



## **15 CREDIT SEMESTER SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM IN CAMBODIA**

The Role of Civil Society and Buddhism in Post-Conflict Cambodia  
FALL & SPRING

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Providing an insider's look into social development in Cambodia addressing the effects of the Khmer Rouge atrocities, this 15 credit semester course allows students to examine the role that civil society and Buddhism play in rebuilding Cambodian society. Incorporating an academic and field component, the program is an expansion of Global Service Corps' (GSC) community development work in Cambodia and is built on GSC's successful service-learning study abroad programs formerly in Tanzania. Since 2001, GSC has provided academic credit to undergraduate and graduate students through our partnership with the University at Albany, SUNY (UAlbany). Students who successfully complete the program will receive a total of 15 credits from UAlbany.

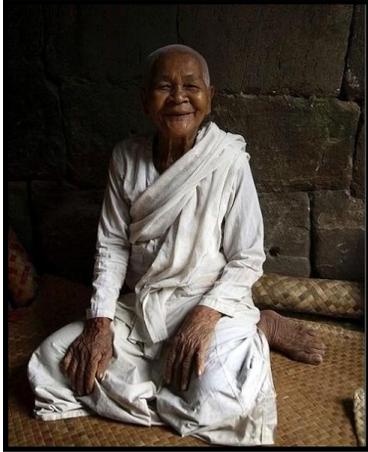
GSC's 16-week service-learning program includes two weeks of orientation and classroom training at Pāññāsastra University of Cambodia (PUC), 12 weeks of field work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in development work, a weekend in Siem Reap, a one-week semester break and a concluding week concentrating on final academic work. Students will participate in an initial two weeks of orientation and academic training and then take their classroom lessons learned into the field to assist NGOs during the following 12 weeks. During the final capstone week students will integrate their course work and field experiences, working on required academic work including capstone projects and possible project presentations.

Students will be provided suggested reading material and purchase required reading material for an academic grounding in the areas of social, cultural, and community development in Cambodia; Buddhism and meditation; service-learning theory; and Cambodian culture and history. Class lectures, discussions, and group activities will be balanced by class outings and field work to provide students with a well-rounded understanding of these subject areas. Basic, conversational Khmer lessons will also be included during orientation. In addition to required academic work, all students will be required to submit bi-weekly blog posts that will be reviewed by the Course Instructor and the UAlbany during the fifteen week period.

### **ACADEMIC AND FIELD COMPONENTS**

Academic classes will be provided by an on-site or by remote presentations by instructors from the US as well as by Cambodian guest lecturers and academics. Dr. Annette Richie, Professor of Anthropology at UAlbany will provide the overall academic supervision of the semester course.

## Weeks 1 through 2: The Role of Civil Society and Buddhism in Cambodia (3 Credits)



### Schedule:

Students will spend approximately 8 hours per day participating in orientation, attending class lectures, engaging in discussions and group work, and joining class outings

### Subjects and Activities:

- Introductions and Overview of Program
- Khmer Language Training
- Cambodian Culture and History
- Service Learning Theory
- Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation
- Social Development in Post-Conflict Societies

Academic coursework will review key social sectors included in the National Strategic Development Plan for Cambodia with a focus on the needs of poor and less developed communities to promote inclusive development. Students will consider the unique challenges faced by post-conflict societies, including peace-building and reconciliation, interpersonal violence, and vulnerable youth. Students will also analyze models of social and community development from Cambodia and other countries and the unique role of Cambodian Buddhism in social development.

## Weeks 3 through 15: GSC Service Learning and Field Work (9 Credits)

### Schedule:

Students will spend their days working with an NGO involved in development work in Cambodia. Placements and projects will vary based on the needs of the local community at that time. During a weekend excursion, participants will visit UNESCO World Heritage Site, Angkor Wat, as well as other historical sites in Siem Reap. A one-week semester break will occur during the middle of the field placement.

During the 12 weeks of field work, students will gain hands-on development experience working with NGOs in and around Phnom Penh. Based on the background of the volunteer and the needs of the community, placements may be in the fields of community development and youth leadership emotional intelligence (EQ) training, global public health, conversational English education, or childcare and social work.



Activities will vary at each NGO and may include project support, literature development, grant writing, administrative assistance, and educational workshop development and facilitation.

## Weeks 16: Capstone Buddhist Monastery Immersion (3 Credits)

### Schedule:

Students will spend their final week at one of the most significant wats (monastery) in Cambodia. While in this contemplative and quiet setting they will spend approximately 8 hours per day working on their academic requirements and preparing their capstone papers and/or presentations. While staying at the wat students will have the opportunity to experience

Cambodian Buddhist monastery culture with opportunities to engage in meditation, chanting, alms giving, and other rituals at the wat. They may also have the opportunity to teach beginning English at a local school supported by the wat.

**Possible Subjects and Activities:**

- Review and Application of Community Development Theory
- Program Design, Evaluation, and Assessment
- Grant Writing
- Group Project Work
- Presentation Techniques and Skills
- Final Group Presentations
- Course Evaluation

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

Program participants will stay in a centrally located hotel, homestay or apartment while in Phnom Penh, and in a local guesthouse when in the field. Rooms are shared and have private bathrooms. Laundry services, breakfast, and in most settings internet are also included.

**PROGRAM FEE:** \$12,000 estimated

**Included:**

- Fifteen credits from SUNY Albany
- All in-country student expenses: Airport pick-up/return and project transportation; all accommodations; all meals; language and cultural orientation and training; project administration; Siem Reap weekend trip

**Not included:**

- Airfare, travel insurance, visa, and background checks; required or optional reading material

**TO APPLY (Please Note: Students will have to apply through both GSC and SUNY)**

- To apply through GSC go to [www.globalservicecorps.org/site/apply/](http://www.globalservicecorps.org/site/apply/)
- To apply through SUNY go to [www.albany.edu/studyabroad/](http://www.albany.edu/studyabroad/)

For answers to commonly asked questions, visit <http://www.globalservicecorps.org/site/cambodia-faqs/>

For further information about this program contact [Cambodia@globalservicecorps.org](mailto:Cambodia@globalservicecorps.org)

