

Many people describe their moments of accidental, serendipitous learning as “stumbling” over an answer or idea. So let’s give them things to stumble over.

—Jane Bozarth, Nuts and Bolts: Causing Serendipity

IDH 4007(Spring 2026) and IDH 4008 (Summer C 2026)

Develop UN’s SDGS by Exploring Malaysia, Singapore, Borneo (Sabah & Brunei)

Spring: Wednesdays 10:00 am-12:30pm

Summer C: Every day while abroad

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

- **Email:** via Canvas Inbox or mlopezbr@fiu.edu • **Phone:** (305) 348 - 1914•
Office: SIPA I 520 (MMC)
- **Office Hours:** By Appointment, we can also meet **ONLINE** at your request.

Spring Course Time Zone | EST. Course due dates are according to this time zone.

Summer Course Time Zone | Malaysia Time (MYT). Course due dates are according to this time zone.

General Information

Course Description and Purpose

This course will examine both pre-modern and modern aspects of several Southeast Asian cities by visiting Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei to understand their efforts in developing United Nations SDGS. Students will live and experience cities, and their spaces, and through the multicultural lens of Southeast Asian traditions, they will learn not only their physical manifestations but their inherent principles which mirror, amplify, or represent the cultural norms of the Malay, Singaporean, Bruneian society. Traveling in the course aims at challenging and changing the Western-centric approach in which students feel and behave, while simultaneously encouraging creativity and broadening students' awareness and understanding of multicultural perspectives of contemporary living. Students will also get hands-on experience learning about several forest and wildlife preservation efforts as well as cultural activities.

Audience: Suitable for students of all levels; no language prerequisites- no previous Southeast Asian knowledge required. Since during the summer we are going to be walking trails, national forests, and Wildlife Preserves it is recommended that students self-assess their fitness level ahead of time to prevent inconveniences.

Course Objectives

1. To promote students’ understanding of Southeast Asian histories, cultures and societies while nurturing respect for its people’s lifestyles and traditions.

2. To foster global citizenship and promote reduced inequality by creating opportunities for students to participate in cross-cultural exchanges with local students and professionals (SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities).
3. To evaluate the economic growth and sustainability efforts in the region, with a focus on green initiatives, urban development, and technological advancements (SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure).
4. To gain first-hand experience by participating in sustainable tourism and responsible environmental stewardship programs from the region (SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production).
5. To explore biodiversity and conservation projects in Sabah, understanding the importance of protecting ecosystems and combating deforestation (SDG 15: Life on Land).

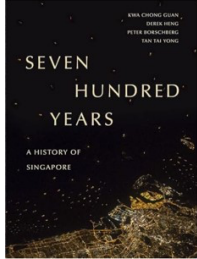
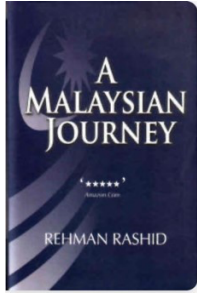
Please Read the Honors SLO at the end of the document.

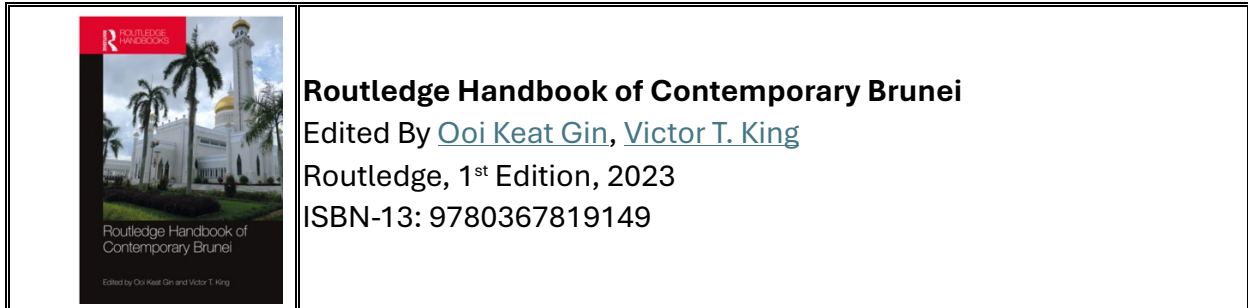
Important Information

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course however researching Malaysian, Singapore, and Bruneian culture and history before traveling will enhance and deepen the students' understanding of Southeast Asian societies.

