



INTERNATIONAL WEEK BANGKOK

SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

FEBRUARY 11 – 16, 2024



INTERNATIONAL WEEK BANGKOK MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Mahidol University International College (MUIC) in collaboration with the Lucerne University of Sciences and Arts - School of Business - Institute of Management and Regional Economics, offers an exciting one-week program within the economic and political context of the vibrant Southeast-Asian economies. MUIC is ranked number one on the Financial Times Ranking of Thai universities and is one of the most recognized universities in Southeast Asia. International faculty members at Mahidol University offer lectures and workshops on the topics of sustainable business, management and leadership in South-East Asia and inform about economical patterns and paths of development in Asia. The lectures are supplemented by visits to companies and prestigious institutions such as the United Nations Organisation in Bangkok (UNESCAP).

The week includes a reception at the residence of the Swiss Embassy in Bangkok. The company visits will mainly take place in Bangkok, the economic power-heart within the so-called "Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC)" of the Chinese "One-Belt Initiative" – and in the province of Nakhonpathom.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The International Week Bangkok is an annual event that focuses on examining the various aspects of International & Intercultural management, Sustainability and Innovation in Southeast Asian region. Specifically, the seminar aims to allow participants to share ideas and perspectives with some of Thailand's academic and business experts.

The seminars for the week feature presentations, discussions, and activities around several themes including: Southeast Asia and Thailand's economic development: Business Environment in Thailand. Dimensions of sustainability: Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Work Employment in Asia. Intercultural differences impact on Asian vs. Western innovation: Managing diversity and inclusion in times of change (to be changed without further notice).

Classroom sessions are also supplemented by visits to some of Thailand's leading telecommunication company (AIS) as well as multinational companies doing business in the Thai and abroad. The companies and institutions of the site visits may change from year to year depending on availability and on the management's invitations. The seminar details will be published approximately two to three weeks before the seminar starts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the program participants will be able to

- Outline Thailand's business context in the context of the Southeast Asian economies,
- Differentiate international business perspectives,
- Demonstrate cultural awareness,
- Develop cross-cultural business competences, and
- Improve management capabilities with regards to internationalization.

CREDITS

Seminar participants will earn MUIC / ECTS credits after the successful completion of the week and assignments, issued by the participant's institution.

ABOUT THAILAND, BANGKOK AND MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

The Kingdom of Thailand is a country at the centre of the Southeast-Asian Indochinese Peninsula composed of 76 provinces. At 513,120 km² and more than 68 million people, Thailand is the world's 50th-largest country by total area and the 22nd-most-populous country. It is one of the few countries in the region that has been never colonized and is a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Thailand is an emerging economy and is considered a newly industrialised country. The country has the 2nd largest economy in Southeast Asia after Indonesia and is, in accordance with WEF standards, an "efficiency driven economy".

Bangkok is the capital and most populous city of Thailand. It is known in Thai as Krung Thep, the city of angels. The city occupies 1,568.7 km² close to the Chao Phraya River delta in central Thailand, and has a population of over eight million, or 12.6 percent of the country's population. Over fourteen million people (22.2 percent) live within the surrounding greater Bangkok metropolitan region.

Mahidol University (MU), an autonomous research institution in Thailand, had its origin in the establishment of Siriraj Hospital in 1888. Mahidol University International College (MUIC) is Thailand's first public international college. It is part of Mahidol University and is located on the university's Salaya Campus in Nakhonpathom Province (25 km away from Bangkok). As an institution of higher learning founded more than three decades ago, Mahidol University International College is recognized as the leading international college in a public university in Thailand, noted for its liberal education and diverse and international environment. As Thailand's number 1 ranked university, MUIC is dedicated to inspire innovation, foster human potential, and create new knowledge through the integration of arts and sciences in an international environment, ultimately resulting in education, research, and services to serve the needs of society and benefit humankind.

MUIC's truly international environment welcomes students from all over the world. With 40 nationalities represented among our faculty members, and staff, together with over 500 fulltime and exchange students, and a network of 115 partner universities from all over the globe, MUIC truly offers students a chance of a lifetime to learn and be exposed to cultures, philosophy and way of life that is truly global. Accreditation is very important for an international institution and MUIC holds several quality labels and accreditations. In 2019, for example, the Business Administration Division was awarded the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

PRE-PLANNING

The program itself takes place from Monday to Friday afternoon. There is a welcome dinner on the Sunday evening where you will receive information helpful for you to start the study week. It is recommended that you arrive prior to Sunday afternoon. For the welcome dinner you will be picked up in your hotel. If you would like to explore Bangkok or other regions of Thailand, think about adding another few days after or before the study week takes place. During the 5 days of the study week you won't have much time to explore the area on your own.

