

Notes and Reflections Journal
Global Change, Communities, & Families in Thailand
May 14 – June 4, 2017

Name: _____



“It is better to travel well than to arrive.”
The Buddha



Department of
Family Social Science

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover™

Adapted for the Thailand Learning Abroad course by Dr. Catherine Solheim, Professor, Family Social Science

This journal was designed for you to reflect on your experiences as you journey in Thailand. The purposes of these writing assignments are:

- Capture your experience in detail so that you can return in the future and remember what you saw, heard, smelled, tasted, felt, and experienced;
- Write your ideas and reflections down will also help you synthesize what you're learning;
- Integrate what you've learned into your knowledge and experience base;
- Contribute to your personal growth through examining and understanding your beliefs, values, and culture; and
- Demonstrate your critically thinking about your experiences and what you've learned in this course.

Start your journey here.....

Who are you and how were you shaped as a culture being?

Write down 5-10 words or phrases that help others understand how you see yourself.

Write down a few words or phrases to describe how others tend to describe you.

Identify 2-3 significant events from your life that have helped to define and shape you. In what ways did they impact you?

List 4-6 values that you hold and describe their meanings. For example, if you value family, what does that look like? How does that play out in your life?

How would describe your culture to someone who does not share a similar culture? (Could include dimensions related to customs, beliefs, faith, ethnicity, language(s), foods, holidays, music, art, race, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, education, class, etc.)

Identify the expectations you have for this course and what has shaped them.

Have you traveled internationally? If yes, where have you traveled and what have you learned from those experiences? If no, why are you choosing Thailand as your first travel experience?

Interacting in a New Culture

ODIE: Observe, Describe, Interpret, and Evaluate

Spend the most time and effort on these two steps.

Observe: Watch and listen to what is happening without allowing your own thoughts to interpret or evaluate.

Describe: State observable facts. Provide rich detail. Choose words that are non-judgmental.

When you believe you have a good grasp on the situation/phenomenon/interaction, then move to the next step...

Interpret: Don't rush to interpret what you've seen or experienced. First, ask questions of cultural insiders that can help you understand. Why might this be the case?

Then ask yourself: Why am I frustrated, excited, sad? What is influencing me to think about what I've observed in this particular way? What is influencing what I'm observing from a Thai cultural or contextual perspective?

When you have grappled sufficiently to understanding your own and another's perspectives, you may be able to move to this step. Without sufficient cultural insight, this is a rare occurrence.

Evaluation: You must first understand deeply enough to interpret the situation/phenomenon/interaction. You must recognize that your own values and cultural socialization are influencing how you're judging the situation. You must consider context – what has influenced this situation/phenomenon/interaction?

Reflection 1: Arrival, First impressions, First Interactions

Child Safe Workshop, At Khao San Road, Hotel, Driving in Bangkok, Walking Around, Eating, Orientation, Khan Toke Dinner - Mon, 5-15, Tues, 5-16, Wed, 5-17

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 1 Continued.....

Reflection 2: Chiang Mai May 18

Local Market, Cooking Class, Wat Suan Dok, and Lecture on Buddhism

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 2 Continued.....

Reflection 3: Chiang Mai May 19

Suksasongkroh Chiang Dao School

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 3 Continued.....

Reflection 4: Chiang Mai May 20

Pha Nok Kok Village

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 4 Continued.....

Reflection 5: Home Stay, May 22, 23, 24

Mae Kampong

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 5 Continued.....

Reflection 6: Chiang Rai, May 25

Hill Area Development Foundation and Night Market

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 6 Continued.....

Reflection 7: Chiang Khong, May 28, 29
Mekong Child Rights Protection Center and Visit to Laos

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 7 Continued.....

Reflection 8: Chiang Khong, May 30 and 31

Hmong Village and Mekong School

Interesting Facts and Ideas I Learned

What I Observed

Reactions and Reflections about What I learned and What I Observed

Questions I Have

2-3 Key Points I Will Remember

Reflection 8 Continued.....

Reflection 9: Synthesis

Reflections on your time in Thailand

Look back at the expectations you wrote down on page 3 before you left the U.S. Which ones were accurate? Which ones were not? What did you experience and learn that were not included in your pre-departure expectations?

What advice would you give future students about this course?

What suggestions do you have to improve the learning experiences in this course?

How will you share this experience with others?

What are 3 stories/experiences that stand out for you?

What was most meaningful?

How did you change, grow, develop, or mature through this time in Thailand?

What have you learned about yourself?

How do you think you might use what you've learned about Thailand and/or about yourself in the future?

Write a brief description of the focus you are imagining for your digital story. What might be the primary theme(s)? How will you communicate what you learned through words, images, sounds?

Additional Page for Notes

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