

**Sabbatical Proposal and Application:
ESL Certification and Teaching Experience
Sydney Sims, Moorpark College
2020-2021**

I am applying for a one-year sabbatical to earn a certification in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). I propose to complete the certification in four weeks and then gain experience teaching ESL in Thailand for the remainder of the academic year. The program is offered at International House in Chiang Mai, Thailand, which offers the CELTA Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults on behalf of Cambridge University. I would also be studying Thai intensively with a private teacher to increase my understanding and fluency.

Instruction (from the International House website)

- 4-week intensive training course for experienced or first-time TEFL teachers who need an internationally recognized qualification.
- 120 hours of course work with 6 hours observed teaching and 6 hours teaching practice.
- 4 written assignments on the theory and practical aspects of TEFL.
- A maintained and evaluated portfolio of work.

Courses start every month; I would expect to complete the certificate in July 2020 and to teach from August 2020 through May 2021. International House also assists graduates in finding a teaching placement. Thai schools typically request a one-year commitment, but shorter assignments can be arranged. I would be willing to work for a very modest salary or to volunteer, so as not to exceed the financial limitations of the sabbatical.

Value to instruction or service to students

ESL: Earning a TEFL certificate will give me minimum qualifications to teach ESL courses, both credit and non-credit.

English: English courses frequently include non-native speakers. Education and experience in TEFL will give me greater sensitivity to their challenges and strategies to help them succeed in English and other disciplines. ESL training will also equip me with techniques and ideas to inspire and encourage all students, native speakers and English language learners alike.

Value to the college

Currently all Moorpark ESL courses, both credit and non-credit, are taught by a single instructor, Daniela Guevara. The college is about to launch an extensive marketing campaign to increase ESL enrollment. This should result in the addition of more sections of ESL, which I would be qualified to teach. I would also be able to fill in for Professor Guevara in case of any unforeseen absences or leaves.

Value to the district

If an ESL instructor or substitute is needed at another college in the district, I would be available to teach.

Value to my professional competence

TEFL: I have taught a foreign language (Swedish, at UC Berkeley) and some casual ESL in a previous visit to Thailand (to Buddhist nuns and to middle school students) so I am familiar with the challenges and rewards of teaching a second language: it requires creativity, flexibility, and nimble thought. It's also great fun, and forges deep and lasting friendships. This formal training would give me much wider competence and confidence in the classroom for both ESL and English classes.

Thai Language: I have basic-to-intermediate ability in Thai. Expanding my Thai listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills will deepen my insight into Moorpark students' challenges in mastering English; give me fuller access to the people, language, and culture of Thailand; refresh my enthusiasm; and build new neural pathways in my aging brain.

Previous sabbatical leaves

I have received two previous sabbaticals, the first (1997-98) to read a variety of modern novels and poetry and to teach English to Thai nuns, and the second (2008-09) to study Holistic/Mindfulness Education.

Information from the International House Chiang Mai website:

CELTA: Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (now known as Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

International House Chiang Mai is one of Asia's finest training centres for those seeking the internationally-recognized Cambridge Assessment English **CELTA or Delta** qualifications. The CELTA is the world's foremost certification for English teachers and is offered at 280 centres in over 50 countries around the world. Each year more than 10,000 trainees take the course, making it a pillar of global English language education.

IH Chiang Mai is affiliated with the The International House World Organisation (IHWO), a leader in teacher training since the 1950s and the first institution to offer distance learning for CELTA trainees on Cambridge's behalf. The IH global network comprises 150 schools around the world and trains more than 3,000 teachers per year on its well respected CELTA and Delta programmes.

IH is committed to improving the quality of language teaching worldwide. IH trainees not only receive the world's leading TEFL qualifications, but also work with an international leader in ELT training.

The CELTA course content covers the following syllabus:

- Language Analysis and Awareness.
- The Learner, the Teacher and the Learning/Teaching Context.
- Planning for Effective Teaching.
- Classroom Management Skills.
- Teaching Procedures and Techniques.
- Resources and Materials.
- Professional Development.
- Classroom Observation.
- Teaching Practice.

For a detailed description of the program and facilities, see the International House Chiang Mai website:

<https://www.ihchiangmai.com/teacher-training/celta/chiang-mai/>