

## HO CHI MINH CITY, VIET NAM

The Semester at Sea Field Program has a strong academic component. Faculty members develop field requirements that constitute 20% of the contact hours for each course they are teaching. As part of these field requirements, all Semester at Sea faculty design and lead field trips that integrate with their course work. The following is a representative sampling of the types of Faculty-Directed Practica (FDPs) that may be offered during this voyage:

### **HO CHI MINH CITY'S TEMPLES AND CHURCHES [FDP: RELIGIOUS STUDIES]**

This practicum will focus on the religions of Viet Nam and their existence alongside a Communist regime. Four great philosophies and religions have shaped the spiritual life of the Vietnamese people: Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Christianity. Over the centuries, the first three have fused with popular Chinese beliefs and ancient Vietnamese animism to form what is known collectively as the "Triple Religion", or Tam Giao. Under French rule, Catholicism flourished. Today, Viet Nam has the highest percentage of Catholics (8-10%) in Asia outside of the Philippines. During this practicum we will visit Notre Dame Cathedral, Xa Loi and Dai Giac Pagodas, Le Van Duyet Temple, Mariamman Hindu Temple and Saigon Central Mosque. (PRICE: \$20.00)



### **FORMER UPI PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE MUSEUM OF WAR REMNANTS [FDP: HISTORY]**

Before visiting the Museum of War Remnants, we will meet with a former UPI photographer who will provide a personal account of his work and of war photography during the 1960s and 1970s in Viet Nam. We will have the opportunity to ask questions before departing for the museum. The Museum of War Remnants (previously known as The Museum of American & Chinese War Crimes and then the Museum of War Atrocities) is housed in the former U.S. Information Service building. Many of the atrocities documented in the museum were well publicized in the West. This visit is likely to jolt the senses; many of the photographs are grisly and shocking. Atrocities illustrated are from U.S. sources and include a picture of a suspected Viet Cong being pushed from a helicopter because he refused to 'cooperate'. In the room on crimes committed by the Chinese during their 1979 invasion, China is portrayed as being allied with U.S. imperialism. In the yard of the museum, U.S. armored vehicles, artillery pieces, bombs and infantry weapons are displayed. (PRICE: \$36.00)

### **BEN THANH MARKET [FDP: SOCIOLOGY]**

We will walk to Ben Thanh Market (Cho Ben Thanh), one of the city's liveliest and most bustling market areas, to view the local culture. Through keen observation skills, we will determine such things as the education levels, relative socioeconomic status, demographic makeup, and opportunities for the future of the local people. (PRICE: \$8.00)

### **WATER PUPPET PERFORMANCE [FDP: THEATRE]**

Water puppetry is a Vietnamese performing art that dates from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The stage is a pool of water and wooden puppets seemingly walk on water. Puppet masters who are hidden behind the set maneuver the brightly colored animals and figures. These figures tell the story of joys and hardships of the Vietnamese way of life and the farmers' reliance on water for their harvest. Our guide will provide a brief explanation of each of the stories depicted. Following the performance, we will have an opportunity to meet the puppeteer and look behind the scenes to learn how the puppets are maneuvered. (PRICE: \$26.00)

**The remaining trips in the Semester at Sea Field Program provide a variety of opportunities for students to enhance their overall study abroad experience. Students can visit sites of historical and cultural interest; learn about local environmental, political, economic and social issues; interact with local university students and other residents; become involved in community service; explore what is unique in each country; and enjoy some recreational activities. The following is a representative sampling of standard field trips that may be offered during this voyage:**

### **CITY ORIENTATION**

This orientation will introduce you to the rapidly modernizing Ho Chi Minh City, still commonly referred to as Saigon. Among the grand old buildings, you will see colorful markets selling everything from lemon grass to French bread and, of course, an endless stream of bicycles, *cyclos* (trishaws) and motorbikes. You will visit the History Museum, which documents the evolution of Viet Nam's various cultures from the Dong Son Bronze Age civilization to the Chams and the Khmers. The History Museum also features a water puppet performance. Water puppetry is a traditional Viet Nameese performing art that dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The stage is a pool of water upon which puppet masters, who are hidden behind the set, maneuver brightly colored wooden puppets. You will also visit the former Presidential Palace, where everything has been left much as it was on April 30, 1975 when North Viet Nameese military tanks crashed through the front gates and overthrew the South Viet Nameese government. In addition to touring the former palace rooms, you can view a video about the French and American wars. If time permits, your orientation will include a brief stop at Thien Hau Pagoda which is known for its profusion of incense coils which burn for as long as one month. Photo stops will be made at Notre Dame Cathedral and City Hall. (Lunch at a local restaurant is included.) (PRICE: \$46.00)

