The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy,* disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the University’s student-related nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the campus Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action office.

*Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.
YOUR UCEAP NETWORK

Local UCEAP Support

Campus EAP Office
The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientations, and academic advising; and serves as your primary contact during the application process.

UCEAP Systemwide Office
The UCEAP Systemwide Office establishes and operates programs and coordinates UCEAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

- **Program Advisors** provide academic and operational program information to you and your campus as well as administrative support for all aspects of your participation.
- **Operations Specialists** manage the logistics of the program. They coordinate document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, acceptance and placement by host institutions, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements.
- **Academic Specialists** advise on academic policies, review courses taken abroad for UC credit, and document your registration, grades, petitions and academic records.
- **Student Finance Accountants** assist primarily with UCEAP statements, program fee collection, and financial aid disbursements (in conjunction with your campus Financial Aid Office).

Contact Information

Program Advisor
Ciara Ristig
Phone: (805) 893-6152; E-mail: cristig@eap.ucop.edu

Operations Specialist
May Pothongsunun
Phone: (805) 893-6152; E-mail: mpothongsunun@eap.ucop.edu

Academic Specialist
Eva Bilandzia
Phone: (805) 893-2598; E-mail: ebilandzia@eap.ucop.edu

Student Finance Accountant
Diana Oropeza
Phone: (805) 893-2761; E-mail: stufinance@eap.ucop.edu

UCEAP Systemwide Office
6950 Hollister Avenue, Suite 200
Goleta, CA 93117-5823
Phone: (805) 893-4762; Fax: (805) 893-2583
UCEAP Online

Bookmark your Participants program page. This resource lists requirements and policies you need to know before you go abroad, including your Predeparture Checklist, UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad, Program Calendar, UCEAP Student Budgets, and payment instructions.

Connect with us! Join our Facebook network via the UCEAP Thailand page.

Study Center Abroad

A Thammasat University professor serves as the UCEAP Liaison Officer. Once you are abroad, the UCEAP Liaison Officer will be your first point of contact for all matters. Among other things, he provides support with academic matters, program logistics, and transition into life in Thailand. He is also familiar with the UC system and American culture, having received his PhD from UC Berkeley.

Prof. Thanet Makjamroen, UCEAP Liaison Officer
Faculty of Economics, Room 521
Thammasat University
Bangkok 10200, Thailand

Phone (calling from the U.S.): (011-66) 2-613-2431
Phone (calling from Bangkok): 02-613-2431
E-mail: thanet@econ.tu.ac.th

Phone Number Codes

U.S. international code ............ 011
(dial this to call from the U.S.)
Thailand country code ............ 66
Bangkok city code ............ 2

Approximate Time Difference

Add 14 hours
Academic Information

Program Descriptions

Summer Interdisciplinary Thai Studies
This intensive summer program provides a set curriculum in English for UC and other international students.

Required:
- Attendance at all orientation sessions.
- 12 UC quarter units; the variable unit option is not available.
- Three courses: Thai Buddhism (5 UC quarter units), Society and Culture of Thailand (5 units), and Thai Language and Culture (2 units)
- Thai Language and Culture course may be taken P/NP. The other two courses must be taken for letter grade.
- Participation in required field trips throughout the program. Field excursions are an integral part of this program.
- MyEAP Study List registration; you will receive instructions after arrival in Thailand.

Fall, Spring, and Year Programs
The semester consists of 16 weeks of instruction and one week of exams. Classes typically meet for three hours once a week or one and a half hours twice a week (except Thai language classes). Instruction combines lecture, discussion, student presentations, and field trips to artistic, ethnological, historical, political, and religious sites where appropriate.

Required:
- Attendance at all orientation sessions.
- 25 UC quarter units per semester; this is five courses of 5 UC quarter units each.
- MyEAP Study List registration
- Special Study Project form if you do a research project or internship for academic credit.

Thammasat University courses are numbered as 100-, 200-, 300-, or 400-level courses:
- 100-level courses are lower division—these are not usually appropriate for UC students and are not recommended except for beginning Thai language courses;
- 200-level courses are usually lower division but may be upper division depending on their content;
- 300- and 400-level courses are upper division (recommended for UC students); class size tends to be small
- You will do a preregistration with your Thammasat University application. Instructions are in your Predeparture Checklist. Final registration takes place after arrival.
Fields of Study

You will select from courses taught in English through Thammasat University's International Programs in Economics, Business Administration, Thai Studies, British and American Studies, and Politics and International Relations. You may take courses in any program, but you are expected to take the majority of courses in your assigned program. You may also select from a variety of broad foundation courses in the humanities and social sciences (mostly lower division) offered through the economics program.

Thai Studies or British and American Studies courses are taken primarily by international students. Courses in economics, business administration, or politics and international relations will have a mixture of Thai and international students.

Most departments are strict about prerequisites. You must provide proof of having fulfilled prerequisites in order to register for certain courses. Take syllabi, papers, and any other documentation to prove requisite knowledge.

Economics courses cover aspects of economic theory and practice, including Thai, Asian, and developing economies; economic theory; econometrics; human resources; international and comparative economics; finance and banking; marketing; and quantitative economics. The Business Administration International Program provides courses in marketing, finance, and accounting. Most courses in economics or business administration require a strong math background.

Thai Studies courses are offered in literature, history, society and culture, religion, politics, and economics. Emphasis is on current issues, dialogue among students, and field trips to cultural and historical sites when relevant. In addition, the Thai student body organizes a rural development camp where students help build classrooms, community houses, and public wells in rural villages.

The British and American Studies (BAS) International Program courses are designed for non-Western students who are not native English speakers. These courses are popular with international students, but most are more basic than what would generally be appropriate for UC students; many are lower division, so choose carefully if you expect a course to be accepted toward major or general education requirements.

Politics and International Relations courses integrate theoretical approaches with case studies and current issues as well as practical skills. Courses examine a diverse range of academic questions essential to the study of politics and international relations.

Courses in Journalism (Mass Media Studies) taught in English are open at the Rangsit campus, which is on the outskirts of Bangkok approximately one hour from the Tha Prachan campus that houses UCEAP's other programs.

You also have the opportunity to learn Thai language, which is recommended. Language classes are taught at the beginning and intermediate levels; classes meet for five hours a week in a combination of lectures, tutorials, and preparation in the Resource Center. Teaching methods include formal language instruction, discussions, group projects, and conversation exercises.
Other Faculties
Courses in the Southeast Asian Studies program in the Faculty of Liberal Arts are not open to UCEAP students. The program operates on the traditional Thai academic calendar of June through February and requires advanced Thai language proficiency.

Independent Study
Independent study, called a UCEAP Special Study Project, can enrich your experience in Thailand with research or an internship. Independent study may count as one of your five courses.

Special Study Projects are under the general direction of the UCEAP Liaison Officer and the supervision of a local faculty member or other qualified professional on-site. They are normally worth 5 UC quarter units although units may vary depending on the type and amount of work involved.

Prior to Departure
- Explore possible research topics or internships and consult appropriate UC campus faculty members for advice. It may be possible to develop a project related to the research interests of a UC faculty member or to your long-term research or honors work at your UC campus.
- Write a preliminary proposal. Instructions are in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.

