

Bangkok, Thailand – Thammasat University Exchange 2021-2022 Academic Year Handbook

The Thammasat University Exchange program is offered by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in partnership with International Academic Programs (IAP) and Thammasat University. This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbook(s) or materials you receive from Thammasat University, as well as the General Study Abroad Handbook and MyStudyAbroad account. It is essential to also review the information contained your General Study Abroad Handbook and MyStudyAbroad account.

Questions about your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, etc.) as well as questions relating to your relationship with your host university or academics (e.g. course credit and equivalents, registration deadlines, etc.) should be directed to your Study Abroad Advisor or on-site International Coordinator.

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For additional information, please review [Thammasat University's International Student Handbook](#). Students studying at the Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology should also review [SIIT's Handbook for International Students](#).

Contact Information

On-Site Program Information

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UW-Madison Information

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University of Wisconsin-Madison

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Tel: 608-890-4196

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Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

For Program Advising & Grades:

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For Financial Matters:

Susan Breitbach

IAP Financial Specialist

Tel: 608-890-3360

E-mail: sbreitbach@studyabroad.wisc.edu

Emergency Contact Information

For questions or general concerns that do not involve the immediate danger or threat to the health or safety of a student, call the main IAP number (608) 265-6329 between 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Calls received outside normal operating hours will be returned as soon as possible the next business day.

If an emergency arises after-hours or on weekends, you can reach the IAP Staff On-Call at (608) 516-9440. This number is ONLY for emergencies, otherwise, please call the main desk.

Program Time Frame

Fall semester: Mid-August to mid-December

Spring semester: Early January to mid-May

A detailed schedule with specific dates will be announced in welcome information from Thammasat University. The academic calendar can be found here:

https://oia.tu.ac.th/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=534&Itemid=472.

Orientation

A week before the commencement of the semester an orientation will cover accommodations, services available, description of the city and academic information. You will receive information about this from the exchange coordinator at Thammasat University.

Preparation Before Leaving

Embassy Registration

Participants are encouraged to register for the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (STEP) that is a free service for all U.S. citizens. All program participants who are U.S. citizens can register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other incident. You can register on-line. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country's embassy or consulate.

U.S. Embassy in Thailand
American Citizen Services (ACS)
95 Wireless Road
Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Tel: [66] (2) 205-4049
Email: acsbkk@state.gov
[U.S. Citizen Services](#) Homepage
[U.S. embassy in Thailand website](#)

Immigration Documents

Passport

A passport is needed to travel to Thailand and to obtain your visa. Apply immediately for a passport if you do not already have one. Passport information and application forms can be found on the U.S. State Department website (<http://travel.state.gov/passport>). If you already have your passport, make sure it will be valid for at least 6 months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

Visa

You must receive an acceptance letter from Thammasat University in order to apply for a visa. This letter will be sent to the program's assigned Study Abroad Advisor and they will notify you when it has been received. Once you have picked up your acceptance letter, you will apply for a non-immigrant "ED" visa. This may take a few weeks to complete. The "ED" visa will allow you to stay in Thailand for 90 days. You will have to extend your visa to cover the rest of the semester after your arrival. You will receive information about how to do this during your on-site orientation. If you are planning to travel abroad during

your program, we recommend that you apply for a “multiple entry visa”. Please check the website of the Thai consulate for visa requirements. Students from UW-Madison can apply at the Thai Consulate in Chicago, even if they live out of state.

Students receiving scholarship and financial aid: Letter of scholarship award specifying amount and duration of award, issued by the financial aid office of the student applicant’s home institution. To request this letter, you can call the Office of Student Financial Aid and let them know that you need this for your visa for study abroad. They are typically able to prepare the letter for you with 1-2 business days and have it ready for you to pick up at their office.

Handling Money Abroad

Currency

The official currency of Thailand is the Baht (THB) and Satang (1 Baht = 100 Satang (THB)).

- Satang coins: 25 Satang and 50 Satang (not frequently used)
- Baht coins: 1 Baht, 2 Baht, 5 Baht, and 10 Baht
- Baht banknotes: 20 Baht (green), 50 Baht (blue), 100 Baht (red), 500 Baht (purple) and 1,000 Baht (gray)

Conversion

Check out the latest conversion rates [here](#).

