

WHEATON/RTC SEMESTER ABROAD CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This overview is intended to acquaint you with the different ways the four courses you will be taking in the Wheaton/RTC program and how they may relate to one another. Though these four courses have different names, entail different kinds of experiences, and require different kinds of assignments, their subject matter and experiences will often be intimately related. The research paper you complete for the practicum might also be informed by what you learn and experience in all four of these courses.

Three courses that are coordinated by the Wheaton Faculty Resident Director.

These three courses are specially designed for students participating in the Wheaton/Royal Thimphu College program. (*Wheaton Course numbers are listed in parentheses. All three of these courses fulfill Wheaton's Beyond the West requirement.*)

Contemporary Bhutanese Society (INT 260, SOC 298, PSYCH 298) Students will examine the Bhutanese path of pursuing social, economic, and political development and consider other issues of importance in contemporary Bhutanese life. The course will consist of a weekly series of invited lectures and discussions with eminent Bhutanese leaders, writers, scholars, policy makers, and activists. These lectures will be open to the RTC community as part of our partnership with RTC. (In the past the audiences for these lectures has been relatively small, allowing for plenty of interaction with the speaker.)

Topics addressed may include: the importance of Buddhism in Bhutanese culture. The Bhutanese economy, political structures, environmental issues, education in Bhutan and changes in family and gender roles. Throughout the course, we will how Bhutan is attempting to maintain its cultural traditions in the face of rapid social change. Students meet with the Wheaton Faculty member in seminar to discuss the lectures in relation to relevant assigned readings.

Practicum in Bhutan (INT 360, SOC 298, PSYCH 334) This is a service learning course for students in the Royal Thimphu College/Wheaton College Partnership Program. In this course, you learn about Bhutanese society through your active involvement in Bhutanese organizations in the capital city of Thimphu and surrounding areas. The practicum provides you with an opportunity to immerse yourself individually (or with partners) in the world of work in Bhutan in a placement that will help you to pursue your particular interests.

Students spend six to ten hours per week in a supervised fieldwork practicum in a governmental, NGO, or human service agency that focuses on such topics as environmentalism, political change, community development, youth activities, media, religion, art, and women's issues. Each student has a field supervisor who, together with the instructor, will provide regular field supervision, feedback, and evaluation. In addition, you will meet weekly in seminar

with the Wheaton faculty member to reflect on your experiences and to discuss issues and problems related to your fieldwork as well as the challenges of working in another culture. As part of this course, students will also pursue an independent research project that may or may not be related to their practicum site under the guidance of the Wheaton faculty member. This affords students the opportunity of either reflecting more deeply upon their experiences at their practicum site, or pursuing a different topic of particular interest to them.

Placement sites have included: Jigme Loessel Middle School, The Royal Society for the Preservation of Nature, RENEW (Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women), Project READ (Read, Education and Development) Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy, The National Biodiversity Center, SABAH (business association of home based workers), Institute for Zorig Chusum (dedicated to preserving the basic arts and crafts of Bhutan), Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children & Youth, the Bhutan Nuns Foundation, and The Gross National Happiness Foundation.

Bhutanese Language and Culture (INT 250, ANTH 298) This course is taught by a Dzongkha professor from RTC in collaboration with the Wheaton Faculty member. It combines language instruction with cultural exposure. The language instruction portion of the course is open to Wheaton Program students and other international students at RTC. Students in the Wheaton program will have additional fieldtrips to study Bhutanese culture as well as extended excursions. These half-day field trips will include trips to market places, temples, and cultural preservation sites near Thimphu. Extended excursions will allow students to see other parts of Bhutan. These fieldtrips and excursions will allow students to practice their Dzongkha while learning about Bhutanese culture.

Elective RTC course (Wheaton course numbers vary.) Your RTC course, taught by a Royal Thimphu College instructor as part of the RTC curriculum, immerses you not only in a topic of your choice, but also in the environment in which your fellow Bhutanese students learn and live. In this course you are not only learners but teachers, modeling for other students the interactive participation and critical thinking that RTC hopes to instill in its students, for whom, in the majority of cases, this learning style is new. Attached is a list of RTC courses have been approved for credit for Wheaton/RTC Partnership Program students.

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