



**FIU**

Honors  
College

Honors Seminar V and VI: Explore Nepal  
IDH 4007/4008

Spring C and Summer A 2026

Tu/Th

## Course Description

### Overall Course Description

The Honors College Seminars: “Explore Nepal” will provide an immersive experience of the diverse and rich cultural heritage and breathtaking natural splendor of Nepal. Discussions will focus on comparative societal structure, culture, and biodiversity. This course aims to fulfill the goals of the global learning initiative. Innovative pedagogical strategies will be utilized to raise students’ awareness of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues. The interdisciplinary nature of the Honors College will facilitate students’ ability to develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems, as well as their willingness to engage in problem-solving in diverse settings.

### Specific Course Description

Nepal, nestled in the heart of the Himalayas, is a small landlocked country in South Asia known for its stunning landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and diverse ethnicity. Nepal's history is rich in ancient traditions, with a legacy of kingdoms, dynasties, and warriors. Nepal was officially a Hindu kingdom for centuries until recently the monarchy was abolished in 2008, marking Nepal's transition to a federal democratic republic. It shares borders with India to the south, east, and west, and with China to the north. This strategic location has influenced its history, culture, and geopolitical dynamics, and balancing relations between the two influential neighbors while pursuing its national interests has been a key aspect of Nepal's foreign policy. This buffer state also holds significance in terms of US geopolitical interests in South Asia. Studying and visiting this country is therefore a way for students to understand others and themselves better.

The spring course, designed to prepare students for their month-long study abroad in Nepal, focuses on three main aspects:

- Nepal’s history, culture, and art, its influence on the region’s geography and politics over the centuries, its role in the British Empire’s war efforts, including World Wars I and II, its social, economic, and political status and role today. The course will specifically examine Nepal’s >2,000-year history divided into pre- and post-unification (ancient/medieval and modern) with particular attention to the legacy of the Gurkhas, the transition to democracy, and the relationship between the U.S. and Nepal.
- Ethnic and cultural diversity in contemporary Nepalese society, with particular emphasis on representative ethnic groups of Newari, Gurung, and Tharu communities. Comparative analysis/differences between Plato's philosophical construct of an ideal city and the socio-religious framework of the Hindu society, co-existence, challenges and opportunities of a highly diverse society, and access to education.
- Nepal’s geographical and biodiversity, unique topography and geological/tectonic factors, range of ecosystems leading to flora/fauna and animal species diversity, conservation efforts, and ecological and socio-economic balance through community projects.

The summer course takes students to Nepal, located on the far side of the globe. Arriving in Kathmandu, the capital city, visiting important cultural sites and places of historical significance and critical to understanding the events that shaped Nepalese society and culture over the centuries. Second, to Pokhara, a stunningly beautiful city surrounded by the Himalayan Mountain range. Third, to Sirubari, a Gurung village known for homestay hospitality, fourth to Marpha and Jomsom, villages high up in the Himalayas, and fifth to Chitwan National Park, known for its unique wildlife and elephant ride adventures and conservation efforts. During this course, students will explore Nepalese culture and society, travel to different places, and reflect on their travel experience.

**Course Objectives**

- Students will be able to appreciate/describe/identify the history, culture, and geography of Nepal and South Asia in general.
- Expose students to the cultural diversity of Nepal, including the influence of Buddhism and Hinduism in Nepalese societies.
- Highlight Nepal's geopolitical importance and US effort in the development of Nepal.
- Introduce students to the culture, society, and biodiversity of contemporary Nepal.
- Expose students to history and sites that will stimulate reflections about themselves and others.

**Guidelines for Written Work**

1. Be submitted to Canvas by the specified times and dates. 20% late penalty each day late.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Papers be submitted to Canvas by the specified times and dates. 20% late penalty each day late.
3. Use Calibri or Arial or Times New Roman font 12, 1.5-spaced, 1" margins
4. Student names should be at the top of each page and include page numbers.
5. Respect the word requirement. Assignments that are extensively shorter than required will receive lower scores.
6. Be free of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage errors. The score will be affected by the severity of errors in your writing.

Registration in this course implies an acceptance of and compliance with the Honors College policies for students and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity.