### **CU CHI TUNNELS**

Located approximately two hours from Ho Chi Minh City, Cu Chi is famous for its 200-kilometer network of underground tunnels. These tunnels were created and used by the Viet Cong forces during wars against both the

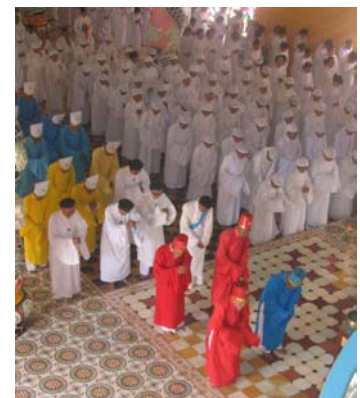


French and Americans. Before visiting the tunnel system, you will be shown a video explaining their history and construction. From the mid-1940s onward, the tunnels were used as a base from which the Viet Cong could launch strategic attacks and then seemingly disappear into thin air. The tunnels had well-hidden entrances and thick roofs which were capable of withstanding the weight of tanks and the impact of bombs. Unknowingly, the Americans even built a base camp on top of an existing tunnel network and suffered extensive casualties before they discovered their mistake.

Most of the tunnels were only about two feet wide and five feet high. However, some of the passageways and tunnel rooms (e.g., meeting room, kitchen, dining room and hospital), while still small, have been enlarged for easier access. If you decide to visit the lower levels of the tunnels, which have not been enlarged, you will most likely get dirty while crawling through the narrow passageways. You may wish to bring a flashlight to assist in navigating these lower levels. (PRICE: \$33.00)

### **CU CHI TUNNELS AND CAO DAI TEMPLE**

Tay Ninh (a drive of about three hours from Ho Chi Minh City) serves as headquarters for one of Viet Nam's most interesting indigenous religions, Caodaism. Caodaism is the product of an attempt to create the ideal religion through the fusion of the secular and religious philosophies of the East and West. The result is a colorful potpourri that includes elements of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism, native Viet Nameese spiritism, Christianity and Islam. The main tenets of Caodaism include belief in one God, the existence of the soul, and the use of mediums to communicate with the spiritual world. The Holy See of the Cao Dai includes the Great Temple, offices, residences for officials and a hospital of traditional Viet Nameese herbal medicine to which people from all over the south travel for treatment. The Great Temple is one of the most striking structures in all of Asia, with its rococo extravagance and many architectural idiosyncrasies. Services are held daily at 0600, 1200, 1800 and 2400. (PRICE: \$53.00)



## **MEKONG DELTA DAY TRIP**

Until the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Mekong Delta was an area of marshlands and forest. Gradually marshlands were reclaimed, and a canal network was built so that today's inhabitants would make a reasonable living from cultivating rice, fish, soybeans, maize, peanuts, tobacco and melons. The My Tho area is famous for its coconut palms and fruit orchards (mangoes, longans, bananas and citrus fruits). The drive out of Ho Chi Minh City (about two hours) takes you through miles of flat rice fields, along a road that is always busy with bicycles and people heading to or from the market. A highlight of this trip is a boat ride on the Mekong River to observe the active river life. The Mekong Delta was annexed from the Khmers in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and continues to hold strong influence and social/physical resemblance to Cambodia. Your boat trip takes you to one of the islands in the Mekong Delta to see a traditional farmer's home and fruit orchards where you will have the opportunity to sample exotic tropical fruits. Lunch will be at a local seafood restaurant in My Tho. (PRICE: \$44.00)

## **SERVICE VISIT: HY VONG 8 SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF & ZOO VISIT**

You will travel by motorcoach to the Hy Vong 8 School for the Deaf to meet the students (ranging in age from 5-18 years) and their teachers. After a brief visit to the school, some of the children will join you for a visit to the zoo. Each SAS student will be assigned the supervision of one or two deaf students. The visit to the zoo will include a picnic lunch (box lunch from the ship). (PRICE: \$26.00)