Textbook and Course Materials

	<p>Seven Hundred Years: A History of Singapore Authors: Kwa Chong Guan, Derek Heng, Peter Borschberg, Tan Tai Yong Marshall Cavendish Intl, 2020 ISBN-13: 978-9814828109</p>
	<p>A Malaysian Journey and Peninsula: A Story of Malaysia Author: Rehman Rashid Rehman Rashid Press, 1993 ISBN -13: 9789839981919</p>



Expectations of this Course

This is a travel abroad course, which means most (if not all) of the coursework will be conducted abroad. Expectations for performance in a travel abroad course are the same as a traditional course. Study abroad programs require a degree of self-motivation, selfdiscipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students. **Furthermore, this course is highly interactive.** You will be required to engage in learning activities with Malaysian, Singaporean, and Bruneian students and professors and to conduct yourself in an appropriate manner representing FIU and the US while abroad. At least one week a semester you will moderate the journaling activities.

Course Detail

COURSE COMMUNICATION

- We will have a debriefing every morning before setting out for the daily activities.
- I will post also post an announcement on Canvas in case several students have similar questions, it is your responsibility to read them.

HOMEWORK SUBMISSION POLICY

Homework will not be accepted via email. If submitted via email it will not be graded. The **Assignments** section on Canvas is the right place to upload homework (mind deadlines as they will not be extended)

SPRING ASSIGNMENTS DESCRIPTION

EXAMS

There will be **NO EXAMS**

I. QUIZZES (25%)

At the end of each module, students need to complete a multiple choice & fill the blanks quiz.

II. ANALITIC REPORTS (25%)

Students are required to write five (5) Analytic Reports (Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and Brunei), they must be 500 to 750 words. This assignment is meant to help students

demonstrate their skills and ability to make connections between the readings and movies assigned and show they can evaluate the impact that cultures and civic engagement have on the cities' lives. **Should you like to have extra credit, you may also choose to write a report about Sabah.**

III. EXPLORATIONS (25%)

During Spring we will explore the locations that we are to visit during the Summer and that we are researching and reading about. You will utilize: 1) AI to find places, locations, and information, 2) your critical skills to evaluate the veracity and reliability of the information provided by AI, 3) our course materials to justify or deny AI's claims and yours, 4) Google Arts & Culture and Maps to showcase the sites and map the future summer visits.

IV. COIL PROJECTS (25%)

Team learning is an important part of our class. Each team is composed of 3~4 students. Each team will choose one of the 4 UN SDGs from the course objectives (SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11, and SDG 15) and will devise a feasible plan to participate in the countries' initiatives and to help them raise awareness within the international community. The plan should demonstrate you have incorporated all the elements we learnt while working with the local students and professionals along with the readings. The project is to be presented in a step-by-step mode with timelines for completion of the parts.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS DESCRIPTION

EXAMS

There will be NO EXAMS

I. DAILY TRAVEL PHOTO REPORT (25%)

Students are required to write a 250~300-word reflection of their daily experiences. Submit it along 2~3 pictures illustrating your impressions in line with the readings and activities.

II. CAPITAL CITY REPORTS (25%)

Students are required to write three (3) Capital City Reports (Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and Brunei), they must be 750 to 1000 words. This assignment is meant to help students demonstrate their skills and ability to travel around East Asian cities. To fully understand the impact that cultures have on the cities' lives. **Should you like to have extra credit, you may also choose to write a report about Sabah.**

III. TEAM PROJECTS (50%)

Team learning is an important part of our class. Each team is composed of 3~4 students. Each team will choose one of the 4 UN SDGs from the course objectives (SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11, and SDG 15) and will devise a feasible plan to participate in the countries' initiatives and to help them raise awareness within the international community. The plan

should demonstrate you have incorporated all the elements we learnt while working with the local students and professionals along with the readings. The project is to be presented in a step-by-step mode with timelines for completion of the parts.

