

# ANTH 329

## ANTHROPOLOGY OF SOUTHEAST ASIA: MAGIC, MONEY, AND NATURE

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*INSTRUCTOR: DAROMIR RUDNYCKYJ*

**-NEW COURSE-**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

The goal of this course is to introduce students to key contemporary issues and problems in Southeast Asian cultures and societies. Southeast Asia is home to some of the world's most dynamic, fast growing economies in the world. Through analysis of text and film we will seek to understand dimensions of society and culture in Southeast Asia through three core themes: money, magic, and nature. In addressing how these themes are often interconnected we seek to understand some of the key forces that shape society and culture in this region today. In examining the role of money we will endeavour to understand how increasing wealth creates new social and cultural patterns and experiences. Engagement with the supernatural is often critical to patterns of life in contemporary Southeast Asia and we will explore the role that magic and religion play in these societies. Finally, this region is well known as home to some of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet and we will examine the social and cultural significance of Southeast Asia's verdant forests, abundant seas, and fertile landscapes. We will pay special attention to the ways in which natural and agricultural resources have been pivotal to economic development and social change in this region. This class is not so much intended to facilitate the memorization of a set of facts about contemporary Southeast Asia, rather we are interested in developing facility with a set of concepts and ways of thinking about the region. Evaluation will be based on written work, exams, and attendance and participation.

### **SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Students will understand how human life in Southeast Asia is shaped by local, regional and global forces and dynamics.
- Students will understand how social, cultural, economic, and political processes interconnect and impact human lives in contemporary Southeast Asia.
- Students will learn to think comparatively across time and place to understand the human condition.
- Develop the ability to understand ideas and behaviours in Southeast Asian cultural and social contexts.
- Summarize and synthesize information in a comprehensive and succinct manner
- Write effectively and develop communication skills.
- Develop critical thinking and reading skills.