Cash

While supermarkets and larger stores will accept credit cards, you should carry some cash for incidental purchases as well as for bus and train fares. It is possible to convert almost any currency into Baht at the airport when you arrive or take out cash from at ATM. You will generally receive 1000-Baht bills when exchanging money, so be sure to ask for small bills at the airport so you can pay for a taxi without needing too much change. Otherwise, taxi drivers may not have enough change or may take advantage of you and claim they do not have any change. After your initial arrival, try not to carry large amounts of cash at one time. If you must carry a larger amount, you should carry it in several different locations on your person to avoid losing a large amount to petty theft. This is general good practice, regardless of country.

Credit Cards

American Express, Diners, Master Card and VISA, are widely accepted and very useful in Thailand. All department stores, many small shops, and supermarkets accept credit cards. And you can use them to withdraw money from most ATMs. Try to keep your credit card in sight in a shop. If possible, follow the sales person to the register or pay counter. Some unscrupulous vendors may make several copies of credit card slips when you are not paying attention.

ATM/Debit Cards

ATMs dispensing Thai baht are available around Thammasat's campus as well as at most bank locations, airports, and shopping malls in urban centers of Thailand. Thai ATM machines all use the official government exchange rate. Cards issued by U.S. banks and credit unions work at all ATM machines that are operated by a member of the same network as that of the issuing bank or credit union. Check with your bank prior to departure to make sure you will be able to access your funds from abroad with an ATM card and to ask which Thai ATMs and banks are within your bank's network. ATMs outside of your bank's network will charge withdrawal fees, which can add up over time.

Packing

Pack light. Remember that Bangkok is a modern city where you can buy almost anything that you would need. A few exceptions include things where it may be more difficult to find larger sizes, such as shoes and undergarments. Tampons are sold in Thai convenience/grocery stores such as Tesco Lotus, but often in smaller quantities for higher prices, so you may want to pack some. Lotion/aloe and sunscreen in Thailand sometimes have whitening components in them, so you may want to bring your own. Other items to remember are insect repellent with DEET, a journal, malaria pills, and sheets.

Clothing

Due to high temperatures and humidity, you will want to bring lightweight clothes. Jeans will often feel too warm in the Thai climate. Depending on the time of year, you may need slightly warmer clothes for cool nights or travel to the mountainous northern region, but there is no need to bring coats or heavy sweaters. A light jacket, long sleeve shirt, and thin base layer will be enough. Also, textiles are a major industry in Thailand, so purchasing affordable clothes on arrival is also an option. You should plan to bring or purchase an umbrella and possibly a rain jacket if you will be abroad during rainy season (June-October).

Thammasat students tend to dress nicely for school and students are required to wear uniforms. In public, women wear skirts or pants (not shorts!) with casual yet nice shirts; men wear pants or shorts with nicer shirts. Remember that it is disrespectful to show too much skin at school. When visiting temples, visitors are expected to cover shoulders and legs.

Electronics

Power in Thailand runs on 220V (volts), 50Hz (cycles) AC and use both the "europlug" with two round pins and plugs with two flat blades are used. Plugs with a grounding pin or with different-sized blades such as those found in United States are not compatible with sockets in Thailand. If you plan on bringing any appliances from the United States, keep in mind that they will require adapters/converters which you should purchase

before departure. It would also be wise to check to be sure that charging units for electric razors, cell phones, cameras, etc. are compatible with 220V, 50Hz power.

Travel and Arrival Information

Travel and arrival information will be provided in more detail in your Thammasat acceptance packet.

The Academic Program

Thammasat University

Thammasat University is the second oldest university in Thailand and one of Thailand's leading institutions of higher education, with over 18,000 undergraduate and 5,000 graduate students. When it opened in 1934, it was an open institution with a focus on teaching law and politics. Since then, the major fields of study expanded to 4 in 1949 and to 15 today, including Political Science, Economics, Engineering, Medicine, Dentistry, Journalism and Mass Communication, and more. Thammasat was the first university in Thailand to offer classes in the Liberal Arts. The university ended its open status in 1960 and began requiring competitive entrance examinations.