### **Religious Observances**

“Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.”

### **Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges**

“Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC), if you have not done so already.” Please note that if you have a student who is registered with the DRC, you will receive notification about the student’s disability and a detailed description of accommodations the student will require.

### **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/getsupport/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/academic-integrity/index.php> . Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Student Handbook: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php>

### **Honors Engagement Requirements**

In The Honors College we strive to build a sense of community, the kind you get at a small liberal arts college, but with all the resources of a major public university. Our events, workshops, and activities are all designed with the purpose of enriching your life and giving you an experience that transcends mere classroom learning. We hope that you will take advantage of all these opportunities to learn and grow. Your 11-activity HC Engagement Pathway and 20 volunteer hours will be tracked using [Panther Connect](#) and [Give Pulse](#), respectively. Make sure to login and create your profile for both systems. Don’t forget to read your weekly *Next Week in Honors* newsletter for awesome opportunities! It lands in your FIU Inbox every Friday. See [Engagement](#) and [Community Service](#) for more information.

### **Resources:**



than \_\_\_\_\_. Students who fail to comply by then will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4008, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed

**ONLY FOR STUDENTS WHO SECURE THEIR SPOT ON OR AFTER \_\_\_\_\_ :**

The deadline to upload the required documentation will be extended until \_\_\_\_\_ (before final DROP date). Students who fail to comply by then will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4008 or travel with the program Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Students must clear any existing holds by \_\_\_\_\_ and again by \_\_\_\_\_, and are responsible for ensuring that they have no new holds before being enrolled in both IDH 4007\* and/or IDH 4008\*. Students who fail to comply by the deadlines will not be allowed to participate in the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed. \* Students with holds on their account cannot be enrolled for classes.

While taking the IDH 4007 class, students will have to complete the online *mandatory* pre-departure orientation on the study abroad application portal. Students must complete the session and associated quizzes, sign the paperwork, and upload it to their application at the [abroad.fiu.edu](http://abroad.fiu.edu) portal by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Physicality:**

The faculty leader and/or support staff do not administer medical care or provide medication.

Students must be aware that if getting tested for COVID-19 were to be required for flying, they will be expected to limit their exposure once tested. Should they contract COVID-19, they will have to abide by the rules of both the airline and their country of destination. It will be their responsibility to keep themselves healthy and able to participate in their program. Students who are not allowed to go as a result of having exposed themselves, or should their departure get delayed, will be responsible for the extra charges. Refunds will NOT be awarded and posted charges will not be removed.

**Academics:**

In order to participate in an Honors study abroad program, students must *maintain* a minimum cumulative FIU GPA of **3.3**. Students who fail to comply will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4007 and/or IDH 4008. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed

A minimum grade of C in IDH 4007 is required to be enrolled in IDH 4008, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded if the student cannot be enrolled and posted charges will not be removed.

Students must be aware that they can enroll in a maximum of 18 credits per semester. If they want to go above that amount, they must get this [form](#) signed by their major's Dean no later than \_\_\_\_\_ for Spring 2026 classes and \_\_\_\_\_ for Summer 2024 classes and send it to [edabroad@fiu.edu](mailto:edabroad@fiu.edu).

**Behavior:**

Students who have been sanctioned under the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/getsupport/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/student-conduct-and-honor-code/index.php>), which results in loss of privileges, and/or other sanctions that result in the student not being considered to be in good standing with the University (e.g., conduct probation), are not be eligible to participate in IDH 4008 or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Students found responsible for an Academic Misconduct Violation will be dismissed from the Honors College upon notification of findings and will not be allowed to participate in, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Students studying abroad are expected to represent the Honors College and FIU honorably and maturely. The faculty director and/or staff are authorized to end the program early for students whose behavior becomes disruptive (and/or violates the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code.)

### **Payments:**

Once students apply online, they must secure their spot with the Honors College with a **blank, non-refundable \$500 cashier's check or money order (ONLY), and all the required documentation.**

Study abroad payments are *non-refundable* and are made in 3 installments. The OEA will post the charges on the student's account approximately 3 weeks before each payment deadline. Once the charges are posted, they cannot be removed.

