



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

GA308 Overseas Project Experience: Applied Social Sciences in Globalised Asia (SMU-XO)

Topic: Exploring Social Change in Bangkok, Thailand

Term 2, AY 2023/24



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PRE-REQUISITES

- This course is open to all SMU undergraduate students.
- Senior students will be prioritised over freshmen and sophomore students.
- The course will be capped at 25 students.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Millions of tourists visit the Bangkok every year, drawn to the city's rich history, culture, and creativity. While the city does offer a rich tapestry of sights and experiences, political tensions, economic disparities, and social inequalities are often out of sight for most foreign visitors. The city's dense urban landscape also exacerbates presents a host of issues that commonly afflict rapidly growing metropolises, including pollution, rising temperatures, mental health issues, etc. Over the past few decades, many non-governmental organisations have stepped up efforts to address social issues in the city with considerable success – from support of migrant workers to human trafficking, HIV/AIDS to sexual violence.

This course will explore the success factors of social change programmes in Bangkok through an interdisciplinary lens that draws from the fields of sociology, communication and management. In partnership with a Bangkok-based SMU-X partner, participants of this SMU-X Overseas programme will receive hands-on guidance on a real-world project to address a social issue in Thailand. Over the course of six seminars at SMU during Term 2, 2023-24, participants will learn about life and work in the land of smiles, public communication frameworks that drive social change, as well as the systems that support and challenge social change management in the city and beyond. A 11-day fieldwork and cultural immersion trip to Bangkok, Thailand (*tentatively* 5 May to 15 May 2024) will follow, where participants can expect to meet with social changemakers and to present their project deliverables to local stakeholders.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, participants should be able to:

- Understand and articulate the complexities of social change initiatives.
- Exercise interdisciplinary thinking in examining and addressing social change issues.
- Evaluate social change messaging and campaigns.
- Apply research skills through study design, data collection and data analysis.
- Understand the sociocultural nuances of working with Thais and Bangkokians.

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

1. Course participation	20%
2. Group written report	30%
3. Client presentation	20%
4. Individual post-trip reflection	30%