It has four campuses, known as "Centers," two of which (Tha Prachan and Rangsit) are located in Bangkok. A third campus is located in Pattaya, in the eastern region, and a fourth campus recently opened in Lampang, in the northern region.

The original campus, Tha Prachan Center, is located on Rattanakosin, at the heart of the old city. The small riverside campus provides a unique mix of bustling city life and calm riverside getaways. It is walking distance of several cultural centers, government agencies and international organizations, including the Grand Palace, the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, and the National Museum.

Thammasat offers students many great opportunities to get involved in clubs and sports on the Rangsit campus, such as Judo, climbing, soccer, tennis, skate boarding, fencing, kayaking, cooking, Thai boxing, dancing. There is also a "volunteer club" on campus that does community service in surrounding communities. Many of the campus housing facilities also organize outings and social events for their residents. There is a strong focus on sustainability at the university.

The Exchange Program

Services are available to international students from any program through the Office of International Affairs, located at the Dhammanathee building (2 Pra Chan Rd.). The OIA arranges trips for international students, holds dinners, and organizes sporting competitions between the international programs. They can also arrange a Thai buddy if you choose.

The OIA offers the following services:

- General information about international programs offered by the university
- Pre-arrival information, coordination, and visa guidance
- Assistance in arranging housing /accommodation for incoming students
- Orientation and Cultural programs
- Ongoing advisor and academic and intercultural counseling services
- On-campus liaison, when needed, with other university services
- Information on current activity at the university
- General information about cultural events and activities in Bangkok and the surrounding areas
- The OIA also helps students to adjust to their new surroundings once they arrive

For additional information, please review [Thammasat University's International Student Handbook](#).

Students taking classes at Sirindhorn (SIIT) will work with the International Affairs and Corporate Relations Division (IA&CR), located at Room No. 1-208, 2nd floor, SIIT Main Building. Students studying at the Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology should review [SIIT's Handbook for International Students](#).

Course Information

As an exchange student at Thammasat University, you will be taking classes with Thai students and international students. At least 50% of your courses must be taken through one department or college, which are known at Thammasat as “faculties”. There are 26 faculties, which include:

1. Faculty of Law
2. Faculty of Commerce and Accountancy
3. Faculty of Political Science
4. Faculty of Economics
5. Faculty of Social Administration
6. Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology
7. Faculty of Liberal Arts
8. Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication
9. Faculty of Science and Technology
10. Faculty of Engineering
11. Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology
12. Faculty of Architecture and Planning
13. Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts
14. Faculty of Medicine
15. Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

16. Faculty of Dentistry
17. Faculty of Nursing
18. Faculty of Public Health
19. Faculty of Pharmacy
20. Faculty of Learning Sciences and Education
21. Language Institute
22. College of Innovation
23. Pridi Banomyong International College
24. Chulabhorn International College of Medicine
25. School of Global Studies
26. Puey Ungphakorn School of Development Studies

Class Schedules

Most classes are typically held two days a week for an hour and a half, while a few classes are only one day a week for three hours. Classes are offered Monday through Saturday, but the majority of classes are scheduled for Tuesday through Friday. The hour-and-a-half blocks run from 8:00 am continuously through 5:00 pm.

Registration

Students will register for courses after arrival in Bangkok, prior to the first day of classes. Registration must be done in person on a specified date and location. More information on the registration process will be given at the on-site orientation.

Classes Available

Course offerings are in English and vary depending on the semester you are abroad. Thai Studies courses are offered fall semester only. You can access course catalogs for each faculty [here](#).

Classroom Culture

- Class sizes are small with 20-40 students in most courses.
- Use of PowerPoint presentations, overhead projectors, and videos is common.
- Course difficulty and expectations vary from one professor to another, just like at the UW-Madison, so be respectful, communicative, and observant as you adjust to your classes.
- Both students and professors sometimes arrive late to class and classes may not always start exactly at the scheduled time. Even so, you should not assume that you can be late and you should plan to arrive to class on time when the semester begins in order to familiarize yourself with class expectations and norms.
- Students and professors may occasionally answer their cell phones during class.
- Group projects are quite common assignments.

