

HIS 4610: Social Responsibility in Thailand and Malaysia, Spring Break

Course Instructor: Prof. Jim Hoopes

Welcome to our course on “Social Responsibility in Thailand and Malaysia.” Our learning goals will be focused mainly on Global and Multicultural Perspectives and on Ethics and Social Responsibility. These two learning goals are almost synonymous in our course because you will be about ethics and social responsibility in different cultures than your own (unless you happen to be Thai or Malaysian).

We will achieve these learning goals by asking “How do Thais and Malaysians think about Social Responsibility and how do they act in order to achieve it?” By extension we will also be asking what our own countries and we ourselves can learn about social responsibility from Thais and Malaysians.

We will explore “social responsibility” in terms of **character** (the way that social responsibility helps each of us become better people), **duty** (the way it helps us fulfill our moral obligations to other people), and **consequences** (the way it helps improve life for everyone in our community, however large). We will discuss these ideas in more detail, especially during our two pre-departure sessions.

Even if social responsibility were not the subject of our course it would be important for each of us to act responsibly and respectfully toward our Thai and Malaysian hosts at the various companies, universities, and organizations we will visit. It is equally important that we do the same for our fellow participants in this course.

Consideration for others as manifested both directly and indirectly – e.g. polite attention to our speakers, courteousness to each other, making it to the morning bus on time, etc. – will be part of the class participation grade. So will be the intellectual quality of your contributions during pre-departure sessions and during our time in Thailand and Malaysia.

Grade weights will be as follows:

Class participation at first pre-departure = 5%

Class participation at second pre-departure = 5%

First pre-departure teaching session = 5%

Second pre-departure teaching session = 5%

Class participation during the trip = 40%

Final paper = 40%

Grading standards for written work, teaching and participation are:

A Profoundly improves the overall learning experience of the class (or in the case of a written paper, profoundly improves the understanding of the reader – i.e. me your instructor);

A- Greatly improves the overall learning experience of the class;

- B+ Profoundly extends the class analysis or discussion of a particular point;
- B Greatly extends the class analysis or discussion of a particular point;
- B- Significantly extends the class analysis or discussion of a particular point;
- C+ Shows good preparation and understanding, adding color but not really extending the learning of your fellow students;
- C Shows good preparation and understanding, but adding no color and not extending the learning of your fellow students;
- C- Shows preparation and understanding but has errors which reduce its contribution to the learning of your fellow students;
- D+ Shows only minimal preparation and understanding but adds some color;
- D Shows only minimal preparation and understanding;
- D- Shows only minimal preparation and understanding marred by errors;

Except for the teaching sessions, your assignments for pre-departures will be credited, not graded. Responses that show lack of effort will not be credited. On-time submission of assignments will be a factor in your course participation grade. Be sure to save all of the work you do for the pre-departures. They will be part of the raw material for the final paper you will write on the question “The Meaning of ‘Social Responsibility’ in Thailand and Malaysia.”

First pre-departure

– In preparation,

Assignment 1. Read the “Babson Framework for Ethical Decision Making” which I will send to you as an attachment along with the email giving you this syllabus. You do not have to read the whole thing, just the first four pages which explain the ideas of **character**, **duty**, and **consequence**.

Assignment 2: Write a brief essay (maximum 200 words) on where you think the culture of your own country or another country you know well places its strongest ethical emphasis – on character, on duty, or on consequences. Offer some evidence for your opinion either from your personal observations or from the media. Send me (hoopes@babson.edu) your essay by noon on due date. Do not send your essay as an attachment. Just paste it into your message to me.

Assignment 3: Go to Wikipedia.com, look up the word “liturgy” and read the first paragraph of the entry. Then look up “pietism” and read the first paragraph of that entry. Be ready in class to discuss

how these two approaches to religion (which many call a virtue) might also shape different understandings of what it means to cultivate a virtuous character.

Assignment 4: All of you are probably familiar with Porter's Five Forces as a tool for thinking about business strategy. If not, you can easily and quickly inform yourself about it by googling Porter's Five Forces. Now go to the Horn Library site and do a "Power Search" for his article "Strategy and Society: The Link between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility." Skim the article and be sure you would be able in a sentence or two to state exactly what Porter sees as the link between competitive advantage and corporate social responsibility.

