



GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK OPTIONS

The Maekok River Village Outdoor Education Centre has been offering fieldwork at junior, GCSE, AS and A levels; and I.B. for 14 years. Northern Thailand offers a range of opportunities to carry out quality fieldwork across human and physical geography, and environmental geography. The work carried out is aimed at

- a) providing quality coursework
- b) teaching fieldwork skills
- c) as well as providing unique case studies.

All fieldwork is planned to meet the needs of the different syllabuses and all written materials and necessary equipment is provided by the centre.

There are two air-conditioned classrooms with projector and screens for planning and follow-up work

Examples of field notes are available for inspection.

The centre also offers a range of outdoor activities and fieldwork students are given the opportunity during their fieldwork 'week' to enjoy a few distractions such as using rafting, climbing, archery, team challenges and even learning to cook some Thai dishes. Our resident instructors are responsible for these, so teachers can be happy in the knowledge that their students are being engaged from dawn until bedtime!

GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK

We offer the opportunity of fieldwork in the immediate area as well as more urban-oriented fieldwork in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, and several schools undertake fieldwork in these cities interesting city, as well as in the Thaton area.

TYPE OF FIELDWORK	AIM AND NATURE OF FIELDWORK
RIVER STUDIES	
Fluvial characteristics of the Mae Ai River / Huay Ngam Nam or Mae Sao Rivers	The pattern of discharge, bedload and gradient from near to the source to where the river flows into the main rivers can be measured. Differences from the expected pattern can be explained by studying the human influences on the river and drainage basin.
Human impact on the Mae Ai, Huay Ngam Nam or Mae Sao Rivers.	The rivers' sources are in heavily forested areas, but flow through areas impacted by people. There are various weirs and dams located on the stream and areas of intense farming. The influence of all these on the flow characteristics and the quality of water can be measured primarily using macro-invertebrate indicator species, but also pH, turbidity, temperature and various water chemistry tests.

SETTLEMENT/POPULATION/DEVELOPMENT STUDIES	
Landuse patterns in Chiang Mai	The aim of this fieldwork is to 'geographically' locate the city centre and to consider whether Chiang Mai's unique history of growth and development has resulted in a unique urban pattern which varies from 'conventional' models.
Urban issues in Chiang Mai	Chiang Mai has grown rapidly over the last 25 years or. It exhibits all the attendant problems of a 'typical less-developed world city'. A study of migration patterns, plus the urban problem and planning issues, provides excellent case study material other than that provided in the usual textbooks. This includes a study of the recent phenomenon of 'suburbanization' which illustrates all the typical characteristics of this process.
Land use patterns in Chiang Rai	Two very different areas of Chiang Rai are compared. One is an area popular amongst Chiang Rai residents for daily shopping and the other is in the main tourist area. Students collect data on land use, environmental quality, traffic and pedestrian movement to explore the variations.
Spheres of influence, accessibility and perception	A study of the movement patterns of people in different sized settlements to consider 'perceived' distances and the influence of accessibility and perceptions on mobility.
Land use patterns in Fang	This simple study involves plotting land use along a transect through the centre of this small town and collecting data on pedestrian flow in order to attempt to explain the observed patterns.
Hierarchy patterns	Comparison of 12 different settlements in the area allows students to see if conventional models of size and function are appropriate in developing societies. In collecting and analysing data on quality of life, accessibility, tourist facilities and ethnicity, interesting conclusions can be reached. Spearman Rank is applied to test the significance of various relationships.
Levels of economic development / quality of life in hilltribe villages	This study involves a minimum of 10 Lahu hilltribe villages and students collect data to assess the relative wealth of these villages and use other factors such as accessibility to explain these variations. This lends itself to the application of Spearman Rank.
Migration patterns: Fang, Mae Ai and Tha Ton and or Chiang Rai / Chiang Mai compared.	A comparison can be made of the migration patterns of two, three or four different sized settlements to see if there are any distinct variations which can be explained and to see if the patterns conform to 'models' of migration behaviour.
SOIL STUDIES	
Impact of shifting cultivation	The effect of shifting cultivation on soils can be assessed by studying the soil quality between an area of undisturbed soils with those in an area which has been cultivated by a hilltribes for over 50 year using traditional 'slash and burn' or shifting cultivation techniques. Variations in soil characteristics are considered – moisture content, humus content, pH, infiltration capacity, as well as soil texture. The Chi Square Test is used see if there is significant difference in texture between the two locations.

TOURISM	
Tourism in Tha Ton	The impact of tourism is studied by a comparative study - collecting data in Thaton on land use, environmental quality, traffic, prices of goods and land, and local peoples' perceptions of tourists, and comparing this data with that collected similarly from a nearby village which does not receive any tourists.
Tourism in Chiang Mai	Using bipolar semantic methods, the tourists perception of Chiang Mai as a tourist destination compared to Bangkok is 'measured' and conclusions drawn. Additional data is collected on environmental quality and traffic and pedestrian flows.
AGRICULTURAL STUDIES	
Agricultural patterns in the Fang Valley: Orange plantations Subsistence (hilltribe) agriculture	<p>System diagrams is used to consider the various inputs, processes and outputs of large scale commercial farming enterprises. A comparison can be made with local hill tribe subsistence rice farming.</p> <p>An additional study can be made of the environmental issues surrounding both of these methods of farming. (see soil studies above)</p>