You are not expected to bring a notebook / computer to Thailand. Be aware, the hotel reservation will be made by MUIC. All participants need to agree with the hotel organized by MUIC. Participants cannot book the accommodations on their own, also not for the same hotel. Lectures and workshops will at least partly take place in a hotel's seminar room arranged by MUIC.

YOUR FLIGHT

Book your flight yourself. Make sure that you arrive in time, taking the time difference into account (Thailand is 6 hours ahead of Swiss winter time). For your flight back have in mind the program and traveling time to the airport.

Even so you are supposed to book your flight for yourself and your convenience, the hotel booking will be arranged by MUIC. All participants need to stay in the same hotel under the conditions arranged by MUIC. Regarding the flight booking you have received confirmation from us that the international week will be conducted! Further, be aware that all types of insurance coverage is the responsibility of the participant.

IMMIGRATION

Immigration to Thailand is a standard procedure. If you have a Swiss, German, Austrian passport you do not need to apply for a visa in advance. Please check visa regulations yourself if you plan to travel with a passport issued by another country. The immigration service at the airport is free. Make sure your passport is valid for the time requested (normally minimum 6 months). Be prepared to show your boarding pass for immigration procedure. You need to answer the question about the purpose of your stay as "holidays" (you are not in Thailand for business and not for education reasons).

TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT

For public transportation you are expected to pay in cash, no matter whether you use the train, taxi or public buses. Transportation fees are very reasonable. Ensure you have small banknotes at hand. After landing at Suvarnabhumi International Airport, the Arrival Hall for international passengers is on the 2nd floor (Level 2) of the concourse building. The most efficient way to travel into the city is by the airport link (Skytrain) or taxi. After you clear customs, follow the signs to "Public Taxi" or "Skytrain".

If you plan to take the Skytrain, you need to buy a ticket. Taking the Skytrain makes sense to avoid Bangkok's traffic congestion; the Suvarnabhumi Airport Rail Link takes around 30 minutes to the city centre of Bangkok at Phayathai Station. From Phayathai station you will need to change to the Skytrain line or you grab a taxi from the final airport link station.

If you decide to travel by taxi (what make sense if you carry some bigger luggage), make your way to the official taxi desk, tell the dispatchers your hotel. You will get a piece of paper with the taxi you are registered. KEEP this slip of paper, it identifies the specific taxi and driver you are using. (There is NO information on this slip of paper that the driver needs, the driver has already been told where you are going – it is yours. Put it in your pocket in case of any difficulties during the trip or when you find you've left some property in the taxi, or for any other issues that may arise). Insist on the taxi driver starts the "taxi meter". The taxi driver expects you to pay cash. Be aware: On top of the fee on the taxi meter additional airport fee will be added by the driver (50 THB) AND the fee for the express way (depends on if the driver uses the express way).

If you take a taxi in Bangkok do not ask "How much?" It is a metered taxi (don't use a "Tuk Tuk", it is more expensive). The cost is dictated by the meter. Asking "How much" is tacit approval to being charged a flat rate. Insist that the taxi meter be started. Your journey from the airport should take about 60 minutes depending on the day, time of day, and weather conditions. A typical taxi fare from the airport to downtown Bangkok is around 400 THB (which will be indicated on the taxi meter) to which you have to add the tollway fee (if any) AND 50 THB airport surcharge. Once you arrive at your hotel you may offer a 50 THB tip for the driver if you are happy with ride.

YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Participants **need** to stay at the hotel arranged by MUIC under the conditions MUIC arranged (no alternative bookings from your side). Before and after the study week you can stay at any hotel you prefer, during the study week (Sunday to Friday) all participants have to stay in the hotel arranged by MUIC. Of course you can add days before the study week starts and you can stay longer at the hotel arranged by MUIC if you like.

This year we got a good overall deal at the Le Meridien Bangkok, which is part of the Marriott group.

The hotel offers elegantly appointed rooms and suites. MUIC negotiated special university rates for participants. Be aware that MUIC can't promise a low-price guarantee for any hotel rates and there are maybe specialized websites which offer even lower rates. However, MUIC will book the room requested for the rates you will be informed of in advance. Reservations made by MUIC will keep you flexible and you will pay after checkout. A deposit needs to be paid upfront by credit card. For the room reservation with MUIC you may be asked for passport information in advance.