Tutoring and Academic Assistance

Some departments have faculty who offer tutoring sessions two times a semester, right before the mid-term and again before the final exam. Faculty also have six hours per week of office hours so students are encouraged to contact their professor if they need extra assistance in a class. Private tutoring is also available, but it's self-paid and not widely offered in English. For more information about academic assistance, reach out to your professors and international coordinator at Thammasat.

School Uniforms

School uniforms are required at Thammasat University. However, how often and when you have to wear them depends on the faculty teaching your courses. Some faculty require uniforms for all classes, while others require it only for an exam, and some may not require them at all. You should confirm uniform requirements with each faculty.

Female Student

- White button-down shirt with short sleeves, without stripes or prints. Shirt always tucked
- Four silver buttons with university logo. One additional button is to be placed on the collar
- University Pin onto the left chest
- You may also wear the chain-style pin as optional, by inserting through the button hole in the collar
- Navy blue or black skirt
- University belt buckle
- Black plain loafers, shoes or high-heels

Male Student

- Plain white button-down shirt (long or short sleeves), without stripes or prints. The sleeves must be unrolled and shirt always tucked in
- Black or dark-colored trousers without stripes
- University belt buckle
- Black loafers with socks

University uniforms and accessories (university logo buttons, pins, and belt buckles) can be purchased at the Thammasat Book store, located on the 1st floor of the Multipurpose building at Tha Prachan Campus and in the Learning Building 1 (LB1) at Rangsit Center. You can also buy the shirts and bottoms near the University, near Khao San Road for a reasonable price (about \$5).

Although you are not used to wearing school uniforms at UW-Madison, it is beneficial for you to wear them early in the semester in Thailand. You will quickly earn local people's respect and friendship because they will recognize you as a Thammasat student rather than just another tourist.

Limits and Load

UW-Madison students are required to take a minimum of 12 UW-Madison equivalent credits each semester. Your required UW-Madison credit load is 12 to 18 credits per semester, so keep this in mind when you plan your schedule at Thammasat.

Credits

Most credits at Thammasat are equivalent to UW-Madison, so three credits at Thammasat will be equivalent to 3 credits at UW-Madison. There may be exceptions depending on the department in which the course is taken. In general, one class hour per week for a 15-week semester equals approximately one credit. While Thammasat may have a lower minimum credit requirement, as a UW-Madison exchange student, you are required to be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits per semester in order to maintain full-time student status.

Transfer Credits

Thammasat University will send the Study Abroad Office your official transcript; you do not need to order it yourself.

Grade Scale

The grade conversion scale for this program is as follows:

Thammasat University	UW-Madison Equivalent
A	A
B+	AB
B	B
C+	BC
C	C
D+/D	D
F	F

University Facilities

Libraries

Thammasat has 11 libraries on its four campuses, or centers, and Thammasat student ID cards serve as library cards. In addition to checking out books and other library services, student IDs make it possible to consult online database collections through the library website: www.library.tu.ac.th. You can also ask for help from a librarian by emailing tulib@tu.ac.th. You can learn more about the hours and services offered at each library [here](#).

The Tha Prachan campus's main library, Pridi Banomyong Library, is located on three floors below the riverside courtyard. Amongst thousands of books in Thai, there is a collection of books written in English. Although the collection is relatively small, it is sufficient for papers and group projects you will do for class.

Be sure to dress respectfully when you go to the library; you will be denied entrance if you wear shorts or a tank top. Backpacks are not allowed in the library. Lockers are available to rent with your student ID. You also need your student ID to enter the library and check out books. You will get a student ID from the BE International Office, but it may take a while to get.

University Bookstore

The University Bookstore is located near the Tha Prachan gate. You can buy your textbooks for class, as well as notebooks, pens, binders, and other office supplies at the bookstore. The uniform, badges, buttons and belt buckles required for your school uniform and other university merchandise can also be purchased here.

