ABSTRACT OF ASK 2008-2011
ADVANCED STUDY OF KHMER (ASK)
SUMMER ABROAD PROGRAM IN PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

The Advanced Study of Khmer (ASK) Summer Abroad Program is an intensive eight-week Khmer language-training program held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It aims to fill a void in the US academic community by providing 3rd-year level Khmer students with a "one-of-a-kind" opportunity to acquire the linguistic foundation necessary to engage in academic research, professional discourse, and cultural immersion with all segments of Cambodian society.

This program is administered by the College of Languages and Literature at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM), and sponsored by the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) in Cambodia. The ASK project will increase the number of linguistically-competent Khmer-speaking professionals available for employment in federal agencies, departments responsible for national security, and all non-governmental agencies. It will promote scholarly cooperation and cultural and socio-economic understanding between Cambodia and the US.

The ASK curriculum is intensive and implements eight instructional modules based on ACTFL proficiency guidelines. Instruction is given to small individualized groups taught by Khmer language instructors from the Institute of Foreign Languages (IFL) at RUPP. ASK is a structured academic program consisting of four hours of formal classroom instruction each morning, followed by a three-hour pre-arranged afternoon site visit and related task-based learning opportunities to observe, analyze, interact, and experience issues introduced in the morning sessions, as well as to practice language skills. These activities include meetings with governmental offices, local non-governmental organizations, and businesses, and encourage student interaction with all segments of Cambodian society. In addition, the curriculum includes a one-week home-stay with rural families in local villages, day-long weekend field trips to outlying areas of Phnom Penh, and a one-week heritage, cultural preservation, and tourism module in which the program participants will visit Siem Reap. In language study, immersion is fluency's best guarantee.

The project director for this program is Dr. Chhany Sak-Humphry. She has taught classes in Khmer language at UHM for twenty-five years and has developed extensive teaching materials for these classes. She strongly believes that total immersion is the best opportunity for students to learn, grow to enjoy, and understand the Khmer language, culture and people. Proficiency in language provides students with the foundation necessary for academic growth, research skills, and future career opportunities. In addition, the ASK project will address the domestic and international shortage of proficient Khmer speakers.

Please see the ASK program website to learn more about the program, program requirements, or to apply online.

http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/ask
http://khmer.hawaii.edu/ask
http://phnompenh.usembassy.gov/advanced_study_of_khmer_ask_program.html