**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

**THAI HISTORY, SOCIETY AND CULTURE**

This undergraduate course on Thai history and culture offers an immersive learning experience in the heart of Thailand, designed to provide students with a deep and nuanced understanding of one of the most culturally rich and diverse countries in Southeast Asia. Through excursions to key historical and cultural sites, students will engage in a variety of experiential learning activities, such as visits to ancient temples and palaces, traditional markets or crafts villages, and museums and cultural centers. They will also have the opportunity to participate in traditional Thai cultural practices.

At the same time, the course includes a rigorous academic program that explores key themes in Thai history and culture, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the historical, social, and cultural dimensions of Thai society. Students will engage with primary sources and scholarly literature to critically analyze key historical events and cultural practices, and to explore the ways in which cultural identity is constructed and negotiated in Thai society. They will also examine contemporary issues in Thai society, including social inequality, political instability, and cultural globalization, and consider the ways in which these issues are shaped by historical and cultural factors. By the end of the course, students will have a solid grounding in the historical, social, and cultural dimensions of Thai society, and a greater appreciation for the complex intersections between culture, history, and identity.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**Class 1:** Class Intro and History of Thailand: This class provides an overview of the course and an introduction to the history and cultural context of Thailand.

**Class 2:** Ancient Times and Mythology: This class explores the mythology and ancient history of Thailand, including the stories of the Ramakien and the origins of Thai society.

**Class 3:** The Spread and Influence of Buddhism: This class examines the role of Buddhism in Thai society, including its introduction to Thailand and its impact on culture and tradition.

**Class 4:** Dhwaravati Period: This class examines the role of Buddhism in Thai society, including its introduction to Thailand and its impact on culture and tradition.

**Class 5:** Sukhothai Period**:** This class focuses on the Dhwaravati period, a significant period of cultural and economic development in Thai history.

**Class 6:** Ayutthaya Period: This class explores the Sukhothai period, a time of artistic and architectural achievement, as well as political and cultural expansion.

**Class 7:** Rattanakosin Period: This class examines the Ayutthaya period, a time of great power and prosperity in Thai history, but also a time of conflict and war.

**Class 8:** Midterm Projects, Culture in Modern Thailand: This class focuses on the Rattanakosin period, a time of significant political and cultural change, including the establishment of Bangkok as the capital city of Thailand.

**Class 9:** Midterm Group Project Workshop

**Class 10:** Formation of the Modern Government: This class examines the formation and development of the modern Thai government and its political system.

**Class 11:** The Modern Economy of Thailand: This class focuses on the modern economy of Thailand, including its key industries and economic challenges.

**Class12:** Guided Excursion to the Grand Palace and the Balance of Tradition and Modernity: This class provides a guided excursion to the Grand Palace, a symbol of Thailand's cultural heritage and the balance between tradition and modernity.

**Class13:** Guided Excursion to Democracy Square and Discussion on Modern Politics: This class is a guided excursion to Democracy Square, where students will discuss modern politics and democratic movements in Thailand.

**Class 14:** Modern Issues and Developments in Thailand: This class examines contemporary issues and developments in Thailand, including social, political, and economic issues.

**Class 15:** Student Final Presentations: This class provides an opportunity for students to present their final projects and reflect on what they have learned throughout the course.