Students who secure their spot *after* charges for an installment(s) have been posted will have the overdue payments added to the next deadline's charges

Students are responsible to ensure with Student Financials that any payment made towards their study abroad program is indeed applied to that program.

Students who pay their **program fee** through a scholarship or Financial Aid are still responsible for having the payments made on time and in their entirety. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to contact Financial Aid to ensure compliance. If any delays are foreseen, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Honors College of the situation *before* the deadline. If their aid/scholarship will not cover the full amount due, it is the student's responsibility to pay the remaining balance out of pocket. Students who fail to comply will not be enrolled on the program and will not be allowed to participate in, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Payments must be made no later than the deadline published at <https://honors.fiu.edu/studyabroad/payments> (December 1, 2025, January 3, 2026, and February 1, 2026). If students fail to make them on time, the university will apply a \$100.00 late fee to their account. Late fees cannot be removed.

After each payment deadline there is a one-week grace period, an *extended* deadline, when payments are still accepted. However, **the late fee will still be applied, and students may get a hold on their account\***. If students fail to complete their payment within exactly that *one-week* grace period, and had not notified the Honors College in advance, they will be withdrawn from the program and will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4007 and/or IDH 4008 or travel with the program, depending on the time the payment was missed. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges and late fees will not be removed. \*Students with holds on their accounts cannot be enrolled for classes.

Students who pay their **program's tuition** through a scholarship or Financial Aid are still responsible for having the payments made on time and in their entirety. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to contact Financial Aid to ensure compliance. If any delays are foreseen by Financial Aid, it is the student's responsibility to pay the balance out of pocket by **FEB 1, 2026, 11:59pm** for IDH 4007 and by **MARCH 28, 2026 11:59pm** for IDH 4008. Students who fail to comply will not be allowed to participate in, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Students must pay OEA'S \$195 fee by **MARCH 1, 2026, 11:59pm**. If they fail to comply, they will not be allowed to participate. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

FIU and the Honors College strongly discourage making big purchases, such as airline tickets, before the programs are confirmed by OEA. If canceled, FIU cannot refund these, or any other expenses related to the programs not paid directly to FIU.

**Switching, Withdrawals, and Cancellations:**

Once students are registered, they are not allowed to switch programs. Students who still want to change programs will have to withdraw from the initial one, first, with no refunds. Then secure their spot in the new program, pay the \$500 deposit again, and complete all the new program's missing payments. Permission to apply for the second program is at the full discretion of the Honors College.

Withdrawal from a program will only be permitted for medical reasons. In order to request a medical withdrawal, students must provide appropriate medical documentation from a physician licensed in the United States. Otherwise, they will remain responsible for all charges.

Students that are dropped from a program for lack of payment, lack of documentation, or due to FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code sanctions, will still be responsible for the charges already posted to their account. That balance will still be due.

FIU and/or the Honors College reserve the right to cancel study abroad programs—the *only* case in which a refund *will* be made. The refund will cover the program's cost and the \$500 deposit. Late fees will not be refunded or removed. Students will be responsible for fees or losses incurred in cancelling or changing their airfare ticket and any other expenses not covered by the program fee. Consideration to purchase Trip Cancellation insurance coverage is recommended. Refunds for the \$195 OEA fee will be at OEA's discretion.

If the program gets canceled once the IDH 4007 course has started, students will continue that course until finished. They will obtain 3 academic credits for it and their tuition for the course taken will not be refunded.

By signing up to participate in a study abroad program, students are assuming all the above-mentioned responsibilities and are committing to comply with them without further notices.