On-Site in Thailand
Complete a Special Study Project form and a formal research proposal or plan of study in consultation with the UCEAP Liaison Officer and the host university faculty member or other designated supervisor. At this time, you will refine your topic or possibly shift it to better fit the resources available. Remember to be respectful and professional in your relations with your supervisors.
THAILAND, 2012-13  ACADEMIC INFORMATION

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

"Thai students treat their professors with more respect than students do at UC. There's also great respect for older people. It's a totally different classroom setting. Lectures are the most common teaching method. It took some time to get used to how Thai students learn, which is largely by memorization, but you'll figure it out and learn how to succeed in the classes. Keep an open mind about the structure of classes and the teaching methods. As confusing as the bureaucracy of our academic institutions can be in America, it's a lot worse when you cannot communicate with someone in their native tongue. Fortunately, it's a learning experience and you're not expected to get it immediately.

Academic Culture

It is important that you learn and adhere to Thai norms for classroom decorum. This begins with respecting the social hierarchy and traditional modes of social interaction. Following the King, the Royal Family, and Buddhist monks (who are highly revered and always take precedence), university professors are deeply respected and hold prestigious positions in Thai society.

The traditional Thai university classroom culture is changing as many of the instructors are graduates of U.S. and European institutions and welcome active class participation. However, respect the Thai manner of being polite and positive and avoid making negative remarks. In deference to Thai students’ polite reserve, avoid dominating class discussions or being as assertive as you may be at UC. Thai students frequently work in teams or groups. Their spoken English may not be advanced, but their written work is of high quality. Thai students are serious and competitive, especially in courses in business administration and economics.

Talking on cell phones, chewing gum, eating, and loud behavior of any kind is unacceptable in the classroom. Although Thai students sometimes talk while the instructor is lecturing or may be late to class, as a representative of UC, do not emulate those less desirable behaviors.

Small class size and a mix of students from international backgrounds—typically European, American, Japanese, and Chinese students—characterize the Thai Studies program. Economics and Business Administration programs have a greater number of Thai students who also study English.

Attendance, Exams, & Grades

Assessment in classes varies with the instructor. While most classes have midterm and final exams, some also require papers, class participation, presentations, etc. Final exams are often in essay format rather than in short-answer or multiple-choice formats, and in the international programs they generally count for 50 to 70 percent of the final grade. Grading is especially rigorous in the economics and business courses.

➢ Class attendance is mandatory, and you may be dropped from the course or prohibited from taking the final exam if your attendance falls below 80 percent.

It is inappropriate to question instructors about test scores or grades. Address any concerns you have about grades to the Liaison Officer, not to the professor of an individual course.

Grades for fall are usually available in March. Spring grades are usually available in September. Early grades are not possible.

➢ For more information about grades, see the Academic Information chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.
EXTENDING UCEAP PARTICIPATION

Plan Ahead to Extend

Extending your UCEAP participation is possible. If you are considering extension, submit a Departmental and College Preliminary Approval to Extend (DPA) form prior to departure. The UCEAP Systemwide Office and the Study Center must approve your extension request. Approval is based on a number of factors including program criteria, academic performance, the support of your UC campus department, and available space.

To initiate the extension process once abroad, make an appointment with your Liaison Officer. The Liaison Officer submits a Request for Final Approval (RFA) form to UCEAP. UCEAP must receive the request by the deadline indicated on the form. If you do not submit an approved DPA before departure, you must submit a Petition to Extend form, which requires campus and department approval and can take up to eight weeks to process.

Once your extension has been approved, notification will be sent to your home campus registrar, Financial Aid Office, and UCEAP. For information about the steps you need to take in regards to finances, see the Extension of Participation chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.
CULTURAL AWARENESS

Educate Yourself

Get acquainted with your new host city, country, and culture before you leave the U.S. Travel guides and travel-related websites are excellent resources. You will also need to understand the local culture and history and keep up with current events. These sources will help you prepare before departure.

Travel Guides

Lonely Planet guides can be found either in print or online. The Lonely Planet guides to Thailand, Southeast Asia, and World Food Thailand are especially useful.

Websites

- Thailand’s Culture and Customs
- Bangkok Guidebook

Recommended Books

Girling, John L. S.  

Keyes, Charles F.  

Neher, Clark D.  

Steinberg, David Joel, ed., and David P. Chandler  

Williams, China  

Winichakul, Thongchai  

Introductions to the Thai People and Natural History

Hoskin, John  

Kislenko, Arne  

Lewis, Paul and Elaine  

Pongsabutra, Paitoon, ed.  
**Illustrated Landforms of Thailand**, Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 1991 (text in both Thai and English).

Swearer, Donald  
Reference Books
You are urged to take a Thai-English dictionary. UCEAP students recommend also taking a Thai history text. English-language books in Thailand may be less expensive than in the U.S. There are also some used bookstores around Bangkok that carry books in English, particularly a large volume of travel guides and maps.

Haas, Mary R.  
*Thai-English Student’s Dictionary*, Oxford University Press; Stanford University Press, 1964. An old but standard dictionary said to be easy to use.

Robertson, Richard G.  

Sethaputra, So  
*New Model English-Thai Dictionary*, 2 vols., Thai Watana Panich, 1999; and *Thai-English Dictionary*, 2 vols., Samnakphim Thai Watthanaphanit, 2001. Established standard works; earlier editions are also available. It is recommended that you obtain these after you arrive in Thailand.

Textbooks
Generally, students are not expected to purchase a lot of textbooks, although many classes require that you purchase handouts. Most of the books you will need are available at the International Office or at the Thammasat University Bookstore, which has the full collection of required textbooks and other materials for each semester’s courses. Many textbooks are available in international editions that are often half the price of the same publication in the U.S.
Social Conduct

Everyday Thai social behavior is less clearly defined than etiquette concerning the monarchy or religion, especially in Bangkok where Western customs are widely accepted. However, what is acceptable in Bangkok may not be the same in the countryside where traditional ways remain strong.

Here are few examples:

- Thais do not normally shake hands when they greet each other; instead they press the palms of their hands in a prayer-like gesture called wai. Generally, a younger person should give a wai to an older person, who will then return it.

- It is considered rude to use your foot for pointing, especially when pointing at a person. Avoid pointing your foot when sitting opposite to someone.

- Thais regard the head as the most sacred part of the body. They disapprove of touching anyone’s head, even in a friendly gesture. At social gatherings, young Thais go to considerable lengths to keep their head lower than those of their elders, to avoid giving the impression of looking down on them. This is not always possible, of course, but it is the effort that counts.

- Public displays of affection are frowned upon. It is also inappropriate to hug or kiss upon greeting.

- Losing your temper, especially in public, will get you nowhere. Thais consider such displays poor manners. You have a greater chance of getting what you want if you keep a cool head and remain polite.

- Thais tend to speak softly in business or formal situations. It is not polite to speak loudly, to yell, or to bring attention to oneself. In more social settings, however, it is normal to speak loudly and have more boisterous communication.

- There are many different levels of speech in the Thai language. It is important to use the correct forms of speech when addressing elders or someone in a formal capacity.

- Do not be surprised if you are addressed by your first name (e.g., Mr. Bob or Ms. Mary) instead of your last name. Thais refer to one another in this manner, usually beginning with the title Khun (Mr., Mrs., or Ms.).

