INTERNATIONAL COURSE MODULE PROGRAM (ICM)

All student participants must be current Arts & Science (St. George) undergraduate students in good standing and be enrolled in an academic program and course listed at the time the proposed activity takes place. Note: In an effort to ensure that as many students as possible can participate in Faculty-funded international opportunities, priority for participation in these opportunities will be given to students who have not previously received funding from Arts and Science for an international experience.

PART I – Applicant + course information

Name of applicant: Rachel Silvey (Professor of Geography and Planning; Director, Asian Institute)

Department/Unit: Asian Institute

E-mail: rachel.silvey@utoronto.ca  Phone: 416-946-8913

Course title(s) and number(s) (only students from courses listed may participate): CAS400Y:

Capstone Seminar – Critical Perspectives on Asian Modernity

Total number of students enrolled: Average 15/year

Maximum number of students proposed to participate in ICM: 10

Location of proposed ICM: Yangon, Myanmar

Proposed travel dates: Fall break (November 2-11)

PART II – International course module details

1) Brief description of the module.

This proposed module is entitled “Global Migrations in Asia: Patterns, Processes, People” and is part of a longstanding emphasis within the Contemporary Asian Studies curriculum on political-economy, migration, and development. The ICM builds on recent introductory-level curricular improvements that provide students moving into the capstone course, CAS400H, with effective preparation for firsthand, grounded experience in Asia. This proposal is for one ICM to be led by the Director of the Asian Institute, Professor Rachel Silvey, who is also teaching the capstone seminar course, CAS400, this fall.

More than two-thirds of the world’s population lives in Asia, and the numbers of migrants both within and between Asian countries, as well as internationally from Asia continues to grow dramatically. Indeed, whereas many news media accounts suggest that the majority of the global “migration crisis” is unfolding around the borders of North America and Europe, in fact global South-South migration rates dwarf those of the global South-North migrations.

Under conditions of such rapid development and rising migration, firsthand field research experience in Asia...
allows students to explore pressing social questions about sustainability, inequality, transnational relations, and rural-urban dynamics. How is the rising tide of new urban residents and global labour affecting social protest, social cohesion, and immigration policy? How do migrants deploy telephone and Internet services in their journeys, and how do they understand their “places” in their local nodes of the global economy? Through case studies of cities in Japan, India, and China, we will examine how residents experience and relate to migration, how their inclusion or exclusion from various forms of social and national citizenship is produced, and how officials (private, government or informal) participate in the management and control of migration flows, and how the study of migration illuminates the larger patterns of political-economy and development in Asia. The ICM will focus not just on official state plans, but also on grassroots social dynamics and their reformulations across scale.

2018 ICM to Yangon, Myanmar

In Myanmar’s nascent democracy, one of the central governance problems is the delivery of public services. In ethnic minority states in particular, after years of destructive civil war, local government capacity and even a rudimentary notion of using public funds for services to the local population has been very low. Decentralization is central to strengthening democratization and federalism in states and regions, where long years of civil war and mismanagement have left few areas with effective bureaucratic capacity or integrated systems of service delivery.

Gender is a key dimension in the provision of government services and interacts with the governance and representational aspects of their delivery. This ICM proposes to help students learn about the lived challenges and opportunities of state actors in the delivery of public services in Myanmar, with a particular focus on gender. The students will learn about three issue-areas that are key to the current decentralization plans, as well as the future of public service delivery as (or if) the country moves toward a deeper federal model as a result of the current peace process. Health, education, and security are key public services that states are expected to manage, and that have some of the strongest impacts on the local population.

Professor Rachel Silvey (Geography and Planning), the professor who is teaching the capstone course (CAS400) of the Contemporary Asian Studies major in fall of 2018, will guide the ICM in a manner than leverages her work with an IDRC project, “Gender, Democracy, and Decentralization: Public Service Delivery in Ethnic Minority States.” This research project involves close collaboration with the Myanmar Institute for Peace and Security (MIPS) in Yangon, and works closely with the Director of MIPS, Min Zaw Oo, and it thus provides strong institutional and research-driven entry points for the students.