## Faculty

Prem Chapagain,  
Professor of Physics  
Associate Director of Biomolecular Sciences Institute  
Honors College Faculty

chapagap@fiu.edu

Office hours: Tu/Th 11am-1pm, CP230 (or by appointment)



Dr. Chapagain was born and brought up in a remote village in the foothills of the Himalayas in Nepal. He pursued his high school and undergraduate education in Nepal before moving to the United States for his graduate studies. Therefore, he brings an inside view of the uniqueness of Nepal, its people and culture, and its geopolitical history. He is currently a Professor in the Department of Physics at Florida International University, specializing in biological physics. His research focuses on the computational investigations of biomolecules, and he has extensively published on various topics of biophysics including protein aggregation, exploring novel antimicrobial compounds against antibiotic-resistant pathogens, membrane interactions, and dynamics of viral proteins of emerging viruses such as Ebola and Marburg viruses and more recently SARS-CoV-2. He has been recognized by several teaching and research awards, including the 2022 Faculty Senate Award for Faculty Excellence in Research and the 2019 Faculty Senate Award for Faculty Excellence in Teaching.



**Meet Tuesdays & Thursdays (5:00 pm – 6:15 pm)**

Office Hours: Tu/Th 11 am -1 pm CP230 or by email: chapagap@fiu.edu

### **Required Reading Material (Freely available ebooks)**

1. Robert Levy, *Mesocosm: Hinduism and the Organization of a Traditional Newar City in Nepal*, UC Press (1990) <https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft6k4007rd;query=;brand=ucpress:>
2. David Gellner: *The Idea of Nepal*, Free e-Book from Oxford University (2016) <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:c993ff4f-c25d-4f81-8892-6e5f0ae651f8/files/mbbb8e8682c5343294c8fdca0590c5ba>
3. Percy Brown, *Picturesque Nepal*, (1912). [A good account of Nepal, esp. Art in Kathmandu] <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo1.ark:/13960/t8rb7mj2h&seq=21>

### **Recommended Reading Material**

1. Isabella Tree, *The Living Goddess*, Eland Publishing (2014) Optional
2. Elizabeth Enslin, *While the Gods Were Sleeping*, Seal Press (2014) Optional
3. Thomas Bell, *Kathmandu*, Haus Publishing (2016) Optional

### **Movies/Documentaries**

Himalaya by Eric Valii, The Mountain Queen (NetFlix), Sunakali, The Living Goddess and YouTube Videos

## Course Grading

#1	Attendance, homework, quizzes	Individual	20 pts
#2	Research papers	Individual	30 pts
#3	In-class participation & discussions	Individual	20 pts
#4	Project/ Presentation on a chosen topic	Team	30 pts

**#1 - Attendance, Participation, Homework, and Quizzes (20 Points – Individual):** You are expected to be an active participant in class presentations and discussions. To participate, you have to be there, so attendance is mandatory. There will be graded in-class discussions in which you post, reply, and present the posts in the class. Tardiness is disrespectful and disruptive. After 15 minutes and/or if it becomes a problem, it will be treated as an absence. After two unexcused absences, your grade will be penalized. Homework refers to the readings and reports not included in the different “steps” listed below.

If necessary, quizzes (announced or unannounced) might be administered on readings, research material, and in-class discussions. There is no make-up for quizzes missed.

**#2 – Research Papers (30 Points - Individual): 2 Papers.** Based on interests or majors, students will select a research topic. Once approved by the faculty member, students will conduct secondary research on the selected topic and submit a minimum 1,500-word paper showcasing their findings, sources, and conclusions. Papers will be evaluated based on:

- The breadth of the secondary research conducted.
- The quality and originality of the research, analysis, and conclusions
- The quality of the paper (structure of the paper, clear and well-supported arguments and examples, sound grammar and typos-free, etc.)

**#3 – In class participation of discussion and impressions of required readings listed above. (20 Points-Individual)**

**#4 – Project / Presentation (30 Points - team):** Throughout the semester, students, in groups of 2-3, will work on a presentation on a chosen/approved topic about Nepal or the trip in general. After brainstorming potential ideas for a project/presentation and selecting one, students will submit a PowerPoint presentation and present their work in class. Students will be evaluated based on their contribution to the team discussions, tasks, and the depth of the research on the selected topic.