Cafeteria

The cafeteria is open-air and located along the riverbank. Food there is quite good and very affordable. A plate of food costs on average 20 Baht. There are vegetarian and halal options in the cafeteria as well. Private food stalls can be found on and very near campus; several good restaurants are also nearby.

Recreational Facilities

Thammasat University's extensive sports facilities includes its main multi-purpose stadium, an Aquatic Center, tennis courts, various sports fields, and several gymnasiums, which were all originally built to host the 1998 Asian Games. Some may charge a fee but provide a student rate. You should bring your student ID card with you to any facility. For more information, visit the [Sports and Recreation](#) webpage.

Transportation

Although traffic in Bangkok is heavy, getting around the city is not difficult. There are several different modes of public transportation that will get you wherever you need to go, which include buses, taxis, river taxis, and the metro.

Shuttle Service

Tha Prachan campus

There is a shuttle (white vans) operated between Tha Prachan to Rangsit center. It costs 40 Baht (one way) and leaves every 10-30 minutes. It takes ~45 minutes to travel between campuses, but this may vary due to traffic conditions. During the university's break, the service still available but less frequency. The mini-bus station is near Velodome next to the front gate opposite Sanam Luang Field.

Rangsit campus

A shuttle is freely available around the campus for all students and leaves from the Office of the Rector building to the following locations:

- Thammasat Tha Prachan (40 baht)
- Future Park Department Store (32 baht)
- Victory Monument, downtown (32 baht)
- Mo-chit BTS station (32 baht)

For more detailed information, please review the campus transportation section of [Thammasat University's International Student Handbook](#). Students studying at the Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology should also review the on-campus transportation section of [SIIT's Handbook for International Students](#).

Living Abroad

Thailand

Thailand sits in the heart of mainland Southeast Asia, surrounded by Myanmar to the west, Laos to the North/Northeast, Cambodia to the Southeast, and Malaysia to the South. Thailand's population is about 65.5 million people. Thailand has four distinct regions: the mountainous North, the dry, poor Northeast, the fertile Central Plains, and the limestone-encrusted rainforest-covered tropical South. Thailand is hot and humid year-round. Tropical monsoons dictate three seasons throughout the year: hot (March-May), rainy (June-October), and cool (November-February). Average temperatures, depending on the region and time of year, range from 75-95 degrees Fahrenheit. Very little rain falls during the hot and cool seasons.

Thailand has been run under a constitutional monarchy since 1932. The government is controlled by the nationally-elected House of Representatives and prime minister. The King appoints all judges who sit on the Supreme Court, acts as a figurehead for the nation, and is revered by Thailand's citizens. Be aware that making a critical or defamatory comment about the royal family is punishable by a prison sentence of up to 15 years per offense. This is called *Lese majeste*.

About half of Thailand's labor force is in the agricultural sector, while the same sector contributes less than 10% of the nation's GDP. Tourism has been a growing industry since the late 1980s and has been a significant contributor to the nation's economic growth. Three-fourths of Thailand's population is ethnically Thai, while about 14% are Chinese. The national language is Thai and English is a very common second language, especially among the elite.

Food is a significant part of Thai culture and is renowned for its combinations of flavors, particularly spicy, sweet and sour. Tropical fruits are abundant and flavorful. Familiar fruits, such as pineapple, bananas, melons and oranges, as well as unfamiliar fruits, such as *lomyay*, *monkut*, lychee, rambutan and more, are popular throughout the country.

Meals in Thailand are leisurely and social and can last about 2 hours. It is common for groups of students to go out to dinner together after classes. The “Thai style” of going out to dinner is ordering many plates of all different dishes and sharing with everyone at the table. You eat with a spoon in your right hand and fork in your left, and use the fork to push food onto your spoon. Except in nice restaurants, it is not part of Thai culture to tip.

The *wai* is a greeting as well as a gesture of respect. Respecting one’s elders is very important in Thai society, and greeting them with a *wai* is a way to show respect. To *wai*, you place your hands together - women, in front of your chest, men in front of your chin - and bow your head a little bit. You should *wai* to your professors when you see them, as well as any other people who are older or of higher status than you.

