

RCSD and Development Studies

The Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD), at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University, was established in 1998 in response to the need for interdisciplinary, social science approaches to sustainable development issues in Southeast Asia. The Center builds upon decades of Chiang Mai University's social science research and teaching experience in the fields of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), highland-lowland agricultural and social systems, health and environmental politics, and ethnic and gender relations, linking graduate training and research to development theories, policies and practice.

Since 1999, RCSD has offered an MA in Sustainable Development which was developed to serve as the pivot of the Center's knowledge production. Responding to dynamism of social, economic and cultural transformations taking place at the local, national and regional levels in Southeast Asia, the MA program takes special effort to support insightful research and analysis of the social, environmental and cultural conundrums of modernization and development. Moreover, in keeping with the RCSD's commitment to the advocacy of cultural diversity, the program solicits for research on local knowledge and culture, with an emphasis on the ethnic minorities and marginalized groups who are so often adversely affected by mainstream development practices. RCSD maintains that the future of sustainable development in Southeast Asia hinges upon the embodiment of inclusive decision-making processes, respect for local knowledge and recognition of cultural difference. Through high-quality research and scholarship, RCSD intends to contribute to the realization of a sustainable regional future.

Since 2012, the international Master's degree title has changed from MA in Sustainable Development to MA in Social Science (Development Studies) in order to reflect both faculty and student interests in contemporary social science theories and cultural studies in variance of emerging social issues including transnational migration, border trade and cooperation, non-traditional securities, climate change and urban-rural interactions, non-state market driven governance, commodification and decommodification of land and natural resources, and political ecology. Although the MA Social Science (Development Studies) still retains its core expertise and value in the field of development studies, coursework and scholarship has oriented to contextualize regional connectivity resulting from regional economic integration via the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and the ASEAN Community.

Graduate Program

Philosophy and Objectives

The underlying philosophy of the revised program is to integrate theories and social research from different disciplines including geography, sociology and anthropology in order to analyze the complexities and problematic impacts of the development process resulting from changes to state policies, laws, trade and investment, manufacturing and production. The MA program examines changes in natural resource uses, cultural transformations among migrant and ethnic populations, and health problems in the mainland Southeast Asia region. Through its teaching and research, RCSD aims to support ethnic groups and marginal populations to adapt to the changes taking place and to seek development alternatives, to participate in the decision-making and policy formulation process, and to develop their potential in terms of adapting and challenging to future changes.

The curriculum places its emphasis on the social science dimension within the study of the development process and livelihood security of different groups of people, through three research agendas, as follows:

Environment and Development

The quest for development and modernity continues to take its toll on natural resources and the environment, which diverse groups depend upon for their livelihoods. The Environment and Development stream of the international MA program is designed to equip students with critical conceptual tools to understand and analyze the issues of sustainable development, politics of the environment, access and control of natural resources, enclosure of resources and the social construction of nature. Students examine the complex social relations embedded in environment and development interactions in the emerging economies in the region.

Regionalization and Transnationalization

This stream of the MA program focuses on changes arising from regionalization in mainland Southeast Asia, such as ecological networks, energy and trade communications, plus the transnational relations and cultural flows facilitated by media and infrastructural development. Emphasis is placed on the diversity of social and cultural relations experienced at different levels and the increasingly complex livelihood patterns of different groups of people across a number of dimensions and scales.

Politics of difference

While regionalization policies in mainland Southeast Asia ostensibly aspire to unify peoples by transcending national boundaries, in reality, the processes of economic regionalization have impacted different ethnic and social groups unevenly. This stream of the MA program focuses on the politics of difference in the context of regionalization. Social differences, in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, class, and social identity, are contingencies of research problematization. This stream encourages students to deepen their analysis of the increasingly complex cultural and social dimensions of the globalized world. In the context of regional development, both collaboration and conflict commonly arise along the boundaries of social and cultural differences.

Program Aims

The MA in Social Science (Development Studies) strives to develop a methodology that transcends static or essentialist modes of thinking. The body of knowledge taught, therefore, is derived from dynamic models which are suited to social and environmental contexts. The program uses multiple methods to encourage learning from local experience, and seeks to enhance local participation in development processes and in the management of cultural and natural resources.

We encourage our students to develop innovative alternative approaches for the promotion of sustainable development based on ecological sustainability, respect for cultural diversity and security of local livelihoods through the participation of local people. Research topics focus on natural and cultural resource management, local knowledge, sustainable development, health, cross-border migration and gender relations.

Our Graduates

Graduates from the MA in Social Science (Development Studies) acquire the following skills and perspectives:

- A holistic understanding of concepts and methods in social science disciplines, enabling them to study the development process from many perspectives and draw upon an understanding of the wider context of social and ecological change.
- A deep understanding of the complexity of development issues, so as to have an ability to analyze the problems and impacts of development in the past, present and future.
- A strong potential for offering alternatives for the direction of sustainable development, based on field-research.
- The ability to synthesize their academic knowledge with local knowledge, and apply it to practical issues in their respective areas of interest.