Respect for the Monarchy

Respect the concept of the monarchy and its representations. Thais hold the king in the highest regard. It is a criminal offense to make negative comments about the king or other members of the Royal Family. This particular crime, called lèse majesté, is punishable by a prison sentence of 3 to 15 years. Purposely tearing or destroying Thai bank notes, which carry an image of the king, may be considered such an offense, as can spitting on or otherwise defiling an official uniform bearing royal insignia.

The national anthem is broadcast over audio systems, indoors and outdoors, in both the morning and evening. As the broadcast is transmitted, people come to a full halt and pay attention until the broadcast ends. When the national anthem is played and the royal portrait is shown at the beginning of movies, it is expected that everyone will stand. When attending a public event at which a member of the Royal Family is present, watch the crowd and follow their lead.
UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

Try not to impose on others. Try to show some small kindnesses when you can. It’s up to you to show people that you’re a good person.

Gifts are a way of showing ‘I thought about you.’ Always bring a gift when you’re going to someone’s home.

Religious Etiquette

Thai law has special sections on religious offenses covering not only Buddhism, the religion of most Thais, but also other faiths in the Kingdom. It is unlawful to commit any act toward an object or a place of religious worship in a manner that insults the religion. It is also unlawful to disturb an assembly engaged in religious worship or ceremonies or to dress up like or use the symbols of a monk, novice, holy man, or clergyman.

Buddhist monks are forbidden to touch or be touched by a woman or to accept anything from the hand of a woman. If a woman has to give anything to a monk or novice, she must first hand it to a man who will then present it to the monk. If a woman wants to present something herself, the monk or novice will spread out a piece of saffron robe or a handkerchief for the woman to place the object on before it can be picked up or handled by the monk.

A few tips on conduct when visiting religious sites:

- All Buddha images, large or small, ruins or not, are regarded as sacred. Do not climb on them or do anything that would show a lack of respect.
- Do not wear sleeveless tops or shorts. Guides or officials at temples will provide instructions for appropriate dress. Some temples provide sarongs for visitors who are underdressed.
- It is acceptable to wear shoes while walking around the compound of a Buddhist temple, but not inside the chapel where the principal Buddha image is kept.
- In a Muslim mosque, you should be well covered wearing slacks or a long skirt and a long-sleeved blouse. Women may be required to wear a head scarf. Remove shoes before entering the mosque. During a religious gathering, you may not be present unless you are a practicing Muslim.
ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

Pre-Program Travel

Be careful about traveling outside of the U.S. after finals at UC and before the program begins. Each year, the host university sends acceptance letters on different dates, sometimes only a short time before the program’s Official Start Date.

Travel Documents

Visa

A visa is an endorsement placed in your passport by the Royal Thai Consulate General, which grants you permission to enter and reside in Thailand for the purpose of study. Summer students can obtain a tourist visa, which is less expensive and valid for 60 days. Fall, spring, and year participants must obtain a nonimmigrant ED visa from the Royal Thai Consulate General prior to entering Thailand.

Royal Thai Consulate General, Visa Section
611 N. Larchmont Blvd., 2nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90004
Phone: (323) 962-9574
Fax: (323) 962-2128
Web: thaiconsulatela.org

Visa Extension

The non-immigrant ED visa is valid for 90 days. After arrival in Thailand, the visa can be extended to match the duration of the program. This is completed at the Thai Immigration Bureau and requires documentation from Thammasat University, a processing fee of THB 2,000, an official passport photograph, an immigration form, and your passport. The Thammasat University Office of International Affairs will assist you with this process.

Thai Immigration Bureau
507 Soi Suan Plu Sathorn Tai, Bangkok
Phone: (66-02) 287-3101-10
Web: immigration.go.th

Do not overstay your visa. If you remain in Thailand once your visa expires, you will be fined for each day that you overstay.

Reentry Permit

If you plan to temporarily leave Thailand during the program, you may be required to obtain a reentry permit from the Thai Immigration Bureau in advance. Before traveling outside of Thailand, verify if your visa is for a single or multiple reentry and if the other countries you travel to require visas.
UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

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For girls who wear tampons, try to bring a supply of them because they are difficult to find, and when they’re found, they’re not the good brands that we all know and love.

I talked to a returnee, and it greatly helped me decide what I should take and what I should leave at home.

Definitely pack a generous supply of insect repellant. It’s cheaper in the U.S. and harder to find in Thailand. The same goes for sunscreen!

”

Packing Tips

When traveling always carry your passport, visa, ticket, prescription medications, and money.

Thailand is well developed in terms of the availability of consumer goods. Therefore, limit your baggage to a reasonable amount.

Essential

- A limited and conservative wardrobe, including washable, easy-to-care-for clothing, lightweight shirts, slacks, and jeans
- Comfortable shoes for walking (large sizes are difficult to find in Thailand)
- A formal outfit for dinners and special events
- Vitamins, over-the-counter medications, personal hygiene products (may be difficult to find in Thailand, particularly if you have a preferred brand)
- Prescription medication (see the Health chapter of this guide)
- Liquid hand sanitizer or antibacterial wipes
- Travel guide with a detailed map of Bangkok
- Thai-English dictionary
- Laptop
- Camera

Optional

- Athletic gear, including a swimsuit
- Electronic adapter
- Small backpack or suitcase for side trips
- Cell phone
- A few American gifts for foreign hosts and new friends (suggestions: Frisbees; T-shirts; UC pens, pencils, or decals; baseball caps; California pistachios, almonds, postcards, or scenic calendars)
- Pictures from home to share with new friends

Climate & Dress

- The UCEAP Student Budget does not provide funds for the purchase of clothing abroad.

The climate in Thailand can be divided roughly into three seasons: 1) rainy or southwestern monsoon season (mid-May through mid-October), 2) winter or northeastern monsoon season (mid-October through mid-February), and 3) summer or pre-monsoon season (mid-February through mid-May). April is generally the warmest month. To combat dehydration, drink plenty of fluids and get enough sleep.

Despite the heat, most local students dress conservatively. Shorts and other revealing clothes are unacceptable. Sleeveless shirts and tank tops are considered inappropriate dress (except at the beach or in a resort area). In Thai culture, your appearance is a measure of your respect for other people and personal dignity.
Unions

University students traditionally wear uniforms to class. The uniform consists of a short-sleeve white dress shirt for both men and women. Women wear black skirts and men wear black pants. Both wear the Thammasat University pin and belt. Some departments require the uniform to be worn to all classes while other departments require students to wear the uniform only during exams. You will be informed of your department’s expectations at orientation. UCEAP students often report that they do not mind wearing the uniform and that it helps them feel more integrated. All the clothing for the uniform can be purchased or tailored inexpensively in Bangkok. Sometimes fitted uniforms are hard to find in Western sizes.

Travel to Thailand

You must make your own travel arrangements to Thailand. Even if you are on full financial aid, you are responsible for reserving and purchasing your ticket. You are strongly urged to purchase a changeable airline ticket (standby tickets are not appropriate). Your Financial Aid Office will not purchase tickets for you. You are responsible for arriving at Thammasat University before the Official Start Date. Review the program calendar located on your Participants program page for the Official Start Date. Additional arrival information is provided in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.

The start date of the program can change due to unforeseen circumstances. You are responsible for making modifications in your travel itinerary to accommodate such changes. UCEAP is not responsible for any unrecoverable transportation charges you may incur for independent travel arrangements.

