English. English language courses are taught at the suburban Thu Duc VNU campus and include Business Administration and Computer Science. Vietnamese-language courses are taught at the downtown VNU campus and may include social sciences and humanities. VNU courses are approved by the CIEE Resident Director on a case-by-case basis. Academic year students not choosing to direct enroll must take classes in the standard CIEE curriculum.

Credit

Total recommended credit for the semester is 15 semester/22.5 quarter hours, and total recommended credit for the academic year is 30 semester/45 quarter hours.

Language and content course contact hours are 45 and recommended credit is 3 semester/4.5 quarter hours per course, unless otherwise indicated.

Languages of Instruction

Vietnamese, English, Khmer

Faculty

Vietnamese and Khmer language courses are taught by teaching professionals from VNU and from Paññasastra University of Cambodia. CIEE-offered courses are taught by the Resident Director and respected senior scholars from VNU and other institutions. VNU electives for academic year students are taught by VNU's international and national faculty members.

The following is a list of past and present CIEE faculty. (Instructors will vary in any given semester.)

Dr. Le Thanh Sang is Vice Director of the Southern Institute for Sustainable Development, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Washington. He teaches Sustainable Development in Vietnam.

Dr. Trudy Jacobsen is Assistant Professor of Southeast Asian History (Mainland) at Northern Illinois University. She received her Ph.D. in History from Monash University. She teaches Nation-Building in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge and has written extensively on a range of Cambodian historical and contemporary issues, including gender, justice, and political legitimization.

Dr. Martin Loicano received his Ph.D. in History from Cornell University and is Assistant Professor of Asian History with a specialty in 19th and 20th century Vietnamese and Chinese History. He teaches Vietnamese Foreign Relations and other courses.

Dr. Huynh Ngoc Tuyet is Director of the Center of Research & Consultancy for Development. She coordinates advising of Directed Independent Study projects and contributes to the Sustainable Development in Vietnam course.

Ms. Hong Bui is a lecturer at Vietnam National University and a Ph.D. Candidate in Anthropology at Cornell University. She teaches Vietnamese Culture and Society.

Dr. Brian Zottoli, CIEE Resident Director, teaches History of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Mr. Tran Ky Phuong, CIEE Academic Coordinator, teaches Art of Southeast Asia.

courses

Required CIEE Language Courses

VIET 1001 VHCM

Beginning Level Vietnamese 1

This course emphasizes practical oral and written Vietnamese language through dialogues, listening comprehension exercises, sentence pattern drills, and grammar exercises. The course gives students basic language skills for everyday living, including carrying on simple conversations, getting directions, and shopping. Local excursions and field trips reinforce language exercises.

VIET 1002 VHCM

Beginning Vietnamese 2

This course continues instruction in beginning Vietnamese.

VIET 2001 VHCM

Intermediate Vietnamese 1

This course is designed for students who already have basic Vietnamese language skills, but are not yet able to read, comprehend, or converse fluently. It brings students to a higher level of fluency in comprehension, speaking, and reading non-specialized materials. Class work consists of readings, listening comprehension exercises, and guided conversations.

VIET 2002 VHCM

Intermediate Vietnamese 2

This course continues instruction in intermediate Vietnamese.

VIET 3001 VHCM

Advanced Vietnamese 1

Students who are proficient speakers of Vietnamese receive advanced Vietnamese language instruction.

VIET 3002 VHCM

Advanced Vietnamese 2

This course continues instruction in advanced Vietnamese.

Required CIEE Core Course

POLI 3003 VHCM/SOCI 3004 VHCM

Nation-Building in Cambodia 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 a center for documentation of Khmer Rouge war crimes, meet and interview survivors of the Khmer Rouge, and visit non-governmental organizations.

CIEE Elective Courses

Students must enroll in three elective courses. Students taking a second Vietnamese language course must enroll in two other elective courses. Electives vary from semester to semester depending on availability of local faculty.

ASIA 3001 VHCM

Art of Southeast Asia

This course presents an overview of the art history of Southeast Asia, focusing on Vietnam, Champa (in central Vietnam), Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Indonesia. It provides students a basic understanding of the Southeast Asian past through its art, with a focus on architecture, sculpture, and painting. The course includes field visits to four World Heritage Sites—Hoi An, Hue, My Son, and Angkor—as well as museums in Vietnam and Cambodia. Students learn to compare the aesthetic trends of the diverse lands and peoples of the mainland and archipelagic regions of Southeast Asia.

ASIA 3002 VHCM

Special Topics in Vietnamese Studies

This course focuses on a topic related to Vietnamese society and culture. A common topic is Vietnamese literature, from Vietnam's classical literature to present day novels and short stories. Students read literary works in translation, including folktales, classical Vietnamese poetry written in Chinese and Nom scripts, Nguyen Du's epic Tale of Kieu, and novels and stories from the colonial and post-colonial eras dealing with such subjects as revolution, war, family, and adjusting to reforms and globalization.

