

**International Program:
MA in Social Science (Development Studies)
Specialization in Land Issues**



**MEKONG
LAND**
RESEARCH FORUM

RCSD The Regional Center for Social Science
and Sustainable Development
Chiang Mai University

(cover photo: IWA)

Introduction

Land governance is a concept that cuts across academic disciplines, bridging social and environmental sciences, an understanding of legal frameworks, political economy and policy studies. At national and regional levels, policy in Southeast Asia has sometimes supported the development of dynamic land markets, while at other times it has sought to curtail excessive accumulation. Governments give concessions to foreign investors on the basis that they promote economic growth, while at the same time many question the impact of land deals on rural smallholders and sustainable land use.

A specialization in land issues within RCSD's MA program in development studies aims to equip students with an applied understanding of concepts such as access, rights, administration, and tenure security, and an ability to grasp regional dynamics, national policy questions and local perspectives on land.



(Photo: REUTERS/ Jorge Silva)

Master of Arts in Social Sciences (Development Studies)

Since 1999, Chiang Mai University has offered an MA in Sustainable Development. This was developed as a centerpiece of knowledge production for the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD). The center was established in 1998, in response to the need for interdisciplinary approaches to sustainable development issues in Southeast Asia. Responding to social, economic and cultural transformations at local, national and regional levels, the MA program supports insightful research and analysis of the social, environmental and cultural conundrums of modernization and development.

In 2012 the degree title changed to MA in Social Science (Development Studies), reflecting faculty and student interests in contemporary social science theories. Emerging social issues include transnational migration, border studies, climate change, urban-rural interactions, non-state market driven governance, land and natural resources, and political ecology. Coursework and scholarship have been oriented to contextualize regional connectivity resulting from regional economic integration via the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and the ASEAN Community. The international program in development studies is taught in English.

A specialization in land issues was introduced in 2017. This reflects a return to a founding concern for RCSD, namely that of social dimensions of resource and environmental management, and in particular forestry. Reframed under the concept of 'land-grabbing', there is revitalized interest in the development of land markets and their impact upon the rights of local users among academics, activists and researchers in the region. Through the specialization, Chiang Mai University provides training benefitting a new generation of researchers and administrators working in the field of land governance.

Academic Program

The specialization in land issues integrates into the course structure of the MA in Social Sciences (Development Studies). It comprises two principal fields of study within the following study plan:

Study Plan:	Coursework and Thesis	
Course duration :	Study for 2 academic years	
Total credits:		36 Credits
	A .Coursework	21 Credits
	B .Thesis	15 Credits



(Photo: Philip Hirsch)

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 Credit
169703 Research Methodology in Social Science (Core course)	3 Credits
166791 Seminar Special Issues on Development Studies (Core course)	3 Credits
166761 Land Relations in Southeast Asia (Elective Course compulsory for specialization in land issues)	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 (subject to availability)

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
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

Under the current study plan, coursework is completed in the first year with the second-year devoted to field research and thesis writing. Coursework is divided into core and elective components. In developing a specialization in land issues, linkages are made throughout the study program by faculty staff. The centerpiece for participating students is the module '*Land Relations in Southeast Asia*'. This will explore long-standing and current issues that surround land in the region. A cluster of staff will teach around topics such as:

- Large-scale land developments and concessions
- Policy issues including property and titling
- Access and exclusion
- Land and food security
- Agrarian transformation
- Urban land governance
- Regionalized land relations

Students will be encouraged to translate between micro- and macro-levels of analysis, gaining a strong grounding through case studies in different communities and countries of the region, but also capable of contextualizing in terms of regional dynamics (such as ASEAN).

As well as the course module, a specialization in land issues also offers:

- Identified components on land within other core and elective course modules
- Graduate seminars and presentations from visiting scholars and organizations in the region
- Project work using the online facility of the Mekong Land Research Forum, and taking part in associated research, thereby increasing knowledge and case study experience in the region

- Attendance at the annual Land Research Summer School, held at Chiang Mai University
- Tailored thesis research in land issues, including assistance with internships and regional networking
- Conceptual and practical support from the Mekong Land Research Forum
- Connection with other academic institutions in the region who are also working with land issues, with an opportunity for study and teaching exchanges

The specialization is taught in English. Each year is split into two semesters, with the first semester running from August to November and the second semester running from January to May.



(The annual Land Research Summer School 2017. Photo: Tubtim Tubtim)

The Mekong Land Research Forum:

Since July 2015, RCSD has housed the Mekong Land Research Forum, with support from the MRLG (Mekong Region Land Governance) program. Through the forum, RCSD seeks to **encourage** research on land governance, **connect** researchers looking into issues of land governance in the Mekong Region (namely Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam), and **facilitate** ready access to their work.