Flights are routinely changed or canceled. Confirm your flight schedule with your airline about two weeks before your departure date.

Financial Aid Students

Your financial aid package is based partly on the UCEAP Student Budget for the program. The estimated round-trip airfare amount is based on the cost of a changeable student fare to Thailand. If your independent travel costs are greater than the airfare estimate in the UCEAP Student Budget, notify your financial aid counselors. Neither UCEAP nor the Financial Aid Office can guarantee that the additional cost will be funded by financial aid.

Bangkok International Airport

Bangkok International Airport, Suvarnabhumi, is located approximately 20 miles east of Bangkok. Travel time to the Thammasat University area can vary greatly depending on the traffic conditions. More information about the airport and transportation services can be found in the Bangkok Airport Guide.

You can request airport pick-up service. Details are provided in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.

If you are making your own transportation arrangements from the airport, only use the authorized transportation services or the official taxi stand. Avoid unauthorized people who offer their services as guides. Many of these unauthorized guides may try to speak with you as you exit the immigration area. Use common sense and observe precautions regarding personal safety and the security of your belongings.
Orientation

Summer students will attend an orientation conducted by Pridi Banomyong International College (PBIC). Fall, spring, and year students will attend three different orientations in Bangkok.

The first general orientation is for all international students and covers such topics as health and safety, living in Thailand, academic culture and expectations, money matters, etc.

The second orientation is specific to the academic department to which you are admitted.

The UCEAP Study Center organizes the third orientation that covers UCEAP requirements and regulations, including MyEAP Study List registration. While learning important details, you will also have the opportunity to explore the culture and learn local traditions.
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Travel within Thailand

Although motorcycles and tuk-tuks are popular among local students, traffic accidents are common in Thailand, and those involving open vehicles in particular can be deadly. The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok strongly recommends that Americans refrain from using motorcycles, mopeds, and tuk-tuks in Bangkok. There is a helmet law.

Mass Transit Systems

You can travel throughout the city using the BTS “Skytrain” elevated mass transit system or the underground Metro (or MRT) system, which operate daily from 6 a.m. to midnight. Skytrain stations are located in major commercial areas and can be an ideal means of escaping the traffic.

Bangkok also has an extensive bus system with routes serving every part of the city. Although an inexpensive way to travel, buses can be overcrowded and are often driven with little or no regard for passenger safety. Cities elsewhere in Thailand typically have only rudimentary public transportation and usually do not have metered taxis. Do not expect to get anywhere quickly in Bangkok. Lengthy commutes due to incredibly heavy, crawling traffic are common.

Taxis

Regular taxi fares based on meters are reasonable given traffic conditions. Tips are not expected, but adding a few extra baht to round off the fare is appreciated. Metered taxis are available 24 hours a day in Bangkok. Make sure the driver turns on the meter once you get in. The U.S. Department of State reports that travelers should not hesitate to ask to be let out of a taxi immediately if the driver acts suspiciously, drives erratically, or refuses to set the meter.

Water Taxis & Ferries

Water taxis on the river run through Bangkok and serve as a pleasant alternative mode of transportation. Most are large speed boats that move quickly and produce a large wake. There is a taut rope strung along the side and the boat bumps up against old rubber tires at the landing. Riders must grab the rope and walk along the gunwale until they can find a seat and climb inside. The passengers inside hold ropes that hold up the canvas on either side to protect them from the spray, and the canvas is lowered just long enough to climb in or out at the landings. A conductor walks along the gunwale to collect fares.

Ferries that shuttle people between two to three destinations are also readily available. Fares are paid at the gate and passengers wait on the dock for the next trip. Before boarding, check the sign to be sure that you are on the correct route.

When the boats reach their destination, the conductor will attach a rope to the float to hold the boat to the landing. Boarding and exiting the boats requires a bit of agility and determination. You must act quickly because the boat will quickly leave again.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Understanding Your Finances

Understanding your finances before, during, and after your program is crucial to having a successful time abroad. The following list outlines just a few of the many things you will need to know before departure.

Detailed information on the following topics can be found in the Money Matters chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad:

- Contact information for finance questions
- How to estimate the cost of your program
- Budget instructions and information
- How to and who can make payments to UCEAP
- UCEAP student account information
- Banking before and after arrival
- Fees and penalties
- Loan information
- How financial aid works while abroad (how do I get my financial aid from my home campus and how are my fees paid?)
- Various forms (e.g., direct deposit, etc.)

MyEAP Student Account

Your MyEAP Student Account is similar to your UC campus financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. You can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard or Discover). The fees that you owe UCEAP will be applied to your account after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP. For the amount due to UCEAP prior to fees being posted on your account, refer to the UCEAP Student Budget Payment Vouchers. Program fees are subject to change.

UCEAP Student Budget

Carefully review your UCEAP Student Budget.

Your UCEAP Student Budget lists the fees you will pay to UCEAP and an estimate of the personal expenses you will need to plan for. It does not include the cost of recreational travel or personal entertainment. Review your UCEAP Student Budget frequently. The Payment Vouchers are on the second page of the UCEAP Student Budget.

Instructions

- Download and print your UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
- Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
- Give the UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your UCEAP bills. Sign this person up for Third Party Authorization so they can make payments online.

For further information see the Money Matters chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad and the Money Matters tab of your Participants Portal. If you will be receiving financial aid, see also the UCEAP Financial Assistance web page.
The official currency unit in Thailand is the baht (abbreviated B or THB).

A housing deposit and the first month’s rent will be due shortly after arrival; be prepared to cover these costs.

**UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...**

“Foreigners (even those with some Thai background) will be perceived to have more money and thus may be charged more for services, food, etc.”

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**Handling Money Abroad**

The Thai unit of currency is the baht, which is divided into 100 satang. Coins are of various sizes and shapes. Bank notes are valued at 20 baht (green), 50 baht (blue), 100 baht (red), 500 baht (purple), and 1,000 baht (light green). Before leaving the U.S., you may want to exchange $100 into Thai currency. Besides providing an opportunity to become familiar with the currency, the funds will be useful upon arrival for snacks, transportation, tips, and unexpected purchases. You can purchase Thai currency through your American bank or at airport international money exchange counters. You may also exchange money at the airport after arrival in Thailand.

You will find banks (with ATMs) and foreign exchange services around Bangkok. Exchange kiosks are also available seven days a week. Fees are assessed per service transaction. Travelers checks in U.S. dollars can be cashed at authorized money exchanges. You will need your passport for the transaction.

If you plan on using your U.S. ATM and/or credit card while abroad, be sure to notify your bank ahead of time. Otherwise, they may freeze your account on suspicion of fraud.

**Banking**

Before departure, find out if your bank is affiliated with a bank in Bangkok and what services they offer. Some large U.S. banks maintain relations with Thai banks, and for a fee you can usually arrange to have money transferred. You may want to open an account at a Thai bank. To do so, inquire at the bank for details. You will need your passport plus a letter of acceptance from Thammasat University. The Thai Military Bank, Thai Farmers Bank, and Siam Commercial Bank are good options for changing money and opening an account. All three have a branch located near the university gate by the souvenir shop and have ATMs throughout the country.