Assignment 5: Once your group has read the material you will be teaching, make an appointment to meet with me the week of Feb. 4-8 to discuss the approach you will take. After that meeting your group will prepare Power Point slides which you will use to teach the main ideas in the reading to the rest of the class in 8 to 10 minutes. At our meeting I may assign you additional readings.

Please send me (hoopes@babson.edu) a copy of your slides no later than noon on due date. Your slides should aim at the highest level possible because I will distribute them to all students for whom they will be one of the resources which they use to write their final paper for this course.

Please understand that the Power Point slides you will prepare are not a "presentation." This is a *teaching* assignment. You are welcome to read all of the course materials but you are only required to read the material you are assigned to teach. Other students are not required to read that material. Your teaching may be the only way that many students will learn about the material. You have a responsibility to teach well.

Conversely, when other students are teaching, it is your responsibility to give them your full attention as this will be your main chance to learn about the material.

Class decorum: Please practice the classroom manners which are used by both Thai and Malaysian students.

Thai and Malaysian students customarily do not open their laptops during class. Therefore you should not do so either. In order to get the most from the teaching of your fellow students, you will probably want to take notes. If you do take notes, you're welcome to use pen and paper. If you want to save your notes as a computer file, you can type them in later which is a good exercise for also preserving the main ideas in your mind.

Class decorum continued: Thai and Malaysian students do not take individual breaks on their own. This is considered extremely discourteous. So we will all break together at scheduled times. No one leaves the class except for a genuine emergency.

The teaching groups and assigned materials are as follows:

- Teaching group 1: “The Virtues of the Mind,” Pages 1-18. This reading was sent as an attachment to the same email by which you received this syllabus.
- Teaching group 2: “The Virtues of the Mind,” Pages 18-36. This reading was sent as an attachment to the same email by which you received this syllabus.
- Teaching group 3: Go to Horn Library homepage and do a Power Search for “An Investigation into Aspects of Thai Culture and Its Impact on Thai Students in an International School in Thailand” which is the article you will teach.
- Teaching group 4: “Muhammad on Leadership” from p. 1 thru the first 4 paragraphs on p. 11. This reading was sent as an attachment to the same email by which you received this syllabus.
- Teaching group 5: “Muhammad on Leadership” from the last paragraph on p. 11 thru p. 25. This reading was sent as an attachment to the same email by which you received this syllabus.
- Teaching group 6: Go to Horn Library homepage and do a Power Search for “Perceptions of Business Ethics in a Multicultural Community: The Case of Malaysia” which is the article you will teach.

Suggestion on teaching: We have all seen weak teaching with Power Point slides filled with text. The teacher turns away from the class and reads what’s on the screen or, not much better, uses the text on the screen as a crutch.

The advantage of Power Point is visual. So use images to suggest your ideas. Images will help you remember your ideas without reading from the screen. For example, suppose you are teaching a class about the Buddha. Your images don’t necessarily have to be from the Buddha’s era. They can be modern representations of the ideas you are trying to convey about the Buddha. Here’s an example not discussed in the essay – the Buddha was a vegetarian. If you wanted to explain why he was a vegetarian you could put up a gory picture of a slaughterhouse and emphasize the positive and negatives. A negative would be a violation of his precept that it is wrong to harm living beings. A positive would be that not killing animals promotes the virtue of Metta (loving kindness) in those who show such restraint, and so on. And then you could show an image of loving kindness – a parent hugging a child would be an obvious example but you could probably do something more creative than that.

In short, make the PowerPoint presentations not only informative but visually interesting!

Schedule for 1st Pre departure meeting

- 9:00 We'll start at 9:30 sharp, so come early if you want the bagels and cream cheese, coffee or cider which will be available before class
- 9:30 – 10:10 What we'll do and why – Jim Hoopes
- 10:10 – 10:40 What kind of group do we want to be? Class discussion facilitated by 2 volunteers. If you're willing to do this, please send me an email in advance. I'll put the names in a hat and we'll draw two names at the time.
- 10:50 – 1:00 Teaching groups on the following:
 The origins of Buddhism
 The Buddha as a leader
 Thai culture today
 Siam Hands as a case study
 The origins of Islam
 The leadership of the Prophet Muhammad
 Multicultural business ethics in Malaysia
 Karangkrak as a case study

Schedule for 2nd Pre departure meeting

You should have read the material you will be teaching before we meet to discuss your presentation.