## **SERVICE VISIT: DA THIEN SCHOOL FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN**

You will travel to Da Thien School for Handicapped Children to meet school administrators. At this school, the Social Assistance Program for Viet Nam (SAP-VN) sponsors a free meal program for approximately 80 students. If available, a representative from SAP-VN will explain the efforts that are underway for the children of this school as well as for many other handicapped children within the rural areas of Viet Nam. Following some time for interaction with the children, you may assist in serving lunch. You will also be provided with small toys to aid in interacting with the children. (PRICE: \$26.00)



## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL VISIT**

We will visit a local elementary school for children from the ages of five to eight years. We will tour the facilities, observe classes, and learn about the educational system in Ho Chi Minh City. If possible, an informal gathering in the staff room at the school will be arranged so that we can meet and interact with the teachers. (PRICE: \$29.00)

## **NHA TRANG (THREE DAYS/TWO NIGHTS)**

The town of Nha Trang extends the length of a white sandy beach and affords you the opportunity to explore some of Viet Nam's beautiful coastline and off-shore islands. Many remnants of the ancient Cham civilization of Viet Nam are also found in this area. Visit the Long Son Pagoda with its entrance gate and roofs decorated with mosaic dragons made of pieces of glass and ceramic tiles. Behind the pagoda, a huge white Buddha sits on a lotus blossom on top of a steep hill. The figure is 14 meters high and can be seen from all over Nha Trang. Climbing the 152 stone steps to the Buddha statue is well worth the effort, as it provides an excellent view of Nha Trang. Also visit the famous Cham Towers at Po Nagar, built between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. The towers provide an excellent view of the mouth of the river, bridges and coracles (bamboo baskets) used to ferry fishermen out to their boats. (PRICE: \$391.00)

## **MEKONG DELTA OVERNIGHT**

Until the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Mekong Delta was an area of marshlands and forest. Gradually marshlands were reclaimed, and a canal network was built for the cultivation of rice, fish, soybeans, maize, peanuts, tobacco and melons. The Cai Be area is famous for its coconut palms and fruit orchards (mangoes, longans, bananas and citrus fruits). The drive out of Ho Chi Minh City (about four hours) takes you through miles of flat rice fields, along a road that is always busy with bicycles and people heading to or from the market. A highlight of this trip is a boat ride on the Mekong River to observe the active river life. The Mekong Delta was annexed from the Khmers in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and continues to be influenced by Cambodia. Your boat trip takes you to one of the



islands in the Mekong Delta to see a traditional farmer's home and fruit orchards where you will have the opportunity to sample exotic tropical fruits. Then travel overland from Vinh Long to Can Tho. Can Tho is the capital of Hau Giang province, the economic hub of the Mekong Delta and its most modern city. Can Tho University, founded in 1966, conducts valuable agricultural research that has contributed substantially to improving production and pest control. Visit the Cai Rang Floating Market at the junction of seven canals, where all types of boats and sampans gather, their occupants busily engaged in buying or selling a wide variety of produce. (PRICE: \$173.00)

## **CAT TIEN NATIONAL PARK (THREE DAYS/TWO NIGHTS)**

Cat Tien National Park is located in Dalat, along the Dong Nail River, and contains one of the last evergreen and semi-evergreen forests in southern Viet Nam. Traveling to this region, you will pass through some of the most beautiful scenery in Viet Nam, including Prenn Mountain Pass and Da Tan La Falls. Prenn is the site of the zoo which was once a base camp for hunters of tiger, deer and elephant. Although much wildlife was frightened away or killed during the American war in Viet Nam, some wild game managed to survive in this area. Cat Tien is one of the world's premier sites for biodiversity, with over 1600 species of plants, nearly 400 bird species and 38 documented species of mammals. In addition, this site is also a model for the UNESCO goal of ensuring sustainable economic, cultural and social development of indigenous people. Your guide will provide information on local flora and fauna and conservation issues in Viet Nam. (PRICE: \$173.00)

## **HANOI AND HALONG BAY (THREE DAYS/TWO NIGHTS)**

History has been brutal to Viet Nam, and much of our knowledge of this country comes from images of the Viet Nam War. But a visit to Hanoi today is more likely to evoke an "old-world" image of ambience and tranquility than an image of an 'enemy city'. Hanoi has become one of the most interesting cities in southeast Asia, preserving its past even while reflecting the rapid changes in Viet Nam today. It is arguably the most beautiful capital in Southeast Asia, a city of dignified, somewhat dilapidated charm where French-colonial architecture dominates narrow, tree-shaded streets. The absence of modern buildings and the predominance of bicycle traffic are quite different from Ho Chi Minh City. Your orientation to Ha Noi includes visits to Ho Chi Minh's house, the History Museum and the Temple of Literature. If time permits, visit the Tran Quoc Pagoda, Army Museum and 36 Streets.