Over 95% of the population in Thailand practices Theravada Buddhism. Almost 4% of the population, primarily in the southern peninsula, are Muslim, and less than 1% of the population practices Christianity. Buddhism is an integral part of daily life. It is very common to see people give offerings of food, flowers, or water to monks in the mornings. This is a common Buddhist practice to “make merit.”

Socially, Thai men are expected to become a monk for some period during their lifetime. Males of any age can become a monk; even young boys can enter the monkhood as novices. Monks live and study in the temple complexes and live by very strict rules - there are 227 monastic rules that dictate how a monk can live his life. For example, monks can only eat twice a day and both meals must be eaten before noon. They can only eat the food that is offered to them in their bowl.

Note for women travelers: Monks are not allowed to touch women, so be aware of who you are passing in crowded places.

No alcohol is allowed on any university campuses in Thailand – it’s a national law.

For additional information on culture, please review [Thammasat University’s International Student Handbook](#). Students studying at the Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology should also review [SIIT’s Handbook for International Students](#).

Bangkok

The city of Bangkok is the capital, largest urban area, and primary city of Thailand.

In the span of over two hundred years, Bangkok has grown to become the political, social and economic center of not only Thailand but for Indochina and South East Asia. Its influence in the arts, politics, fashion, education and entertainment as well as being a business, financial and cultural center of Asia has given Bangkok the status of a global city.

Bangkok has a variety of cultural performances and activities for the enjoyment of both tourists and locals alike. In your free time, attend a Thai puppet show or dance performance to learn traditional stories and see traditional dress, take a ride down the Chao Phraya River and connecting canals to view local river life, or visit one of the hundreds of Buddhist temples to learn more about Buddhism and observe religious traditions.

In Bangkok, food from street vendors is delicious, affordable, and readily available at any time of the day. Many apartments do not even have a kitchen for this reason – since Thai food requires so many ingredients, it can be economical to buy it from food vendors. The Thai government has strict regulations that street vendors must follow, so buying food off the street is generally safe. Of course you must pay attention to and avoid meat that may have been in the heat too long, is undercooked, or otherwise looks unsafe.

There are plentiful options for shopping, including shopping centers, department stores, markets, or vendors along the street - Thailand has it all and it is often inexpensive. Thai boxing is a very popular sport in Thailand, to watch as well as participate in. Audiences are very lively because gambling at boxing matches is common. Although for many Thais it is too hot to participate in outdoor sports, many people enjoy playing soccer, basketball or tennis.

Sanam luang, or the “Royal Garden,” is a large open field near Thammasat. Vendors sell kites and people of all ages go there to fly kites in the afternoons and evenings. There is also a large park in downtown Bangkok, where you can find people exercising, reading, studying or hanging out.

Housing

You will receive housing information from your program coordinator prior to arrival. You have the option of applying to live in a dormitory on either the Tha Prachan or the Rangsit center. If you are interested in that option, you must submit a housing application early, along with your application for the program. Not all students will receive dormitory housing.

Students not assigned a dormitory or not interested in applying are responsible for finding their own off-campus housing. Thammasat staff recommend arriving in Bangkok a few days early and staying in a nearby hotel or hostel while searching for housing. There

are many options that are available to and appropriate for students. Every semester, before the start of the semester, the Thammasat program coordinator will arrange a Housing Tour for students to go to check out the selected apartments in the area. You can also ask your Thai Buddy if they can help you with the housing process.

For additional information on housing, please visit [Thammasat University's International Student Handbook](#). Students studying at the Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology should also review [SIIT's Handbook for International Students](#).

Safety

Civil Unrest and “Lèse majesté”

Criticizing or insulting the monarchy is a crime under Article 112 of Thailand's criminal code, known commonly as the “lèse majesté” law and punishable by up to 15 years in prison. In 2020, Thailand experienced growing youth demonstrations and civil unrest in protest against the Thai monarchy and in defiance of “lèse majesté”. Students are encouraged to avoid demonstrations and be cautious with public criticism of the Thai monarchy.