GRADING

You must **complete** and **receive a grade** for **every** assignment to receive credit for the course Failure to complete a required component of the course will result in a failing grade.

SPRING Course Requirements	%	Points
I. QUIZ (5 @ 10 points each)	25%	50
II. ANALYTIC REPORTS (5 @ 10 points each)	25%	50
III. EXPLORATIONS AI & MAPPING (5 @ 10 points each)	25%	50
IV. COIL TEAM PROJECTS (1 @ 100 points each)	25%	50
Total	102%	200

SUMMER Course Requirements	%	Points
I. DAILY TRAVEL PHOTO REPORT (20 @ 1 point each)	25%	20
II. CAPITAL CITY REPORTS (3 @ 5 points each)	25%	15
III. TEAM PROJECTS (1 @ 15)	50%	15
Total	100%	50

Breakdown of Percentages and Points

Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less

SPRING SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Module 1 – UN SDG’s – Civic Engagement (Weeks 1~2)

Readings from: *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Provisions & Reports*

Watch: *The President of the Island* directed by Jon Shenk

Explore: 2~3 coastal sites that are on the list of endangered (compare with Miami)

Assignments: a) Quiz

b) Readings & Movie connections

c) Report on Explorations of Miami, Maldives, & 1 more coastal location

Module 2 – Malaysia (continental) (Weeks 3 ~ 6)

Readings from: *A Malaysian Journey and Peninsula: A Story of Malaysia*

Watch directed by

Explore

Assignments: a)

Quiz

b) Readings & Movie connections

c) Report on Explorations Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Malacca

Module 3 – Singapore (Weeks 7 ~ 10)

Readings from: *Seven Hundred Years: A History of Singapore*

Watch: *Crazy Rich Asians* directed by Jon M. Chu

Explore Assignments: a) Quiz

b) Readings & Movie connections

c) Report on Explorations Singapore

d) COIL PROJECT with Malaysian University

Module 4 – Malaysia (Borneo) (Weeks 11 ~ 13)

Readings from: *Stranger in the Forest: On Foot Across Borneo*

Watch: *Malaysia's Last Tigers* directed by Harun Rahman & *The Soul of a Teacher* directed by Jiwa Pendidik

Explore: Rainforest and Sepilok.

Assignments: a)

Quiz

b) Readings & Movie connections

c) Report on Explorations Sepilok, Sabah, Kota Kinabalu

d) COIL PROJECT with Malaysian University (50% done in FIU/50% in conjunction with Malaysia)

Module 5 – Brunei (Borneo) (Weeks 14 ~ 16)

Readings from: *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Brunei*

Watch *Yasmine* directed by Siti Kamaluddin & *Kopi* directed by Zulfan Farhi Iskandar Karim

Explore Assignments: a) Quiz

b) Readings & Movie connections

c) Report on Explorations Brunei

SUMMER SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Please see detailed itinerary in separate sheet, below is just a compressed list
Module 1 – Malaysia & Singapore

Module 2 – Borneo (Malaysia & Brunei)

Arrive Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur)

Module 1

5 days Kuala Lumpur (Petronas Towers, Butterfly & Birds sanctuary, Batu Caves, Muzium Negeri Sembilan, Forest Research Institute, China Town Sancheng Gong-native gods)

2 days Penang (George Town, Island Cruise, Tropical Spice Garden, Kek Lok Si Temple-B)

2 days Malacca (1400's Portuguese Trading Port, Cruise Melaka River, Jonker Street Night Market, Stadthuys Christ Church of Malacca + Cheng Hoong Teng Chinese Temple) **3-4**

days Singapore

City, Port, National Gallery, Indian Heritage Center & Sultan Mosque in Kampong Glam, MacRitchie Reservoir, Gardens by the Bay, National Museum, Zoo by Night, ChinaTown,

Module 2

5 days Kota Kinabalu (Mari Mari Cultural Village, scented candle making workshop, Filipino and Night Markets, including **2 days** at Orangutan Reserve, Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, Sandakan)

3 days Brunei (Capital, Ulu Temburong, Butik Teraja Forrest, Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque, Kampong Ayer- floating houses, Royal Regalia Museum, Yayasan Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkiah)

1 day Return to Kuala Lumpur back home 😊

Honors College Policies and Requirements Academic Misconduct Procedures and Policies

In The Honors College, the term “honor” refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College. An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal

resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Academic Misconduct Procedures available at <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academicintegrity/academicintegrity/index.php>.