The magnificent scenery of Ha Long Bay is considered one of the natural wonders of the world. The bay's tranquil beauty encompasses 1,500-square miles dotted with more than 1,000 limestone islands and islets. Bizarre rock sculptures jut dramatically from the sea, and numerous grottoes have created a picturesque setting. The sails of the junks and sampans gliding on the bay add to the timeless beauty of the scene. A four-hour boat trip on the bay includes stops at some of the grottoes. The most spectacular is Dau Go Cave with its stalactites and stalagmites resembling beasts, birds and human forms. Folk legends associated with various grottoes and information about some of Ha Long Bay's historic battles are part of this learning experience. (PRICE: \$700.00)

### **CAMBODIA: PHNOM PENH & ANGKOR WAT (THREE DAYS/TWO NIGHTS)**

Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia, was once considered the loveliest of the French-built cities of Indochina. Its charm is still in evidence despite the violence and destruction during and immediately following the Viet Nam War. When the Viet Nam War spread to Cambodia, the city's population swelled with refugees, reaching about 2 million in early 1975. The Khmer Rouge took over the city in April 1975 and immediately forced the entire population into the countryside as part of their radical social program. During the next four years, tens of thousands of Cambodians (including the vast majority of the educated people) were killed. On your city orientation of Phnom Penh you will visit the National Museum and Silver Pagoda. Enjoy a sunset cruise on the Mekong River followed by dinner and overnight. The next morning, visit Tuol Sleng (Genocide) Museum and The Killing Fields of Choeng Ek, an extermination camp operated by the Khmer Rouge, where over 17,000 men, women and children were executed between 1975 and 1978. You will fly from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap to visit the famous temples of Angkor, built between 7 and 11 centuries ago at the height of the Khmer civilization. You will visit the most famous temple complex, Angkor Wat. With its soaring towers and extraordinary bas-reliefs, many consider Angkor Wat to be one of the most inspired and spectacular monuments ever conceived by the human mind. It was built by Suryavarman II who reigned from 1112 to 1152 to honor Vishnu and for later use as his funerary temple. In the afternoon, return to Ho Chi Minh City. (PRICE: \$847.00)



### **HANOI AND MAI CHAU VILLAGE (THREE DAYS/TWO NIGHTS)**

Escape to the fascinating village life in the heartland of the north's ethnic minority region. Travel to the mountainous region west of Hanoi with its expanses of rice fields, magnificent mountain vistas, and villages nestled into scenic valleys. The Mai Chau village, where weaving and rice farming are the mainstays of life, provides a warm welcome. Enjoy the unique opportunity of spending the evening in the home of a member of the Black Thai hill tribe. In addition to providing a fascinating look into rural life in Viet Nam, this trip also allows you to explore the capital city of Hanoi. Probable visits include Ho Chi Minh's house, the Army Museum, the Temple of Literature, and Tran Quoc Pagoda. (PRICE: \$550.00)

### **CAMBODIA: TEMPLES OF ANGKOR (THREE DAYS/TWO NIGHTS)**

You will fly directly to Siem Reap to visit the famous temples of Angkor, built between 7 and 11 centuries ago at the height of the Khmer civilization. You will visit the most famous temple complex, Angkor Wat. With its soaring towers and extraordinary bas-reliefs, many consider Angkor Wat to be one of the most inspired and spectacular monuments ever conceived by the human mind. It was built by Suryavarman II (reigned 1112 to 1152) to honor Vishnu and for later use as his funerary temple. Upon arrival in Siem Reap, enjoy an afternoon of exploring the famous temples of Angkor Wat until sunset. The next day you will tour Angkor Thom, the Bayon Temple and Preah Khan. In the afternoon, continue to Ta Phrom Temple followed by sunset at Phnom Bakheng. On your third day, there will be an optional sunrise tour at Angkor Wat. The day's activities will include an early morning boat trip to see floating homes and a market at Tonle Sap with some time on your own before transferring to the airport for your flight back to Ho Chi Minh City. (PRICE: \$710.00)

*From the time this Sample Field Program is posted until the time the Final Field Program is available, a number of changes will occur.*