**Tentative Course Calendar**  
**Tuesdays & Thursdays, Time: TBD in person**

### 1 – January 6, 8 – Introduction & Updates

- Faculty & student introduction
- Spring semester syllabus and timeline
- Summer semester information
- Watch a short montage ("[Nepal by Ghumante](#)" on YouTube)
- Strange/unique Facts about Nepal

### 2. – January 13, 15 – Introduction: Geography of South Asia

- Continental Collision and the birth of the Himalayas
- Tectonic Movement and Earthquakes
- HW: watch "The colliding continents"

### 3. – January 20, 22 – Geographical diversity of Nepal

- The Himalayas, Hills and Valleys, and the lowland belt – Terai
- Watch: "Himalaya" by Eric Valii
- Watch "Breathtaking Look at the Man Who Climbed Everest 21 Times"

### 4. – January 27, 29 - Introduction to Nepal

- Nepal intro videos (Geography Now – Nepal, Traveling Back to Nepal, Selena Gomez is paying it forward etc on YouTube)
- Brief History of South Asia & Early History of Nepal

### 5. – February 3, 5 – History & Culture - South Asia

- History and culture of South Asia to the European colonial period
- Religions of South Asia and their influence on their societies
- Religious and cultural developments in ancient Nepal
- HW: read Chapter 3 of the book "*Mesocosm: Hinduism and the Organization of a Traditional Newar City in Nepal*"

### 6. – February 10, 12 – History & Culture – Ancient to Medieval Nepal

- Rise of the kingdoms: Bhaktapur, Kathmandu, and Patan.
- Cultural flourishing: Architecture, art, literature, and trade during the Malla period.
- Unification of Nepal, Rise of the Shah dynasty
- Classroom Discussion of "*Mesocosm:*" Ch. 3.

### 7. – February 17, 19 – History & Culture – colonial to modern

- South Asia in the colonial period
- Collision of expansionists, Anglo-Nepal war
- The legacy of the Gurkhas
- Watch: The Gurkhas: Nepal's Legendary Warrior Class
- Watch: The Life-Changing Journey of Being Selected as a Gurkha

### February 23 – March 1 – Spring Break

### 8. – March 3, 5 – History & Culture – Modern Nepal

- Political evolution: Transition from an absolute monarchy to a republic

- Maoist insurgency and peace process
- Class divisions in Nepali society
- HW: Read *The Living Goddess*

**9. – March 10, 12 - History & Culture - Cultural Heritage**

- Cultural heritage - art, architecture, religion, festivals, and traditions.
- Watch: Chosen to be a Kumari Goddess – BBC
- Classroom discussion on *The Living Goddess*
- Festivals of Nepal
- Topics for individual paper and group presentations – discussion, brainstorming

**10. – March 17, 19 – History & Culture – Ethnic Diversity**

- Diversity of ethnic groups, languages, and customs
- Newari culture, food, and festivals (<https://www.newar.com.np>)
- Gurung/Tharu/Sherpa culture, food, and festivals

**11. – March 24, 26 – Biodiversity**

- Wildlife of Nepal
- Watch: How Nepal is saving its tigers - BBC
- Watch: Women in Nepal lead the way in conserving forests
- Individual Paper due

**12. – Mar 30, Apr 2 – Life in Nepal – General Topics**

- Updates on final Group Presentations
- The U.S. and South Asia
- Watch: Meet Nepal's Democracy Defender
- Reminder for pre-departure orientation- online

**13. – April 7, 9 – Life in Nepal – General Topics**

- Watch: Sunakali (Prime Videos)
- Watch: What Jonathan Zimmerman Learned Living in Nepal

**15 – April 14, 16 – Group presentations**

**[This syllabus is subject to change](#)**



## Summer “A” Course

### Course Objectives

- Students will be able to appreciate/describe/identify the history, culture, and geography of South Asia, focusing on Nepal.
- Students will be exposed to the cultural diversity of South Asia, including the influence of Hinduism and Buddhism on Nepali societies through visits to religious and cultural sites.
- In-person visits to the historical sites that highlight the history and culture of the region
- Students will travel to Nepal to better understand the roots of ethnic and political conflicts through a better understanding of cultural background that can influence the outcome of conflict resolution by peaceful means.
- Students will learn and understand the importance of community projects in empowering the people of Nepal and maintaining ecological diversity.
- Students will visit historical and cultural sites that will stimulate reflections about themselves and how cultural diversity can influence decisions that have geopolitical significance.