In Yangon, the International Course Module, and the curriculum covered in CAS400, we will focus on several inter-related analytical objectives: We will be focusing on the following analytical aspects:

- The proportion and role of women in the bureaucratic apparatus related to health, education and security;
- Analysis of policy discussions at the state level on the strategic deployment of resources and personnel to address issues of central concern to women, including whether such include the pertinence of women as agents of implementation and their roles as brokers;
- An assessment of how reform, new fiscal and administrative powers, are allowing state governments to exercise their roles in education, health and policing under the current decentralization framework, and how the related impact on a gender sensitive approach;
- Discussions within the security sector of priorities for reform, and whether (and how) to address the building of new relations to local communities, with a particular emphasis on women
- An assessment of local communities’ expectations in education, health and security sector, with a particular focus on identifying the differentiated priorities of men and women
2) What are the learning objectives of this module?

The proposed ICM will offer students the firsthand experience of carrying out scholarly field research in-country, on the ground with the guidance of a faculty member who specializes in the place.

The primary learning objective is to increase understanding of the intersection between gender and decentralization in a nascent democracy, and introduce the students to the challenges of building a new government after a long period of military rule. Students will reflect on the various norms and values that inform different political agendas, and how these intersect with democratic governance. Based on Professor Silvey's gender expertise, the ICM will pay particular attention to the gender issues at stake. The ICM will explore how students, women, activists, religious leaders, and businesses adapt to the changing governance landscape and social terrain of an emergent system of governance.

We also want to give students the opportunity to conduct academic field research under the supervision of a faculty member in a real-world context. This ICM will help students to develop the skills to conduct primary research, including identifying and approaching potential interviewees, taking detailed field notes, formulating interview questions, conducting effective interviews, and analyzing research results.

3) If participation by less than the total number of students in the course is proposed:

a) What procedures and criteria will be used to select ICM participants?

Applicants will be asked to submit a short statement of purpose, resume, research proposal, and unofficial transcript. The faculty member leading the trip will evaluate the applications and make the selections. Favourable consideration will be given to students who have never conducted research in an international setting and who submit a compelling research proposal. Special consideration will also be given to those who have never visited Asia.

b) Describe how non-ICM participants will contribute to the ICM.

Non-ICM participants will contribute by taking part in class discussions both before and after the field course, and will contribute to the conversation through the blog posts on the Asian Institute website and the Re:locations journal (a student-run journal at the Asian Institute). Students who do not participate in the ICMs will have their learning experience enhanced through hearing about the ICM students’ field research and observations, as well as benefitting from the deeply contextualized firsthand knowledge of the faculty members.

4) How does the ICM enhance students’ (both ICM participants and non-participants) classroom learning for the course in which it is embedded?

This module deepens the examination of Asian modernities, the guiding thematic goal of CAS400H. Furthermore, CAS400 seeks to develop critical social science methodologies, and the ICM will teach students how to critically examine and question key issues to do with migration in Asia from a multidisciplinary perspective, as well as how to carry out field research. It provides an opportunity to further develop and apply their classroom knowledge in a practical setting.

5) How will the ICM be incorporated into the course evaluation and marking scheme? Please describe the assignments and marking scheme for the ICM.

In CAS400H, all students are expected to write three reaction papers, and the ICM participants will be able to submit their ICM reaction paper as one of these. Students participating in the ICM will write a post-trip report on the fieldwork they carried out (4-6 pages), in addition to all of the regular assignments in the course. While regular CAS400 students are required to design and conduct a field research project in a site in the GTA, students participating in the ICM will carry out that assignment while they are abroad. The marking scheme will be unchanged.