Safety in Transportation

Bangkok is a very populated city and therefore has many forms of transportation which lead to crowded roads. In Thailand, one drives on the left side of the road, so be sure to check both directions, particularly the left, when crossing the street. Motorcycle taxis are common in Bangkok, but can easily prove fatal in an accident, so students are cautioned against using them.

When taking a taxi, be sure it is a metered taxi. Some taxi drivers require that you bargain with them, and will charge you expensive flat rates. Be sure that the driver turns the meter on, and if he/she does not, get out of the taxi.

Health Insurance

All students will receive health insurance coverage through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI). The cost of the insurance coverage is included in program fees. Please refer to your My Study Abroad account “Health and Insurance” tab or visit <https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/health-safety/cisi-insurance/> and www.culturalinsurance.com for more information.

Health Infirmaries

Students at both Tha Prachan and Rangsit Centers have access to the university infirmaries, which provide free-of-charge basic healthcare. Health Center offers first-aid, initial diagnosis and medical aid. Any students who needs hospital attention will be transferred to the Thammasat University Hospital at Rangsit Center or to the Siriraj

Hospital near the Tha Prachan, or provided with guidance about finding another international hospital.

The Health Infirmary at Tha Prachan is located on the first floor of the Student Activities Center. For medical advice or to make an appointment, please contact: 02 613 3961. Hours: Mon-Fri 8.30 a.m.- 4.30 p.m.

Rangsit Center has two Health Infirmaries:

- 1st Floor, Office of the Rector building. For medical advice or to make an appointment, please contact 02 564 4440-59 ext. 1274, 1275, 1999. Hours: Mon-Fri 8.30 a.m.- 4.30 p.m.
- Room 1063, 1st Floor, Social sciences (SC) building. For medical advice or to make an appointment, please contact 02 696 6600-2. Hours: 9.00 a.m.- 4.00 p.m.

Communication

Calling internationally can be unreliable and expensive. Skype, Google Hangouts/Duo, Whatsapp, and other apps and online software are generally the best communication option when internet connections are available, strong, and secure.

When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences (www.timeanddate.com/worldclock).

To call *from* an international country to the United States:

1. Dial the country *exit* code for the country you are in. Oftentimes this is "00."
2. Dial the country *access* code for the country you want to reach. For the United States it is "+1" or "011."
3. Follow with the area code and the local number as normal.
4. Thailand's exit code is "001." To call to the U.S. from Thailand, the following format would be used:
 - a. 001-1-XXX-XXX-XXXX

To call *from* the United States to an International country:

1. Dial the United States' exit code "011," the country code for the country you want to reach, the area/city code, and the phone number
2. *Example:* Brazil has country code "55", Rio de Janeiro has city code "21". To call Brazil from the U.S., the following format would be used:
 - a. 011-55-21-XXX-XXXX
3. Note: some countries employ varying numbers of digits for area/city codes and for telephone numbers. Don't be surprised if the number you are trying to call has more or less than the standard "three plus seven"
4. The international code for Thailand is +66

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION/WEBSITES OF INTEREST

UW Madison International Travel:
<http://internationaltravel.wisc.edu/>

UW-Madison International Academic Programs
<http://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu>

U.S. State Department:
<http://travel.state.gov>

Center for Disease Control
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

Current exchange rates
<http://www.oanda.com>

Lonely Planet
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com>

Diversity Climate In-Country

Thai society is well-known for its hospitality and helpfulness towards foreigners, but students should be aware that some people may be very direct with their language and actions. You may encounter assumptions or stereotypes of American students, which is a common experience regardless of where you study abroad. However, this mostly stems from curiosity and misconceptions, and in general, you will be treated with great courtesy and friendliness.

Bangkok is a major tourist destination, thus a diverse array of people, activities and organizations exist within the city, even if it may take a little research to find what one is looking for.