The Mekong Land Research Forum has been actualized in three principal ways, which support students working on land issues:

1. An online resource

Maintaining, enhancing and fostering utilization of an online resource offers access to both published and unpublished research. Different search avenues include a conceptual framework through twelve key themes on land. Annotations of specific articles are also provided, and students will be invited to participate in progressive annotation of key bibliographic items. A vital accessing point of research, the resource acts as a core educational tool for integration into Master's training on land issues.

2. A research network

This brings together those in academic institutions, NGOs and where relevant government agencies, with a research interest on current land issues, and provides a platform by which they may exchange, debate and collaborate. The network considers, through moderated online and face-to-face discussions, the latest country-specific or regional trends in land governance, alongside conceptual, technical and methodological approaches. As well as offering a useful knowledge resource to students,

it is hoped that information on their own research will be reciprocated back to the network.

3. Education outreach program

A specialization on land issues on impact and policy within the MA in Social Science (Development Studies) represents a core activity to facilitate the training of a new generation of researchers. Support will be provided to students concerning their own thesis research, connecting them with appropriate experts around the Mekong Region, and providing suitable mentoring.

For more information on the Mekong Land Research Forum, please visit <http://www.mekonglandforum.org> or contact the project coordinator at mekonglandforum@gmail.com. For further information on the MRLG program, please visit <http://mrlg.org/>



(Photo: SDC – Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation)

Our graduates

Land governance is a critical issue for the region, and there is a lack of qualified academics and professionals working in this field in the Mekong Region. The specialization in land issues within the MA international program in Social Science will help fill this gap. A graduating student is expected to possess the following skills:

- Expertise in conducting research, from methodology to data collection, analysis and reporting
- Contact with a regional network of researchers on land issues
- Contact with a wide range of inter-related topics, with the ability to communicate across multiple fields, between academia, civil society, and policy-makers
- An ability to scale up and down, from a consideration of local issues to a contextualization within regional dynamics

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 -Transport -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

The living cost in Chiang Mai is approximately 10,000 – 12,000 baht per month. Housing cost, a room in apartment or condominium, is around 5,000 Baht per month.



(Photo: Philip Hirsch)

Scholarships

Applicants are urged to seek their own financial support from private, as well as government sources, in their own countries. A limited number of scholarships from the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development are available for students following a specialization in land issues, who demonstrate excellent academic performance. More details can be obtained from RCSD.

Shortlisted applicants for the scholarship will be invited for an interview, which will be held either in the applicant's home country or online.

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.

Contact: rscsd@cmu.ac.th, Support staff: rungthiwa.hacker@gmail.com

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.



(Photo: Indohun)

How to Apply

Step 1: Submit written application to the MA program via email, rcsd@cmu.ac.th

- 1) A completed application form (you can type the form)
 - 2) A copy of passport (passport must be valid)
 - 3) JPG-file photograph (passport/ID style)
 - 4) An official **transcript** written in English
 - 5) A copy of your degree certificate(s) (with English translation)
 - 6) Letters of recommendation (at least 2 letters)
 - 7) Certificate of **English Proficiency**; (at least one of the following)
 - A: TOEFL at least 500 (PBT), 173 (CBT), 61 (IBT)
 - B: IELTS at least 5.5
 - C: CMU-eTEGS at least 65
 - D: CU-TEP at least 75
 - E: TU-GET at least 550
 - F: KU-EPT at least 5.5
- Note: - English Certification must be current for the application period.
- Applicants must submit an official copy of the English Certificate
- This requirement does not apply to all native English speakers
- 8) The applicant's proposed research outline or a statement of tentative project, connecting to the topic of land

Step 2: Complete online application for the Graduate School

Link: <https://www.grad.cmu.ac.th/main.php?p=83&lang=en>

Information for completing Graduate School's online application:

Admission:	for Semester 1 st , Academic Year 2019 (Thai year 2562)
Level:	Master Degree
Study plan:	Type 2 (Coursework and Thesis)
Name of the program:	International program, Master of Arts in Social Science Track Development Studies
Admission fee:	900 baht

For further inquiries, please contact "Ann": rungthiwa.hacker@gmail.com

Mobile: +66 (0)81 951 0049 or +66 (0)53 943 595 #21



(The annual Land Research Summer School 2017. Photo: Tubtim Tubtim)

Schedule for admission

Activities	Date/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 through email.
Registration and tuition fees payment for new students	August 2019
Preparation course for new students	Beginning 15 July with the Annual Land Relations Summer School, Chiang Mai
Orientation for new Graduate students by RCSD center	To be announced
Online course enrollment for new students	To be announced
First day of semester/classes	5 August

For further inquiries on admissions please contact: rcsd@cmu.ac.th or support staff: rungthiwa.hacker@gmail.com

Phone: +66 53 493 595 ext.21 (Ann)

RCSD

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The Learning Space for Sustainable Development

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