Most Thai banks are open Monday through Friday (except holidays). Main banking facilities often have English-speaking personnel. Banks also have branches located in shopping malls that are open from around 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**ATM Cards**

UCEAP participants report that a good way to obtain money is through an ATM. ATMs provide a convenient way to get cash, make deposits and transfers, and verify account balances. Check with your home bank to make sure an ATM can be used to access funds abroad. Normally, if the banking symbols on the back of the card match the symbols on the ATM (Cirrus, Plus, etc.), you can use that ATM’s services. Money withdrawn from a Thai ATM will be issued in baht. Your account balances are likely to also appear in baht. Each bank has different limitations on the amount of cash accessible per transaction, as well as fees assessed per transaction.

**Credit Cards**

Major credit cards are widely accepted in Thailand. Visa and MasterCard are accepted at most larger stores; however, some stores charge service fees of 3–5 percent to use credit cards. Discounts are occasionally offered for cash payments, but you will always pay full price when you use a credit card. Before departure, ask your credit card company about fees and services that are available abroad.
Approximate time difference: Add 14 hours

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

To print from a computer at an Internet café, they usually charge 5 baht per page. But to print from the Thammasat library, it’s more like 1 or 2 baht per page.

Communications Abroad

Cell phones are readily available in Bangkok. Most students buy one after arrival. The cost for cell phone service in Bangkok is competitive. You can buy a standard phone for about THB 2,000. You can also bring a phone from the U.S. and get it unlocked for no more than THB 300.

Local calls cost approximately one to three baht per minute. International calls to the U.S. cost about 15 baht per minute. Rates are subject to change.

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), the technology for transmitting voice conversations via the Internet, is popular with students who take a laptop abroad. Social networking software such as Skype is commonly used to make free or low-cost calls over the Internet. Some vendors offer 1 baht/minute VoIP international calls, but the quality can be uneven.

In addition to using a cell phone, major hotels, post offices, and most guest houses offer phone services. Note that hotels and guest houses usually add a high surcharge.

The Bangkok Central Post Office on Charoen Krung Road and some major post offices around the country have a CAT center that can arrange reverse-charge and credit card calls.

Public phones are readily available throughout Bangkok. You can purchase prepaid THAICARD calling cards at convenience stores, post offices, and telecommunications offices. These cards can be used for mobile, international, or local calls. Local phone calls can be made from any public pay phone other than the blue and yellow Lenso phones (which can only be used for international calls). Domestic calls can be made from blue and silver coin phones or green card phones.

Computer Access & Use

- If you have a laptop, consider taking it with you to Thailand. Free WiFi is available campus-wide at the university. Otherwise, computers are widely available on campus and in Internet cafés.

Computer facilities are available at several different locations on campus. The Economics and Business Administration departments have their own computer labs for students to use. The Public Access Center (PAC), located in the Applied Computer Library, has three computerized classrooms that you can use when no class is scheduled. The IBM-TU Student Union has a special computer room. Additional computers are located in the TA-TU Internet Center. The Netsquare provides computer services with printers. Most computer centers on campus close early, so adjust your schedule accordingly.

You must take your own supply of paper to computer facilities and a fee is charged for each page printed.
Housing & Meals

Where Will I Live?

There are several housing options located in a residential area near the university. You have the option of making your own housing arrangements or staying in housing prearranged by UCEAP.

If you wish to find your own housing, you can stay in a temporary accommodation until you select a long-term housing option. Thammasat University will assist you in finding housing during the on-site orientation. At your request, UCEAP can make housing arrangements at an apartment complex on your behalf. Fully furnished, air-conditioned single and double rooms are available. Additional information will be provided in your UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.

Apartments & Private Housing

Amenities, location, and costs vary widely. Therefore, there are a variety of options to consider when selecting an apartment. Many students share an apartment with a roommate, usually another international exchange student. You will meet other students at the orientations and can decide if you want a roommate. Most of your neighbors are likely to be local Thais and other exchange students.

Most apartments do not include a kitchen area but have a private bathroom. The majority of apartments are furnished with beds and a table and chairs. Some newer apartments include amenities such as cable and Internet connections. Most students opt for apartments with air-conditioning and hot water. While the rent for apartments without air-conditioning will be less, Bangkok has a very hot and humid climate. Larger apartment complexes even have such amenities as gyms, laundry rooms, security guards, pools, and computer labs.

As you are scouting out apartments, walk through the neighborhood to get a feel for the area (noise levels, nearby restaurants and shops, and proximity to campus).

You are responsible for paying rent and other associated costs in the local currency. Rent is normally paid on a monthly basis directly to the landlord. Most apartments charge separately for phone, Internet, and utilities.

Meals

Bangkok is one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. You can find a variety of international restaurants serving Chinese, Indian, Italian, French, and Greek cuisine, just to name a few. Tipping is not usually practiced, although it is becoming more customary. Some established restaurants and hotels add a flat 10 percent service fee automatically to the bill. Western-style fast food has also become more common in Bangkok, and you will see many familiar restaurants (including KFC and McDonald’s). A wide variety of delicious, fresh Thai dishes are also available at restaurants and food stalls. Rice is a staple food. Predominant flavors are lime and tamarind, lemongrass, salty fish sauce, and garlic. Most Thai meals will be spicier than you anticipate. You can ask for a dish to be made less spicy, and then add more spice to taste. Your tolerance will increase over time.
UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“
There are a lot of student cafeterias on campus with a wide variety of inexpensive food. You should also find local places to eat; it’s always an adventure.

You won’t find good Mexican food here, so eat a burrito before you leave.

Strict vegetarians may have a slightly more difficult time finding food they can eat (without fish sauce or seafood), but it can be found.
”

You can buy inexpensive prepared foods or buy fresh ingredients to make your own food. Fruits and vegetables abound in the markets and you will be surprised, even delighted, at some of the more unusual offerings.

Campus Dining Options
Most people on campus eat in the student cafeterias. A variety of fresh foods (vegetarian, halal-style, and Thai-style foods) are relatively inexpensive. There are also a variety of local options for food in the immediate neighborhood. There are several nearby markets and a wide range of street stalls and restaurants within walking distance.

Vegetarians
Many people assume that since the majority of Thailand’s population is Buddhist, vegetarianism is common. However, Theravada Buddhism, which is widely practiced throughout Thailand, does not prohibit eating meat. Chicken, fish, and eggs are regular components in many local dishes. Nevertheless, most vegetarians in Thailand will be happy with the wide variety of food available, both Thai and Indian styles. Vegetarians can say dee chan kin jae (women) or pom kin jae (men), which translates to “I am a vegetarian.” Be flexible about the use of fish sauce, since many dishes include this staple flavoring and it may be difficult to avoid completely.

Thai Customs Associated with Food
For locals, eating with friends is a social event and means of bonding. Food also plays a key role in many business meetings and formal social gatherings. It is normal to be greeted with, “Have you eaten yet?” rather than “How are you?” especially when you meet a Thai person at his or her home. Food commands immense respect in Thai culture. Therefore, it is extremely disrespectful to play with your food or waste it.

Most locals will eat with a spoon in the right hand and fork in the left hand. One pushes the food onto the spoon with the fork and uses the spoon to eat. If noodles are served, there may be chopsticks; however, chopsticks are not normally used for regular meals.

Food Precautions
When eating food purchased in street stalls and markets, make sure the hot food is boiling hot and the cold food is well chilled to avoid stomach problems. Avoid raw meat and seafood.