Racial/Ethnic Minorities

As in most of the world, including the U.S., some race-based prejudice exists in Thailand and offensive stereotypes of certain ethnicities may be heard or seen. One example is that students of color may not initially be perceived to be U.S. American, but rather strictly African, Asian or Hispanic by some individuals. Increased visibility may inspire curiosity and blunt questioning, but in most cases this is not intended to be harmful.

Students may also have difficulty finding beauty products they use in the U.S. and it is not uncommon in Thailand for facial creams contain skin lighteners.

Sexual Orientation

Thailand touts itself as a welcoming place for LGBTQ students, and there are many events, venues and establishments for LGBTQ individuals, especially in Bangkok. However, homophobia and discrimination does still exist, and students may want to practice discretion when disclosing their sexual orientation in public and among peers.

Disabilities

Students with physical disabilities may find streets and sidewalks in Thailand very difficult to traverse due to uneven paving, lack of audio signals at crosswalks, and busy intersections. Many public facilities and transportation also lack accessible accommodations, and though the Bangkok underground (Metro) is one exception (it has elevators and wheelchair locks), it is not perfect. Planning an itinerary ahead of time as best as possible may be helpful, and courteous Thai locals will often readily provide one with assistance, usually without being asked.

Religion

While the majority of Thailand's population is Buddhist, individuals are generally tolerant and respectful of other religions. Some clashes have occurred in parts of southern Thailand that are majority Muslim, but this is not reflective of the country as a whole. Many Muslims practice and live safely and comfortably in all parts of Thailand. Information about the Jewish community in Thailand as well as places of worship and kosher food availability can be found [here](#).

Women Travelers

Women can generally expect to be treated with respect, but should take [safety precautions](#) just as they would in the United States or traveling anywhere else.

The issue of "consent" has gained increasing attention in recent years and Thammasat University has become [the first Asian university to partner with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women](#) to create a Committee on Ending Sexual Harassment on Campus and Promoting Gender Diversity.

Past Participant Comments

Financial

"Thailand is incredibly affordable on almost all fronts. As long as you don't need Western amenities you won't have to worry about carefully budgeting."

"Affordable study abroad experience that allows you to experience a beautiful and kindhearted culture. Also, makes it incredibly easy to travel throughout Asia while studying."

Health and Safety

“Additionally, if you use tampons, I would recommend buying enough for the whole duration as they were only sold in packs of 8 in Thailand and were very difficult to find.”

“Sunscreen can be super expensive in Asia, so try and bring a decent amount. Same goes with Bug repellent”

“Thailand was super safe.”

“I appreciated the safety information as well as the task that I had to complete before I left. Even though at the time it seemed like a waste of time it was helpful to know for emergency situations and thinking of ways to navigate a new country.”

Additional

“A very, very good buddy system. I had two that helped me out with so many different things. The Thai students were very welcoming.”

“The international staff at SIIT (the department of Thammasat I was studying in) were great. Very helpful, responsive and just generally on top of their work.”

“Most exchange students are on the downtown campus...Being on the Rangsit campus was awesome, it was much cheaper and there were less westerners so I [was able to] branch out and meet more Thai friends.”

“[At the Rangsit campus] Keystone and Dcondo apartments are both very nice.”

“I took a housing tour after I arrived. I stayed in a hotel and signed a lease with a popular apartment with exchange students a couple days later. The apartment, Amarin Mansion, was very accommodating to exchange student and helped with immediate moving in and out. A slight rip off. Example, they charged \$60 for a cleaning charge taken out of the security deposit, an unnecessary amount in my opinion.”

“Don't want to return I had such a great time. Career-wise it was great to understand a new culture and their values as well as how far American Western experience goes.”

“Granted there is a large tourism industry, but where I lived I was on of the few non-Asian people around. It was well worth it to have a taste of what it is like to be in the minority ethnically.”

“Tesco sells gas hot plates for around \$20, could be a decent investment early in the semester as the majority of apartments in Thailand do not have kitchens (unless its a family setting) due to food being available pretty much everywhere (and cheap!)”

“Rely on your Thai buddy and become good friends with them. [At the Rangsit campus]
Almost everything will be a little different so keep trying things and don't feel defeated if
it takes a few attempts to really figure things out.”