Curriculum Structure International program Master of Art in Social Science (Development Studies)

Study Plan:	Coursework and Thesis	
Course duration:	Study for 2 academic years,	
Total credits:	36 credits	
	A. Coursework (a minimum of)	21 Credits
	B. Thesis	15 Credits

1st Academic Year:

1st Semester (August-December)	9 Credits
169701 Social Science Theories (Core course)	3 Credits
166701 Development Theories (Core course)	3 Credits
Elective Course	3 Credits
2nd Semester (January-May)	12 Credits
169703 Research Methodology in Social Sciences(Core course)	3 Credits
166791 Seminar: Special Issues on Development Studies (Core course)	3 Credits
Elective Course	3 Credits
Elective Course	3 Credits

2nd Academic Year:

1st Semester (August-December)	
169799 M.A. Thesis	15 Credits
2nd Semester (January-May)	
Enrollment for University services	0 Credits

Elective courses

166711 Regionalization in Development Process	3 credits
166721 Knowledge, Rights and Globalisation	3 credits
166731 Cultural economy	3 credits
166741 Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia	3 credits
166751 Transborder Studies	3 credits
166761 Land relations in Southeast Asia	3 credits
166789 Selected Topics on Development Studies	3 credits
154714 Political Ecology	3 credits
154711 Environmentalism and Public Policy	3 credits
159723 Economic Sociology and Anthropology	3 credits
159712 Resource Governance and Civil Society	3 credits

Note: The enrollment for elective courses depend on availability of courses in each semester.

Tuition Fee

	Total Tuition Fee (4 semesters)	Number of semester for the payment	The amount of payment per semester
Non-Thai residents	THB 320,000.-	4 semesters	THB 80,000.-
Thai	THB 240,000.-	4 semesters	THB 60,000.-

Further cost will apply as follows;

Details	Approximately Amount (Baht)
Reading materials (photocopy)	5,000.-
Field Research expenses	20,000-40,000.- Budget is depending on the researches.
English Editing (For non-native English Speakers)	15,000-20,000.-
Required Academic activity: International conference or Publication; -Registration Fee -Transportation -Accommodation	The budget is depending on where the conferences students want to attend.
Thesis book printing	2,500-3,000.-
Visa (For non-Thai residents)	Please check the visa fee with the Thai Embassy and Chiang Mai Immigration Office

Living cost in Chiang Mai is approximately 12,000 – 15,000 Baht per month. Housing cost, a room in apartment or condominium, is around 5,000-10,000 Baht per month.

Student Visa

Chiang Mai University will provide visa-documents for students such as a certify letter or acceptance letter which is required by the Thai Embassy or Chiang Mai Immigration.

However, **it is the student's responsibility** to know the requirements, rules and regulations including visa fees from The **Thai Embassy or Chiang Mai Immigration**.

Recently the Thai immigration laws and regulations have been changed for National security reasons. Students are expected to be aware of the new immigration laws and regulations;

1. Notification of staying over 90 days
2. Notification of residence
3. Re-entry Permit
4. Re-new student visa
5. Valid passport for the length of staying in Thailand

If students have a difficulty to communicate with the immigration officers or uncertain with the regulations. Students must inform our support staff immediately.

Admission Procedure

Qualifications

- All applicants who have a bachelor degree or equivalent in any discipline, as accredited by the Ministry of University Affairs, are eligible to apply for the MA in Social Science (Development Studies).
- Applicants must also have passed TOEFL with a score of at least 500 (paper-based), 173 (computer-based) or 61 (internet-based), or have passed IELTS with a score of 5.5, or have passed CMU-TEGS with a score of at least 65, or CU-TEP 75 or, TU-GET 550 or KU-EPT 5.5

Interview

If an applicant's written application is successful, he or she will be invited to attend an entrance interview held by RCSD staff. Candidates will be informed of the time and place of the interview via e-mail. Candidates who successfully pass the interview stage will be eligible for admission to the program.

Admission Schedule

Activities	Date/2019
Call for applications 2019	1 December 2018 – 31 March 2019
Last day to submit written applications and online application	31 March 2019
Interview	April 2019 *All applicants will be informed the date for the interview via email.
Announcement for successful candidates	Within two weeks after the interview * All applicants will be informed the result of the interview via email.
New students Registration and tuition fees payment	31 July 2019
Preparation course for new students	July 2019 *we will announce the schedule in April 2019
Orientation for new Graduate students by RCSD center	To be announced
Online course enrollment for new students	1-11 August 2019
First day of semester/classes	5 August 2019

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