(courses continued from previous page)

ECON 3004 VHCM

Sustainable Development in Vietnam

This course examines the pressing challenges of sustainable development in Vietnam today. Students investigate such issues as economic reform and the transition to a free market, globalization, urbanization, rural-urban migration, growing socio-economic inequality, safety nets for the poor, and the environmental strains caused by rapid development. In addition to attending lectures, the class requires field study and community engagement, as students explore issues of poverty and development while visiting local NGO projects, urban squatter settlements, and rural villages.

HIST 3006 VHCM

History of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos

This course traces the histories of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos from the Bronze Age through the conclusion of the Third Indochina War. Particular attention is given to the development of cultural and religious traditions, notions of political legitimacy, cultural borrowing in the region, and patterns of collaboration and conflict.

INDE 3003 VHCM

Directed Independent Study

Academic year students who make the necessary arrangements may undertake an independent study in various disciplines. The student is potentially responsible for extra costs associated with the independent project.

KHMR 1001 VHCM

Beginning Khmer Language

This course emphasizes conversational Khmer language through dialogues, listening comprehension exercises, sentence pattern drills, and grammar exercises. It gives students basic language skills for everyday living, including carrying on simple conversations, getting directions, and shopping. Students learn to recognize letters, numbers, and some common words in the Cambodian alphabet and number system. Local excursions and field trips reinforce language exercises. This course is intensive and meets for four weeks during the period when students are in Cambodia.

POLI 3004 VHCM

Vietnamese Foreign Relations

This course surveys interstate relationships in 20th Century Vietnam from a critical perspective. Beginning with Franco-Vietnamese affairs of the early 20th Century, students examine the role of foreign affairs in the colonial and war eras as a backdrop to contemporary Vietnamese efforts to engage an increasingly interdependent world. The bulk of the course deals with the period from 1975 to the present and covers such topics as the complex relationship between China and Vietnam, Vietnam's engagement with neighboring states such as Cambodia, as well as its more recent rapprochement with Western powers since 1986. The course also addresses contemporary subjects ranging from Vietnam's recent admission to the WTO and its election to a seat in the UN Security Council in 2007. In addition to the course lecturer, students have numerous opportunities to interact with members of the Vietnamese and foreign diplomatic corps. The class also makes a series of excursions aimed at furthering the students' knowledge of international initiatives taking place throughout the country and of Vietnamese government's current policies and perceptions of its place in the international order.

SOCI 3005 VHCM

Vietnamese Culture and Society

This course presents an overview of the society and culture of Vietnam. Particular attention is given to the relationship between traditional values and modernity, issues introduced with the transition from an agricultural to an industrialized economy, changes in the family, and popular culture.

a student's story

Whatever expectations I had before coming to Vietnam could not have prepared me for my experience here. Every day, I walk down the jam-packed streets and see something I've never seen before. I could easily fill my days here by simply wandering the streets. From French Colonial architecture, to modern skyscrapers, to beggars, to the city's thousands of food carts and stalls, Ho Chi Minh City has it all. Where we live, in District One, is the heart of the city. Teeming with restaurants and street vendors, food is never far away, and always cheap. Some of the best food in the city can be had for \$5, while the average lunch here doesn't cost more than 50 cents. Undoubtedly, though, one of the best parts of this city is the smiles. In Vietnamese culture, smile and laughter are essential and seemingly omnipresent; everywhere I look, someone is smiling, or ready to return one of my smiles.

Classes are discussion-filled and thought-provoking. Our studies often spill out into the city. As a class, we travel together, attend cultural events, hear speakers, and eat meals. When I'm not studying, I can often be found working at the Saigon Times, one of the few English language newspapers in Ho Chi Minh City. For about 15 hours of every week, I help the staff with editing, and contribute some of my own articles. One of the highlights of the internship, though, is definitely getting to know the staff: interns, reporters, and editors, many in their mid-20s.

For most of my dinners, I head back to my homestay. Here in Ho Chi Minh City, I live with a family of five: two brothers, 14 and 22, a mom, a dad, and the family's only pet, a small dog, named Puppy. Dinners usually involve a lot of laughing, nonverbal communication, and some basic English and Vietnamese. My older brother and I have become very close, going out to play basketball and Ping Pong on weekends. And when I mentioned to my Mom that I love to cook and wanted to learn how to cook Vietnamese food, she offered to teach me some of her family recipes. I've already learned how to make Vietnamese spring rolls, pickled carrots, and Pho. One of the best parts of learning recipes is that when I cook these recipes after returning to the U.S., I'll remember Vietnam and my homestay family. I'll be reminded how I forged a connection here, with a family on the other side of the world, cooking together, playing sports together, and laughing together.

— David Gainsboro, Tufts University

