



Community-Based Program

Background Information

Institution: Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute

Program address: 207 Ingraham Hall, University of Wisconsin, 1155 Observatory Rd.,
Madison, WI 53706

Telephone: (608) 263-1755

Web address: <http://www.seasia.wisc.edu>

Contact person

Name: Mary Jo Wilson (Studenberg)

Title: Director

Email: seassi@intl-institute.wisc.edu

Languages/dialects taught: Hmong, Lao, Vietnamese, Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian,
Javanese, Khmer, and Thai

Grades taught: 1st - 3rd years at the university level

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: The purpose of the program is to offer an intensive summer study of the national languages of Southeast Asia with small individualized group instruction by a team consisting of a coordinator and several native speakers.

Type of program: Intensive 8-week summer study (equivalent to a full year)

Program origin: The program has been running since 1983 and began to be hosted by the University of Wisconsin, Madison from 1994-1995, and then since 2000. This coming summer will be the 25th Anniversary of SEASSI.

Staff

Instructors' and administration's expectations for the program: Instructors want to train undergraduate students, graduate students, and professionals in the national languages of Southeast Asia.

Students

Students: 150-170 students

How the program identifies heritage speakers: Self-identification is used for entry into the program, and a placement test is administered to determine the appropriate level.

Possible reasons for student withdrawal: The completion rate is over 95%, and very few students decide to withdraw.

Students' expectations of the program: Students hope to find out more about their own identity, a trend most noticed with the undergraduate students.

Instructors

Number of instructors in the program: 26 instructors

Languages in which instructors are proficient: Hmong, Lao, Vietnamese, Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian, Javanese, Khmer, and Thai

Proficiency level: All instructors are native or near-native speakers.

Credentials: MA or PhD; minimum qualification is native or near-native speaker plus 2 years experience in teaching at the college level.

Professional development opportunities instructors have: Instructors receive training through COTSEAL (Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages).

Professional development opportunities instructors need: Instructors need more training and development of materials.

Instruction

Total contact hours per week: 4.5 hours per day for 8 weeks

Language skills

Skills developed by the program: Speaking, comprehension, reading, and writing

Culture

Aspects of culture taught: Religion, politics, traditional food, family, film, and the arts

Additional comments: Once a week 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students gather together for cultural activities.

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program: The program's strategy is standard communicative competence.

Materials

Technology used for instruction: Use of technology depends on the coordinator.

Additional comments: Instructors participate in a one-week teacher training session to prepare and review agendas. Each language has a coordinator, who is responsible for supervising the sessions.

Assessment

Assessments used to evaluate students' progress: Students are assessed at the end of the program.

Articulation

Opportunities for using the heritage language and developing cultural knowledge outside the program: Concurrent Southeast Asian area studies focused on film, music, environment policy, etc.

What the program has in place

Financial support the program receives: Funds are received from 12 contributing schools for administration. Another 8 schools take their grants for less commonly taught languages and forward summer allocation to SEASSI. 50% of funding is student tuition.

Other support the program receives: Private foundation money and scholarships awarded for heritage students

How students graduate and/or how they receive credit: All students receive full credit for taking the summer course.

Program research or evaluation: The program has been evaluated in the past.

Special challenges

Challenges the program has experienced: Challenges to the program include keeping costs low enough for students while at the same time maintaining the advertising budget. There has been difficulty in reaching Southeast Asian American college students and local community schools. Finding funding for undergraduates is also a challenge.