Always drink bottled water. Drinks made with ice that is cylinder-shaped with a hole in the middle are safe. Crushed ice may not be safe to drink. When in doubt, have your drink without ice.
**UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...**

“I joined the Boxing Club on campus to be part of the campus life and because I wanted to do something I wouldn’t do back home to learn more about Thai culture.

Make sure to visit all of the beautiful nature that Thailand has to offer such as its waterfalls, national parks, and beaches.

Soak up as much culture as humanly possible, whether it be by visiting historical landmarks, engaging in conversations with your professors and Thai peers, or doing your own research.

Try to buddy up with Thai students as soon as you get here. Some are shy because they feel like their English is poor (which it isn’t), and some are really outgoing and love to make friends with foreigners. You’ll learn to speak Thai a little better, discover the best places to eat, and make AMAZING friends.

Practice bargaining for things, especially at the pier by Thammasat University.”

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**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

**Get Involved**

Participating in extracurricular cultural and social activities while on UCEAP is an excellent way to meet people, improve your language skills, and integrate more fully into the community. Join sports, musical, theater, or arts groups; volunteer at local organizations; attend lectures and receptions held in academic and community circles; and get the most out of your time abroad. Opportunities are not limited to those mentioned in this guide. This chapter discusses just a few of the many activities past students have enjoyed.

**Cultural Activities & Performing Arts**

You may immerse yourself into local cultural activities, some of which include Buddhist meditation, Thai classical dancing, muay thai boxing, and traditional Thai massage. Courses in Thai culture and arts, such as cooking, are available throughout the city and are an excellent way to learn about the culture. A large performing arts hall on the Thammasat University Tha Prachan campus hosts plays, concerts, and lectures.

**Festivals**

Thailand celebrates a number of festivals and events throughout the year. Festivals are a wonderful opportunity to experience the local culture. Examples of festivals include Songkran—the celebration of the Thai New Year—and Loi Krathong, a flower festival. The *Tourism Authority of Thailand* posts upcoming festivals and events on its website.

**Historical Sightseeing**

The Thammasat University Tha Prachan campus is located on the Chao Phraya River, next door to the National Museum, National Theater, and close to Wat Po, Grand Palace, and the Emerald Buddha Temple.

**Outdoor Activities & Sports**

Hiking in the mountains in the northern provinces and snorkeling at one of the beach resorts on the Andaman Sea are very popular among students.

You may also use the various facilities at the university sports centers, including basketball and badminton courts, a gymnasium, tennis courts, a football field, a boxing ring, and a swimming pool off campus.

**Reading**

The Thammasat University campuses have bookstores that are well stocked with books in English and Thai. In some of the touristy areas of Bangkok, there are also several used bookstores that carry a wide selection of books in English.

**Religion**

Although Theravada Buddhism is dominant in Thailand, many religious denominations with English-speaking services are available in Bangkok.

**Shopping**

Many students enjoy shopping in the various markets and bargaining with street vendors. Popular items include silk and leather products, silverware, ceramics, ethnic handicrafts, and items carved out of softwood.
Volunteer Activities & International Organizations
There are several volunteer organizations and NGOs, particularly centered around environmental and public health issues, that operate in Thailand. This is a great opportunity to get involved and give back to your host community. The UCEAP Liaison Officer can help arrange volunteer and internship opportunities at local schools, international corporations, finance companies, and government agencies for semester and year-long students.

Within the Bangkok community, several international organizations provide support services and arrange activities. Examples include the American Women’s Club of Thailand and The Siam Society.

Travel

The UCEAP Student Budget does not provide funds for recreational travel.

There are plenty of beautiful areas within Thailand to discover. Get a travel guide for Thailand and surrounding areas. Past students have found the following guides to be particularly useful: Lonely Planet Thailand; Culture Shock! Thailand; Lonely Planet Southeast Asia on a Shoestring; and The Rough Guide to Thailand. Also refer to the Safety chapter of this guide for warnings about southern Thailand and the UCEAP Student Travel Policy.
Health

Health Care Facilities

Medical treatment is generally adequate throughout Thailand. In Bangkok, excellent facilities are available for routine, long-term, and emergency healthcare. Many physicians have been trained in the United States and other Western countries and speak English. Smaller towns and outlying facilities lack the amenities, expertise, and various medical personnel found in major metropolitan areas.

In Bangkok, there is a university clinic on the Tha Prachan campus that is open on weekdays. For emergencies, you can go to Thonburi Hospital, a private hospital just across the river from the university.

Thonburi Hospital
34/1 Itsaraphap Road
Ban Chang Lo, Bangkok Noi
Bangkok 10700

Phone: + 662-412-0020
Web: www.thonburihospital.com/en

Bumrungrad Hospital and BNH Hospital, located downtown, are recommended for general medical care. They are two of the most well equipped hospitals in Southeast Asia with specialized physicians and English-speaking staff.

Bumrungrad Hospital
33 Sukumvit 3 (Soi Nana Nua)
Wattana, Bangkok 10110

Phone: (02) 667-1000
Emergency: + 662-667-2999
Web: www.bumrungrad.com/thailandhospital

BNH Hospital
9/1 Convent Road
Silom, Bangkok 10500

Phone: + 662-666-2700
Web: www.bnhhospital.com/en/

The UCEAP Liaison Officer can provide information about hospitals and medical care, including medical professionals who cater to international patients. An additional resource is the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, which maintains a current list of medical facilities providing English-speaking services.

Prescription Medications

If you require prescription medications, you will need to confirm whether your specific prescriptions and dosages are legal and available in Thailand. Contact the Royal Thai Consulate or Europ Assistance, the University of California’s travel assistance provider, at (866) 451-7606 or e-mail ops@europassistance-usa.com for information.

Take a full supply of your prescription medications to last your entire stay abroad. Along with your medication, retain a copy of the prescription or letter from your doctor with a detailed explanation (including the generic name, dosage, and purpose). Always pack prescription medications in your carry-on luggage.
Physical Health

Before you get acclimated to the heat, humidity, and traffic congestion, your first few days in Thailand may be some of the hardest. You are encouraged to slow down, take everything in stride, and realize that it will take time and patience to adjust to your new surroundings.

With the change in diet, climate, and sanitary standards, you may experience an upset stomach and diarrhea. The key to staying healthy is to take food and water precautions. Cook all your food thoroughly and wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially before eating. People do not drink tap water; bottled water is the norm.

If you feel sick or have a medical emergency, seek medical attention and contact the Liaison Officer immediately. The Liaison Officer can recommend a clinic to visit, advise on the necessary medical insurance claim forms to complete, and make arrangements with your professors if extended absence from class is required.

Health Risks

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travelers’ Health web page provides valuable information on measures necessary to prevent illness and injury during international travel.

Infectious Diseases

UCEAP continually reviews information from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization, works closely with medical experts on the UC campuses, and monitors host university and country health resources.

Avian flu continues to be reported among bird populations in Southeast Asia. It is important to exercise care while traveling in the area and avoid poultry farms, contact with animals in live food markets, or any surfaces that appear to be contaminated with feces or fluids from poultry or other animals, and eat only thoroughly cooked poultry products. Refer to additional information on the UCEAP Emergency Information web page.

Note that, in the event of a pandemic, UCEAP’s ability to assist you abroad may be severely limited; foreign or U.S. government restrictions may be imposed on local and international movement for public health reasons.