Room rates will be announced 2 to 3 months in advance. These rates include breakfast for 1 or 2 people. The rooms can be shared but the rate might change slightly. Approx. 5700 to 6000 TB (single occupation) will be the rate per night and room (around 140 CHF [1 CHF equivalent is around 40 TB; exchange rates fluctuate!]). MUIC will contact all participants with regards to their preferred room reservations and to ask whether two participants wish to share a room (which would cut the room costs nearly to half per person).

SPOUSES

Accompanying partners are welcome to attend some of the activities. If you are interested in this, please contact us.

STAYING HEALTHY

There are some health risks that are more common in Thailand than in many Western countries. For example, diarrhea from infected water, ice cubes or food and parasite infestation. Make sure you eat in proper places to reduce risks. Mosquito-borne diseases like dengue fever, Japanese encephalitis, malaria are possible, but unlikely in the Bangkok area. Nevertheless, to reduce the risk, apply mosquito repellents.

Healthcare standards in Bangkok are high, with hundreds of thousands of visitors combining their holiday with good quality, inexpensive medical procedures including surgery, diagnostics and dental work. Make sure your health and/or travel insurance will cover your costs in case.

COST OF LIVING IN BANGKOK

Thailand is, in comparison to Switzerland, an inexpensive place to live. Nevertheless, especially in the touristic hotspots, expenses for drinks, foods and souvenirs can reach the Swiss price levels. Food and soft drinks in shopping malls as well as in local food courts are very inexpensive and an upper-class lunch set starts with around 150 TB. As alcohol tax is quite high in Thailand, expect a glass of beer to be above 100 TB. In the hotel or in fancy sky view bars it can easily cost you 300 TB plus 7% tax plus 10% VAT. In Thailand only a small tip is expected. Around 20 TB to 50 TB (max 100 TB, depending on the bill) works nearly everywhere. If the restaurant already charges 10% service charge, no extra tip is expected. In local places it is usually expected to pay in cash. Hotels, bars, and restaurants in tourist areas accept credit cards. To be on the safe side be ready with some cash at hand.

Thai Baht can easily be obtained at every ATM machine for a service fee of around 50 TB up to 100 TB.

MastroCard as well as Postfinance card are commonly accepted at ATM machines. Money exchange in Thailand is quite inexpensive and a major player in this market is the company "Super Rich".

Some Swiss banks require you to tell them in advance that you will be using your card to withdraw money in Thailand / Southeast Asia. Ensure you do so before departure, so the withdrawal of funds goes smoothly.

Public transportation in Bangkok is quite inexpensive. A subway and a skytrain is available. Taxis in Bangkok are inexpensive (insist on the taxi meter) with a small starting fee of 35 TB. Twenty minutes by taxi is around 150 TB. Outside Bangkok – for example in Pattaya area – taxi meters are not very common and many taxis ask for a flat price of 500 TB or even more.

DRESS CODE

Thailand is a great place to spend your holiday and tourists are very common at any places of interest. Even though some tourists may dress very casually, in Thailand it is expected to dress properly, especially

for company visits and, of course, at the university. As for any office employee, a shirt and even jacket are expected. Rooms are air-conditioned to around 20 degrees.

In any case shorts, tank shirts, flip flops are no goes. Business Casual for men and women is expected and needed to deal with the air-conditioned environment.

NOT TO-DO!

Thailand at first glance seems to be a country where anything goes (for tourists). Know that is an illusion. The police is supposed to enforce the law. Avoid any contact with (illegal) drugs. Drinking alcohol at the beach is restricted as well as smoking in many places. The police is just waiting for you to charge you up to 2000 TB. Be aware, electronic smoking devises (E-Cigarette devises) are illegal in Thailand even so you can by them on the night market.

Finally, despite the fact that prostitution is visible in the major tourist hot spots, it is illegal. Illegal services may harm your health and the law in Thailand is not on your side.

Take advantage of the many activities offered, such as visits to temples and the King Palace or the great sky bars on offer in the City of Bangkok. Do not be surprised that for the temples and Kings Place, also the 5-star skybars (such as the famous Sirocco State Tower) you are expected to dress properly, which means no T-shirts, no flip flops....

FURTHER INFORMATION

Our aim in providing the information in this booklet is to enable you to plan your trip. For additional and up-to-date information about your travels, please consult the information provided by government agencies and travel resources, i.e. regarding visa requirements, up-to-date health recommendations, travel advice, etc.

Mahidol University International College