

ECET 399

Malaysian Culture and Society

Course Description

The course is only available as part of overseas experience to Malaysia and involves complete submersion into Malaysian society. During the course students will be required to share an apartment with students from Malaysia and interact on a daily basis. This course examines the Malaysian culture and society. The course covers the major ethnic groups in Malaysia including the Malays, Chinese and Indian subcultures and how they interact. The major religions are also discussed in detail including Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism.

Course Requirements

The students are required to submit three weekly (while in Malaysia) reports on their experiences, along with maintain a daily journal to be submitted at the end of the course, write a final report on their experience including a reflection on how their views regarding Malaysia changed during the course of their visit, and give a final oral presentation upon their return. Each of the weekly papers should be about three pages, and the final report should be no less than twenty pages.

Instructor

Iskandar Hack

Professor Hack has lived in Malaysia for three years and has visited Malaysia about 25 times since his time working there. He is married to a Malaysian and is very knowledgeable about Malaysian society and culture. He has been involved in a number of projects with University of Kuala Lumpur, University Technology Malaysia and University Tenanga.

Course Outline

Week One

Attend three orientation sessions which include a one hour video on Malaysia, and two 90 minute sessions introducing Malaysian Culture and customs. These sessions are designed to make the transition to living in Malaysia smooth.

Week Two

Transport to Malaysia and attend another orientation from the staff at UniKL.

First weekend – attend traditional dance and welcoming performance put on by Tourism Board of Malaysia. This meeting is about two hours long and orientates the students to the different states of Malaysia and a very short introduction to each of the major subcultures. Also during the first Saturday the students are given a tour of the Kuala Lumpur area. The second day of the weekend the students

are required to attend a field trip to the historical city of Melaka. During their time in Melaka they will visit a number of historical sites including the following:

- Fort A Famosa
- St. John's Fort
- St. Peter's Church
- St. Paul's Church
- Christ Church
- Francis Xavier Church
- Stadhuys Building
- Portuguese Square

On the Wednesday of the second week the students are required to visit a number of other campuses in the UniKL system and learn the types of programs being taught at these campuses. Along with the trip to the other campuses the students will visit Putra Jaya, the seat of government in Malaysia, along with the Mosque at Putra Jaya.

Third Week

During the second week the students will travel to the State of Johor and visit one of the islands. This particular experience is a combination of fun and learning. On Thursday night the student will travel to the town of Mersing on the east coast and spend the night. They will have an opportunity to see a more rural part of Malaysia during this trip and eat at a number of local food stalls. On Friday they will take a ferry to the island of Tioman and spend the day visiting the island. On Saturday they will be able to go out for a snorkeling trip off the coast of Tioman. On Sunday they will return back to Kuala Lumpur. After class on Tuesday the student will take the overnight train to Singapore and spend the day on Wednesday visiting the Island State of Singapore. The sights visited during the trip to Singapore will include Arab Street, Malay Village, Chinatown and Orchard Road. They will take the overnight train back to Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday, and start classes again on Wednesday afternoon.

Four Week

On Saturday morning the students will visit the PETRONAS Towers, the world's tallest twin towers. In the afternoon they will attend a traditional Malay wedding. On Saturday evening they will attend a performance (in Malay) at the Malaysian Art Museum. On Sunday morning they will visit the Hindu shrine at Batu Caves, and will be able to explore Kuala Lumpur on their own in the afternoon. On Wednesday morning the students will travel by bus to the city of Penang where they will first visit an Integrated Circuits manufacturing plant. After which they will be taken to Kek Lok Si Temple, one of the

finest Buddhist temples in South East Asia and the biggest Buddhist temple in Malaysia. At the end of the fourth week they will return to the US.

Fifth and Sixth Week

The students will submit their final report, journals and give their formal oral presentation from the course for final grading.