6) How will participants share their experience with the wider Arts & Science community?
Student will share their experiences via: student blogs on the website for the Asian Institute and their home departments (if available), write news releases and analytical pieces for the Re:locations journal, and CORN (China Open Research Network), which is organized by U of T graduate students. Once they have returned to Toronto, students will be encouraged to disseminate their findings and reactions through an undergraduate academic journal (Synergy: The Journal of Contemporary Asian Studies). As in previous years, the Contemporary Asian Studies Student Union will organize a post-research panel for the students to share their experience and findings with other Arts and Science students. The group will also hold a public presentation hosted by the Asian Institute at the Munk School of Global Affairs.

7) What are the preliminary plans for meeting U of T Safety Abroad guidelines? (All students are required to attend a Safety Abroad Workshop and be registered on the U of T Safety Abroad Database.)
DFAIT travel advisories will be checked closer to the date of the trip, but it is not anticipated that a travel advisory will apply to the regions being visited. We will continue to monitor the safety ratings and local news in the cities being visited. All selected participants in the ICM will be required to attend a mandatory pre-departure orientation hosted by the U of T Safety Abroad office, where safety precautions will be clearly outlined. Students will be expected to acquire and forward their travel insurance prior to departure. The students and the accompanying faculty member will stay together as a group throughout the trip.

8) If you are applying for additional funding for planning and logistics, describe how these funds would be used. (e.g. planning prior to the module, administrative support, on-site coordination, etc.)
Funds are requested to cover the cost of logistical assistance and onsite coordination from an intermediary familiar with the area and with connections there. This is a substantial budget request and makes it possible for the faculty lead to manage the leadership of this ICM.

9) If funding is requested for multiple years, how will the success of the module be measured?
Success of the module will be measured based on the quality of the student research papers, the feedback from organizations and individuals visited in the host country, and the report of the faculty member who leads the trip. Student publications following the trip also allow them and us to reflect on their experience, and to continue to improve the course. Results from the previous experience are well publicized via the Asian Institute’s communications team.

PART III – Itinerary

ITINERARY – Yangon, Myanmar (November 2-11, 2018)

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<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fri. Nov. 2</td>
<td>Flight – Toronto to Yangon</td>
<td>• Depart Toronto</td>
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<td>Sun. Nov. 4</td>
<td>Briefing by Ar Yone Oo a medium sized local NGO doing development work</td>
<td>• Welcoming session</td>
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<td>across different parts in Myanmar</td>
<td>• Background session on decentralization in Myanmar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Meet with MIPS</td>
<td>• Orientation by MIPS, our primary counterpart organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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| Mon. Nov. 5 | Zaceau (UT alumni)  
Humanitarian Dialogue-  
Afternoon meeting with Canadian Ambassador  
Learn about humanitarian interventions and their intersections with decentralization  
Learn about Canada’s role and relations with governance change in Myanmar |
| Tues. Nov. 6 | Pegu Region Government  
Yangon University, Dr. Chaw and students  
- Background information on specific Pegu gender initiatives  
- Meet student counterparts and tour city in the evening |
| Weds. Nov. 7 | Enlighten Myanmar Research (Myat The Thitsar and Myat Thet Thitsar)  
Pyoe Pin International (at Ar Yone Oo) (Siu Sue Mark and Salai Thawng)  
Meeting with Civil Society organizations  
- Visit NGOs working on gender and decentralization  
- Discussion  
- Myanmar Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) |
| Thurs. Nov. 8 | Meet Two local business owners  
Meet with political parties (one senior USDP, one NLD, one ethnic political party)  
- Learn about local business challenges and successes in the context of regime change  
Learn about differences between political parties; group discussion |
| Frid. Nov. 9 | Yangon University, Dr. Chaw and students  
Lunch  
Meeting with one MPC staff Yan Naing-Today (Media)  
- Learn about student research projects related to decentralization and gender  
Meet with leaders of MPC |
| Sat. Nov. 10 | Independent research with local counterpart students  
Learn about local student research and carry out interviews with counterparts |
| Sun. Nov. 11 | Return to Toronto |