HIV/AIDS

More than one in 100 adults out of 65 million people in Thailand are infected with HIV, and AIDS has become a leading cause of death. The majority of cases are from unsafe sex, shared needles, and substandard blood transfusions. It is important that you understand the seriousness of this health risk. If you decide to engage in sexual activity, always practice safe sex.

Rabies

Rabies is a viral disease of mammals and most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. There is a high incidence of rabies contracted from stray dogs in Thailand. Avoid all contact with mammals, in particular stray animals. If you are bitten or scratched, wash the wound immediately with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately.
Insect Protection
Mosquitoes transmit diseases such as dengue fever and malaria. Wear long sleeves, long pants, hats, and shoes (rather than sandals). For rural and forested areas, boots are preferable, with pants tucked in, to prevent tick bites. Apply insect repellents containing 25–50% DEET (N,N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamidine) or 20% picaridin (Bayrepel) to exposed skin (but not to the eyes, mouth, or open wounds). DEET may also be applied to clothing. Products with a lower concentration of either repellent must be reapplied more frequently. Products with a higher concentration of DEET carry an increased risk of neurologic toxicity without any additional benefit. For additional protection, apply permethrin-containing compounds to clothing, shoes, and bed nets. Do not sleep with the window open unless there is a screen. If sleeping outdoors or in an accommodation that allows entry of mosquitoes, use a bed net, preferably saturated with insect repellent, with edges tucked in under the mattress. The mesh size should be less than 1.5 mm. If the sleeping area is not otherwise protected, use a mosquito coil, which fills the room with insecticide throughout the night.

In rural or forested areas, perform a thorough tick check at the end of each day with the assistance of a friend or a full-length mirror. Ticks should be removed with tweezers, grasping the tick by the head. Many tick-borne illnesses can be prevented by prompt tick removal.

Rural areas bordering Cambodia, Laos, and Burma are considered high-risk zones for malaria. Insect protection measures are recommended for all areas reporting malaria, including Phang Nga and Phuket.

Parasitic Infection
Do not swim or wade in fresh water (except in well-chlorinated swimming pools) to avoid infection with schistosomiasis.
Emotional/Psychological Health

Speak with returnees and gather as much information as possible before you leave for Thailand. You may experience stress caused by limited language skills, cross-cultural misunderstandings, and differences between Americans and Thai nationals in values and expectations.

Do not be surprised to think, “It’s not what I expected.” Expect the unexpected and be sensitive to romanticized misconceptions or unrealistic expectations. Living abroad is stressful by its very nature. Life in Thailand, fast-paced as it is, adds crowds, noise, and a foreign surrounding. Ask for insight from locals and acknowledge this as a valuable learning experience.

Most students who experience culture shock function reasonably well under the stress and are able to keep up with the responsibilities of school and everyday life. However, any situation entailing a high level of stress can cause unusually strong emotional reactions and can interfere with effective functioning either immediately or later. Such reactions are normal responses to abnormal situations and are to be expected under the circumstances. They are usually transitory—lasting a couple of weeks—and do not imply mental illness or an inability to cope. However, there are occasions when the experience of culture shock can stir up deeper emotional issues. These reactions should not be ignored; if they persist, a student needs to immediately seek help.

It is easy to become worn down from physical and mental stress due to the vastly different environment. To counter this, eat well, stay hydrated, get plenty of rest, share concerns with the Liaison Officer, and be open and accepting of the differences you encounter. It will make your stay more enjoyable as you adapt to the new environment.

Counseling services in English are available at several of the hospitals. Thonburi Hospital also has an English-speaking psychiatric department.
SAFETY

Minimizing Risks

Studying and living abroad requires changes in your lifestyle, preferences, and habits to respect Thai cultural expectations and to minimize your personal security risks.

Bangkok has a relatively moderate crime rate when compared to its urban counterparts around the world. Most criminal activity is limited to “non-confrontational” street crimes such as pick-pocketing, purse-snatching, jewelry and credit card theft, and other assorted tourism frauds. However, UCEAP students report a general feeling of safety with the exception of a few bad areas of the city. It is important to use common sense and good judgment when living in Bangkok.

The U.S. Department of State recommends that citizens exercise caution in locations where tourists congregate; examples include Khao San Road and Patpong. These areas tend to have higher rates of drug usage, prostitution, and theft, including pick-pocketing. On the other hand, the U.S. Department of State reports that violent crimes against foreigners are relatively rare. If you are the victim of a crime while in Thailand, immediately report it to the UCEAP Liaison Officer, local police, and U.S. embassy.

Living and traveling in an unfamiliar environment, having a limited understanding of local language and culture, and being perceived as wealthy are some of the factors that can put you at risk. You are expected to take responsibility for your safety and well-being.

In case of an emergency situation in Bangkok (personal, medical emergency, political unrest, etc.) it is important that you are prepared and that you communicate immediately with the Liaison Officer and follow his advice. Be sure to update your local contact information through MyEAP and provide your contact information to the Liaison Officer.

Drugs

Do not become involved with drugs or alcohol.

Thailand strictly enforces drug laws and penalties for the possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs. Thailand’s enforcement efforts include the death penalty for drug smuggling. Convicted offenders can expect long prison sentences under harsh conditions, and often heavy fines as well. Several Americans currently in Thai prisons were arrested for trafficking illicit drugs.

Thai police occasionally raid discos, bars, or nightclubs looking for underage patrons and drug users. During the raids, they typically check the IDs of all customers in the establishment and then make each person provide a urine sample to be checked for narcotics. Foreigners are not excused from these checks, and anyone who tests positive for drugs is arrested and charged.

Never agree to transport packages or luggage for strangers, and do not accept gifts from anyone that is not a trusted friend. Drug traffickers sometimes try to recruit unsuspecting foreigners by offering them free return trips to Thailand in exchange for transporting luggage or packages containing drugs. Some Americans have been duped into carrying a package of illegal drugs with the promise of a vacation to Thailand. Ignorance about the contents of such a package is not a legal defense.
Nightclubs

There are many nightclubs in Bangkok that are sources of entertainment, cultural exchange, and social interaction with locals. Unfortunately, owners do not always abide by safety regulations. Popular destinations often exceed their maximum capacity. Emergency exits are not always easily accessible. Pay attention to your surroundings. Note emergency exits in particular.

Avoid leaving drinks unattended and going alone to unfamiliar venues.

Thai Law

While you are in Thailand, you are subject to Thai laws and penalties, even if you are a U.S. citizen. If you violate Thai laws, even unknowingly, you may be fined, arrested, imprisoned or expelled.

It is a requirement under Thai law to carry photo identification at all times. Tourists have been arrested because they were unable to produce their passport upon request.

Never become involved with drugs of any kind in Thailand. Possession of even very small quantities can lead to imprisonment. If you are found guilty of being in possession of marijuana, you are likely to receive a long prison sentence and a hefty fine.

It is a criminal offence to make critical or defamatory comments about the King or other members of the Royal family in Thailand. This is known as lèse majesté and is punishable by a prison sentence of three to fifteen years, or longer. Foreign nationals have been convicted of lèse majesté. Thai authorities actively search for and investigate Internet postings, including blog entries and links to other sites, for lèse majesté content. They have arrested and charged U.S. citizens and others with lèse majesté offenses for actions that occurred outside of Thailand. You can also be charged if you do not remove a potentially offensive item fast enough from an Internet site you control.