- 9:00 We'll start at 9:30 sharp, so come early if you want some of the bagels and cream cheese, coffee or cider which will be available before class
- 9:30 – 12:00 Teaching Groups, per research assignments
- 12:00 – 1:00 Getting there and staying safe –Glavin Office

SAMPLE Travel Itinerary

Exact times and final details of itinerary will be announced closer to departure. A sample of what the week could look like is below:

Sunday – arrival and welcome by students from Mahidol Univeristy, visit to a roof top farm on a shopping mall, "treasure hunt" in the ancient city of Bangkok, welcome dinner en route to our student operated hotel, the Salaya Pavilion <http://www.salayapavilion.com/websph/>

Monday – Siam Hands, one of the most beautiful factories in the world. We'll have lots of time with the company's inspiring founders, in the evening travel by bus to the Nakhon Sawan branch of Mahidol University where we'll stay in the dorms which are very safe and reasonably comfortable

Tuesday – Work with Mahidol students on a social responsibility project at a nearby "squatter village." I will be at the university the week before planning the project with faculty there

Wednesday – Social activities in the morning with Mahidol students. In the afternoon we'll travel to Kuala Lumpur where we will stay in the DoubleTree Hotel:

<https://doubletree3.hilton.com/en/hotels/malaysia/doubletree-by-hilton-hotel-kuala-lumpur-KULDTDI/index.html>

Thursday morning – We'll join students from Universiti Tun Abdul Razak to visit Karangraf, the largest publisher and multimedia company in Malaysia, famous for its social responsibility programs. We'll meet and have plenty of time with Dato' Hussamuddin, the founder.

Thursday afternoon – We'll visit Nusatek, which provides high level testing and measuring services to Malaysian industry -- <http://www.nusatek.com/>. We'll meet Dato' Mohamed Razali, the CEO, who is well known for his philanthropy.

Friday morning – Frangipani Organic Farm School, one of the most advanced farm schools in the world. We'll meet Anthony Wong, the founder, who has made a career of sustainability and green business, including Malaysia's largest tour company and SE Asia's greenest hotel, the Frangipani, on the resort island of Lankawi.

Friday afternoon – Activities and farewell dinner at UniRazak.

Saturday – free time for shopping and sightseeing. Late afternoon trip to the top of Petronas Twin Towers.

In-flight project.

Well before your flight, order a copy (Kindle or other e-reader is fine) of *Small Is Beautiful* by E. F. Schumacher, available through Amazon

(https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_2?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=small+is+beautiful) or through other sources including our campus store. I will send you a list of questions to answer on the flight. You can work together on these questions, but please email me your individual answers after your arrival in Thailand. Although Schumacher's love of smallness was partly inspired by Buddhism and therefore may seem most applicable to Thailand, please consider how it might also help us understand social responsibility in Malaysia and especially the spirit of *budi* as explained by your peer Teaching Group.

Keep a journal in Thailand and Malaysia.

I suggest that every day you find time to make entries in a journal for every event we experience focused on the question of what you learned during that event about social responsibility in Thailand and Malaysia. In particular, focus in your journal entries on how each event connects to the **character-duty-consequences** model in the Babson Framework for Ethical Decision Making.

Your journal will be a big help to you in writing the final essay (assignment below, at the end of this syllabus). Some of the experiences on our trip may seem so intense that you cannot imagine forgetting them. But a week or two later when you're back at Babson your classes and other activities will seem very intense also. It may be difficult to remember some of the ideas and insights which would make the difference between an acceptable final paper and an excellent one. So keep a journal!

Final Assignment: Write a paper of at least 1200 words in length on the topic of "The Meaning of Social Responsibility in Thailand and Malaysia." Email your final paper as an attachment first week of April.