Engaging China: Yunnan Trip Course ASIA 297

Accreditation through Loyola University Chicago

Please Note: This is a sample syllabus, subject to change. Students will receive the updated syllabus and textbook list prior to the start of each semester.

Course Number: ASIA 297

E-mail: academics@thebeijingcenter.org

Course Description

The purpose of the Yunnan Excursion is to afford the student an in-depth experience of the ethnological background of the “Minority Peoples” of China. At the same time the excursion provides a general survey of the history and culture of Yunnan.

The Yunnan Excursion course is comprised of:

- Four pre-trip introductory lectures/presentations/movies
- Two weeks of guided travel
- Two lectures during the travel + student presentations
- One "reflection dinner" during the trip to consider what is being learned
- Student research topics presented as 8-minute "in-progress" reports during the trip
- Or, Team (5 members) Ethnographic Report as 20-minute presentation one month after return from the trip
- Two summary lectures/presentations at conclusion of trip
- Student 7-page (academic form) paper on research topic
- Synoptic exam

Course Outcomes

Preliminary lectures/presentations will introduce the student to the history and peoples of
China. The Excursion itself is a physical validation of what has been read and heard. Prior to arriving in China the student will be given the option to choose from our master list a research topic about Yunnan. S/he will have additional time in our library to study. During the travel, at an appropriate site, each student offers an in-progress report on, for example, the “Strategies of Rice Farming”. Staff and faculty will comment on the presentation in private. Further research and physical resources will be supplied. The student will photograph, interview, document and record data to corroborate the substance of their research. During travel a “reflection dinner” will aid students to digest the myriad images and experiences they will have had. At the conclusion of the trip two presentations will help gather up what has been learned. A written exam will be undertaken. A final draught of the research will be presented in academic form. If a student chooses to work on a Team Ethnographic study, s/he will investigate the social, economic, cultural, artistic and religious dimensions of a minority group. S/he will come to a richer understanding of the subject people.

**Attendance Policy**

Participation in the Excursions is mandatory. No exceptions. A student cannot enroll in TBC unless s/he can undertake these trips. Participation during the travel includes not only attendance, but contributing to reflection dinners, asking questions of presenters and lecturers.

Students must attend all pre-departure lectures, all "in-situ" student presentations, lectures during travel and post-factum lectures. Absence from any one activity will diminish the total grade by 5%

**Academic Honesty Statement**

Please see the following link, and read the text carefully:


**Assessment**

Trip Participation 40%

Report 15%

Student “in-progress” report will be judged for comprehensiveness, clarity and presentation

Final Exam on Yunnan Excursion Reader 15%
Final Paper or PowerPoint Presentation 30%

Readings

All students will be given the Yunnan Excursion Reader, a comprehensive survey of history, geography, religion and politics of Yunnan. All students will be afforded access to a vast array of recommended books appropriate to the trip. Each student will be furnished a reading list of approximately six books for the research topic s/he undertakes. Final Exam will be based on these readings.

Class Schedule

Session 1: Introduction to Geography/History of Yunnan (video of geography), How to conduct research on assigned topics

Session 2: Pre-departure Special Topics: “How China became China,” “The Meaning of Minzu Ethnicity in China”

Session 3: Pre-departure Special Topics: “Tourism and its Effect on Culture,” Documentary: “When Ruoma was Seventeen,” “The Diversity of Peoples in Yunnan”

Session 4: During Travel Presentations: “Dynamic Yunnan” music and dance, “Bai People orchestra and song”

Session 5: Religion: During Travel Lectures or Presentations: “Principles and Practice of Buddhism,” “Lamaist Buddhism,” and “Theravada Buddhism,” and “Tibetan Thangka painting”

Session 6: Culture: During Travel Lectures or Presentations: “Dongba Culture, Ritual and Writing,” “Hani Culture and Rice Terraces,” “The Bai Kingdom and its Ceremonies”


Session 8: Resume and Reflection on what we have Seen and Learned; this will consist in five twenty-minute ethnographical reports by students based on their travel researches