Civil Unrest/Political Tension

Large scale demonstrations have become common in Bangkok due to competing political factions. Large-scale political demonstrations and related incidents in Thailand over the past couple of years have resulted in a number of fatalities and injuries.

Political demonstrators do not target foreigners, and foreigners are unlikely to be hassled or hurt unless they choose to participate. Avoid all large gatherings of people and follow the UC Liaison Officer’s advice at all times.

Major security incidents involving Islamist extremists or security personnel can prompt occasional demonstrations and/or road blockades in the deep south. Traveling to Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat provinces is potentially dangerous. Separatist violence also occurs in southern districts of Songkhla Province. Do not put yourself at risk. Completely avoid these insurgency-affected areas.
UCEAP Travel Warning
UCEAP strongly discourages travel along the Thai-Cambodian border. The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok recommends deferring travel near the Thai-Cambodian border in the area of the Preah Vihear temple and farther west in the Phanom Dong Rak district of Surin province because of border disputes between Thailand and Cambodia.

The Thai/Burma border is the site of ongoing conflicts between the Burmese Army and armed opposition groups as well as clashes between Thai security forces and armed drug traffickers. Pirates, bandits, and drug traffickers operate in these border areas. It is possible that significant flare-ups of military activity on the Burmese side of the border could spill over into adjacent areas of northern Thailand.

The Department of State urges U.S. citizens to defer non-emergency travel to the far south of Thailand: Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala, and Songkhla provinces, including the town of Hat Yai. The U.S. Embassy prohibits its personnel from traveling to the far south of Thailand—Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala provinces—without prior mission approval, and Embassy personnel may go there only on mission-essential travel. In recent years almost daily attacks, many of which have caused deaths and serious injuries, have taken place in these areas. Bombings and shootings are commonplace in these areas. Arson and beheadings have occurred. The Thai Government has warned tourists not to travel to these areas. Bombings can occur in close succession and proximity to target those responding to the initial explosions. Over the past few years, there have been numerous instances of multiple explosions occurring across a range of locations in southern Thailand.

Militants typically use cell phones or other electronic devices to detonate preplanted improvised explosive devices. These blasts can be powerful and create significant casualties. Common targets include security posts and personnel, military vehicles, local government buildings, and rail infrastructure. Bombings, however, have also occurred in crowded public areas, including markets, hotels, and transportation hubs such as Hat Yai Airport in Songkhla. Militants sometimes use motorcycles to transport explosives, but car bombings are much less common.

You are expected to fully comply with the UCEAP Student Travel Policy and observe this and any other travel warning generated by UCEAP, the Study Center, or the U.S. Department of State.

Ocean Safety
Strong seasonal undercurrents at popular beach resorts pose a sometimes fatal threat to surfers and swimmers. During the monsoon season from May through October, drowning is the leading cause of death for tourists visiting the resort island of Phuket. Some, but not all, beaches have warning flags to indicate the degree of risk (red flag: sea condition dangerous for swimming; yellow flag: sea condition rough, swim with caution; green flag: sea condition stable). Boat safety has become an increasing concern in Thailand. Ferries and speedboats used to transport tourists and local nationals to and from the many islands off the Thai mainland are often overcrowded and carry insufficient safety equipment.
Road accidents are the leading cause of death among foreigners abroad. You are strongly discouraged from operating a vehicle while abroad. Thailand requires that all vehicles be covered by third-party liability insurance for death or injury, but there is no mandatory coverage for property damage.

Earthquakes & Floods
Several earthquake fault lines run through Thailand.
Thailand can experience serious flooding during the rainy season (usually July through October) both in major cities and in the rural countryside. Follow the UCEAP Liaison Officer’s advice at all times.

Road & Transportation Safety
Traffic moves on the left in Thailand (opposite of the U.S.), although motorcycles and motorized carts often drive (illegally) against the traffic flow and seldom yield. The city of Bangkok has heavy traffic composed of motorcycles, cars, trucks, buses, and three-wheeled tuk-tuks. For your safety, use overhead walkways or pedestrian bridges whenever possible, especially in metropolitan Bangkok. Look carefully in both directions before crossing streets, even when using a marked crosswalk with a green “walk” light illuminated.

Traffic accidents are common in Thailand, and those involving motorcycles in particular can be deadly. Do not rent, hire, or ride motorcycles (especially motorcycle taxis), mopeds, and tuktuks. Fares for these modes of transportation are only slightly less than regular taxis but impose a greater safety risk. There are many other forms of public transportation available in Bangkok (see the Local Transportation chapter of this guide). The accident rate in Thailand is particularly high during long holidays, when alcohol use and traffic are both heavier than normal. There can be 300–400 deaths and many thousand injuries, with the majority of accidents caused by motorcycles. During the Songkran (Thai New Year) holiday in April, the problem is further exacerbated by people throwing water at passing vehicles as part of the traditional celebration.

Travel by public transportation in Thailand is usually secure, but always exercise common sense if you are unfamiliar with the local crime situation. Do not use any form of public transportation in rural areas and never use public transportation alone at night.

The subway system and the elevated Skytrain are good ways to travel securely in Bangkok. Do not openly display signs of wealth, such as jewelry, watches, or cash. Keep all possessions nearby and secured or locked. Exercise awareness and caution in terminals.

Ferries and speedboats that transport tourists and local nationals to and from the many islands off the Thai mainland are often overcrowded and carry insufficient safety equipment.

Common Scams
Bangkok is notorious for scams. The most common scam centers on selling tourists overpriced gems and jewelry. This scam typically starts with a tuk-tuk driver telling you that the attraction you want to go to is closed and bringing you to a gem or silk shopping center instead.

Credit card fraud is a concern. Never lose sight of your credit cards during transactions; use them only in reputable establishments and safeguard them when not in use. Demand receipts for all purchases and transactions.
**Fire Safety**

Purchase a battery-operated smoke alarm. Know your exits and have an escape plan. For more information read the Fire Safety section in the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.

**Emergency Contacts**

**What Is an Emergency?**

An emergency is a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action. The following are considered emergencies:

- Any life/death situation
- A traumatic event requiring immediate assistance
- An arrest
- Civil unrest or natural disaster in the host country

**In an Emergency**

Contact local emergency services first and then contact the following:

**If you are in the U.S.**

- During office hours (8 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific Time): Contact your Operations Specialist at the UCEAP Systemwide Office
- After office hours: Call the 24-hour emergency phone number at (805) 893-4762

**If you are abroad**

Carry the local emergency contact information at all times:

- Ambulance, Fire, Police ............. 191
- Tourist Police ..................... 1155

**U.S. Embassy in Bangkok**

American Citizen Services (ACS)
95 Wireless Road
Bangkok 10330, Thailand

Phone: (66-2) 205-4049
E-mail: acsbkk@state.gov
Web: bangkok.usembassy.gov

**Regular Hours:** Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m.–11 a.m. and 1 p.m.–2 p.m. Closed the last Friday of every month.

**After-Hours Emergencies:** (66-2) 205-4000

If you have a health, travel, or safety emergency and do not have access to local or UCEAP representative emergency information, contact the UCEAP travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance, available 24/7:

- **Call international collect:** 1+202-828-5896
- **Call within the U.S.:** 1+866-451-7606
- **E-mail:** ops@europassistance-usa.com