## Course Grading

#1	Participation	Individual	10 pts
#2	Community Research project	Individual	30 pts
#3	Reflection journals	Individual	30 pts
#4	Scrapbook and/or video montage	Individual	20 pts
#5	Final reflection	Individual	10 pts

### Recommended Reading:

1. Elizabeth Enslin, *While the Gods Were Sleeping*, Seal Press (2014)
2. Thomas Bell, *Kathmandu*, Haus Publishing (2016)

**#1 – Attendance & Active Participation (10 Points – Individual, Read ):** Even though this course will not take place in a traditional classroom setting, this is a course, and you are receiving academic credits, so you are expected to be on time, prepared, and actively participate in every aspect of the class guided by the faculty.

**Important: Repeated tardiness or unjustified absences will result in a lower grade.**

Class Participation is defined as a student being actively engaged in the conversation and activity, not solely being physically present. 1 Unexcused Absence is defined as a student not being present for more than half a day's activities/lectures, 0.5 Unexcused Absence is defined as a student not being present for half a day's activities/lectures. Unavoidable Absences for sickness and medical situations are considered "Excused Absences" as long as the student is communicative with the Faculty Director and/or Program Assistant. Three Unexcused Absences would result in a deduction of a letter grade in IDH 4008. Four Unexcused Absences would be in an F letter grade in IDH 4008 and dismissal from the program.

**#2 – Community Research Project (30 Points - Individual):** Students will select an individual from the places they visit to interview pertaining to their lives and experiences. Students will then write a report on their interview (800-word minimum). Students will then give a presentation to the class of their interview and experiences gained from the interaction with the local community. Students will be evaluated based on:

- The breadth and originality of the research and/or interview (20%)
- The analysis and conclusions drawn from the research and/or interview (30%)
- The quality (preparation, content, and delivery) of their presentation (50%).

Topics pertaining to the community/region on focus (you can also suggest a topic to the faculty member)

- The U.S. presence,
- NGOs
- Access to primary healthcare
- Tourism
- Social media
- Religion
- Economic development
- Cultural differences,

- Art
- The education system
- Sports
- Driving

**#3 – Reflective Journals (30 Points – Individual, handwritten):** Students will regularly document about their experience. The goal is not to list or describe the different activities taking place every day, but to reflect on the experience – what surprised you, what disappointed you, what did you feel when exposed to....., what makes you think about things differently, etc. Students can write as often as they want. A minimum of 5 reflective journal entries each with 200 words or more is what is generally expected. However, more frequent but shorter entries will be accepted as well. Suggested entries may include,

- Kathmandu – 2 entries
- Pokhara – 1 entry
- Sirubari Homestay – 1 entry
- Chitwan – 1 entry
- Nagarkot – 1 entry
- Lumbini - 1 entry
- Bandipur - 1 entry

Journal entries can be handwritten (preferred) or typed and uploaded to Canvas within 72 hours of visiting the site. Meeting the requirements (entry length and numbers)

- The reflective aspect of the entries (as opposed to descriptive)
- The breadth of the reflections

#### **#4 – Scrapbook and/or digital Montage (20 points)**

Students will regularly journal about their experiences in the form of a scrapbook (a spiral notebook preferred) and/or video montage. On the left of the scrapbook, you can decorate the page with items representing the experience such as stickers, postcards, and pictures taken, or collages, and on the right, a **hand-written** journal about the experience of the day (or a few days). The goal is to describe the different activities taking place every day and to reflect on the experience – what surprised you, what disappointed you, what you felt when exposed to....., what makes you think about things differently, etc. Students can write as often as they want. A minimum of 15 scrapbook/journal entries is required, each with 100 words or more is what is generally expected. However, more frequent but shorter entries will be accepted as well. The scrapbook should be handed to the professor on the farewell day of the trip. Students will be evaluated based on the effort, thoughts, and overall impression of each entry. You can choose to do 1) only the scrapbook (100% credit), or 2) part scrapbook (50%) and supplemented by video montage (50%), or 3) only video montage (100%). The video montage should include trip highlights (similar to the scrapbook entries, showing unique experiences or reflections). A minimum of 10-minute video montage is expected for 100% credit. The video will be evaluated on the scope, editing, and overall presentation. Samples will be provided.