Please refer to the following documents for additional information: FIU Student Handbook: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php>

Student Portfolios

The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students' learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what "artifacts" or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience. Portfolios provide a rich context for students to show what they have learned and to explain their learning process. Because the Honors curriculum is meant to be thought-provoking and reflective, student selfassessment through portfolios will facilitate learning and provide in-depth assessment. Each Honors College course includes at least one assignment that could potentially fit portfolio requirements. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/portfolio/>

Honors Engagement

Requirements Honors College students are required to accumulate at least 20 engagement points each academic year (Fall and Spring) by attending Honors College activities. Students attending only one semester (Fall or Spring) are required to accumulate 10 engagement points. Each activity has a point value. Students may select which events and activities they want to attend. The new system is designed to be more flexible for students, offering events at various days and times (including some weekend events) and allowing for a variety of ways to meet the requirements. Please plan accordingly. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/citizenship/>

Community Service

Honors College students must also complete 20 volunteer service hours. These hours DO NOT count toward the 20 engagement points discussed above. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/communityservice/>

Honors Education in the Arts (HEARTS)

The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to "explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to

experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets.

<http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/hearts/>

Honors College SLO

To succeed in graduate or professional school and in the workforce, Honors College undergraduate students need to demonstrate acquired skills in the areas of Research, Interdisciplinarity and Connectivity, and Community Engagement and Leadership.

Documentation of these acquired skills will be provided by Honors College faculty to administration as they assess student progress via identified course assignments.

Research

The Honors College undergraduate student needs to demonstrate acquired research and problem-solving skills based on the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

SLO.R.1: Demonstrate the principles of disciplinary-specific research and problem solving.

SLO.R.2: Conduct a multi-perspective logical analysis and synthesis of local, regional, national, or global intercultural problems.

SLO.R.3: Communicate results fluently orally or in writing.

Assignments or artifacts that satisfy these SLOs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A discipline-specific research project developed through the Honors College undergraduate research program, which may later be presented at the annual Honors College Research Conference.
- An interdisciplinary research project presented in an Honors College seminar.
- A discipline-specific research paper written for an Honors College seminar.
- An Honors thesis in the major.

Interdisciplinarity and Connectivity

The Honors College undergraduate student needs to demonstrate acquired skills in recognizing and applying interdisciplinary approaches and connectivity when analyzing and solving a problem, i.e., the student needs to bring into the analysis insights from fields outside the student's major. The student needs to demonstrate the acquired skills based on the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

SLO.I.1: Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelatedness of local, regional, national, and global intercultural issues and trends.

SLO.I.2: Apply ideas, methods, and knowledge from multiple disciplines to a question or issue.

SLO.I.3: Identify connections learned in the framework of the course.

Assignments or artifacts that satisfy these SLOs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A seminar-generated interdisciplinary paper.
- An interdisciplinary undergraduate research project.

- A team project incorporating several disciplinary methodologies, as long as the specific contribution of the student to the project is clearly identified.

Community Engagement and Leadership

Honors College students are expected to return the investment made in them by the Honors College and FIU by becoming productive, honorable, and service-oriented community leaders. This kind of leadership can be exercised in various ways at FIU or on the local, state, and national levels. The student need not be elected to office to be a leader. Community service also demonstrates leadership. The student's community engagement and acquired leadership needs to be demonstrated based on the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

SLO.C.1: Articulate an understanding and application of ethics in the framework of the course.

SLO.C.2: Assume leadership roles in the framework of the course.

SLO.C.3: Demonstrate willingness to engage in local, global, international, or intercultural problem solving.

Assignments or artifacts that satisfy these SLOs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A project completed in the first-year Honors leadership course or Honors seminar.
 - Evidence of advocacy for a student or public issue.
 - Demonstrable service to a larger community
-