#### **#5 – Final Reflection (10 points)**

With prospective future participants of the program as the readers, students are expected to write a letter/essay/blog/commentary summarizing their overall impressions and experiences from this trip (can include excerpts from journal entries) as well as tips and suggestions. A minimum of 1000 words is expected, and the entry must be posted to Canvas by the last regular class day of Summer A but ideally before leaving Nepal. Students will be evaluated based on

- Meeting the requirements (entry length)

- The reflective aspect of the entry (as opposed to descriptive)
- The breadth of the reflections
- writing style

## Summer Course Itinerary

- May 12** Arrival into Kathmandu no later than midnight of May 12, 2026
- May 13** Orientation, City Tour of **Kathmandu\*** (Kathmandu Durbar Square, local markets)
- May 14** **Kathmandu** Cultural Heritage Tour (Budhanilkantha Temple, Pashupatinath Temple, Bodhnath Stupa)\*
- May 15** Visit to local school and interact with students, **Patan** Durbar Square\*
- May 16** Kathmandu to Pokhara by bus, Relax in Lakeside Pokhara
- May 17** Tour of Pokhara (Davis Falls, Gupteshwar cave, Peace Pagoda)
- May 18** Tour of Pokhara & surrounds (Cable car to Sarangkot)
- May 19** Pokhara to Marpha, Jomsom
- May 20** Visit Muktinath Temple and Dhumba Lake
- May 21** Jomsom to Pokhara via Tatopani (natural hot spring)
- May 22** Tour of Pokhara (visit to PN Campus, Natural History Museum, Gorkha museum, Seti Gorge, Caves)
- May 23** Pokhara to Sirubari (Gurung village homestay, cultural welcome program)
- May 24** Village exploration: visit to local school, hike to scenic hill, village life in homestay
- May 25** Sirubari to Pokhara by bus, Mountain Museum
- May 26** Tuesday - Free day in Pokhara, getting ready for Chitwan.
- May 27** Pokhara to Chitwan by bus, Explore Tharu village, Museum, cultural tour, Tharu cultural dance in the evening
- May 28** Jungle Adventure in **Chitwan National Park\*** (Canoeing, jungle walk, Jeep Safari, elephant breeding center)
- May 29** Bird watching, Jeep Safari, Crocodile breeding center (optional - jungle safari on elephant)
- May 30** Chitwan to Kathmandu by bus
- May 31** Free Day (relax, shop or sightseeing, write/post reflections, work on projects)
- June 1** **Bhaktapur Durbar square\***, pottery; Afternoon - Kathmandu to Nagarkot by bus
- June 2** Sunrise from Nagarkot, hike to **Changunarayan Temple\***, drive back to Kathmandu
- June 3** Morning: Kirtipur historic city, Tribhuvan University

- June 4** Royal Palace Museum, Afternoon – work on research project presentations
- June 5** Community research project presentations at local school, interact with students
- June 6** Free day, work on research, write/post final reflection, optional Newari Street Food festival
- June 7** Morning free (wrap up, possible shopping), evening Farewell dinner
- June 8** Departure, Transfer to the airport for the return flight

\* UNESCO World Heritage Sites (also bold-faced).

**This itinerary is subject to change based on airline itinerary changes and official Nepali holidays.**

## Resources

### Books

- John Parker, *The Gurkhas* (2005)
- Ed Douglas, *House of Snow: An Anthology of the Greatest Writing About Nepal* (2016)
- Tessa Feller, *Nepal - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture* (2021)
- Kim Stanley Robinson, *Escape From Kathmandu* (1989)

### Films & Documentaries

- The Golden Child (1986)
- Everest (2015)
- Even When I Fall (2017)
- Seto Surya (the white sun) (2016)
- The Sari Soldiers (2008)
- Sherpa (2015)
- Sunakali (2014)
- Hunting Nepal's Mad Honey (YouTube)
- Where Tibet and Nepal Meet: Tsum Valley Trekking (YouTube)
- Buffalo Sacrificed For 8 Year Old Goddess!! (YouTube)