

Pre Requisites, Spring Semester:

- W.L.C. 120, Chinese for Travelers - 2 units
- Geography 472, The Geography of China and Tibet - 3 units
- Substantial upper division course work in your respective major.

Program Courses:

- Geography 411: Senior Field Research - 4 units
- Geography 499: Geographic Documentation - 4 units

Funding:

- Financial aid is available to qualified students.

Selection Process:

- Travel abroad is challenging and requires maturity, endurance, tolerance and a strong sense of responsibility. In addition to satisfactorily completing the academic prerequisites, the selection process includes faculty recommendations, strict health and cultural protocols and intensive preparation including the development of a thoroughly prepared research plan. Prior to departure there are a series of mandatory orientation meetings and group outdoor activities.

Collateral Benefits:

- By actively engaging in the entire process students will make the best use of the learning opportunities that arise, tap inner strengths and emerge tempered and empowered by the experience.

Those fully committed to the experience can expect that this program will not only add a valuable chapter to their overall education, but that it may provide some individuals with a career focus and perhaps an inspiration for, and or preparation for, graduate school or careers in teaching or NGO work.

In large part, the success of this program is due to the active involvement of highly motivated individuals. Taking advantage of the opportunities offered the majority of participants achieve notable results and return to HSU with a broader global perspective and their role in it.

"...on-location in China and Tibet opened my mind to a new view of myself as an American and gave me a fresh perspective and awareness of the cultural, political and economic differences between America and other countries,"

Melissa Baughn, 2002 HSU graduate and recent Fulbright Scholarship recipient.

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H.S.U. GEOGRAPHY

China & Tibet Field Research Program

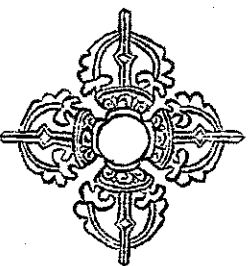


Harrison Forrester, 2006

Great Rivers of eastern Tibet

There is no more remarkable strip of crust on earth than that where the great rivers of eastern Tibet also jostle each other in their eagerness to escape from the roof of the world. They issue from Tibet through a grooved slot in the backbone of Asia, and are squeezed between two of the mightiest uplifts in the world. Deep down in their troughs they rage.

F. Kingdon Ward, 1922



Set against a backdrop of great economic and social change, this program is a unique opportunity to explore, research and document the physical and cultural geography of western China and Tibet.

Program Goals

- 1st - provide a greater awareness of the land and peoples of China and Tibet.
- 2nd - foster and develop specific technical and personal research skills.
- 3rd - enhance our participants overall learning experience by engaging in community service projects.

Specific needs addressed by this program include satisfying certain departmental graduation requirements, providing students with practical field experience and adding important course work to the HSU China Studies Curriculum and minor.

Though there is a general focus on China, the main area of study is Tibet and our principal task is to identify and chronicle the physical, cultural and spiritual attributes of its landscape.

Traveling overland, our annual field trip takes students from the ancient Yellow River and Yangtze River Basin to the high grasslands and deep valleys of the Tibetan Plateau. While addressing research questions and engaging in site analysis projects, students will confront contemporary environmental, economic and social issues.

Specific study sites are chosen that not only address individual research topics but also best represent significant aspects of Tibet and clearly defines its distinct sense of place. While in the "Land of Snows", students have conducted surveys of the health, education and transportation systems, taken elevation and GPS readings, identified distinguishing physical landforms and climatic regimes, observed the rate and impact of economic development and noted ethnic composition and distribution. The controversial dynamic of Sino-Tibetan relations is explored as well as issues within Tibetan Buddhism.

Research projects also contribute to our regional survey of Tibet's unique art and architecture which is an ongoing part of the program. Every year a number of remote religious sites are located and their current state of preservation and cultural integrity recorded.

The development and use of objective field research skills is an important aspect of this program. This includes not only the ability to accumulate and analyze information and data, but also involves the development of a whole array of skills related to travel, access and cross-cultural communication. These will have value wherever the student works in the future.

Community Service

It has long been our ambition to give something back to our host communities and in recent years we have been able to help renovate a rural clinic in eastern Tibet, contributed to the upkeep of a Tashithang Boarding school in northeastern Tibet and sponsored Tibetan students to learn Buddhist art. In 2006 we returned to Tashithang and installed a solar energy system designed by a participant of the 2005 field trip.



Solar project designer Morgan Zinger, foreground, guiding the installation.

Plans are currently underway to design and help build a greenhouse at the Karoethang primary school in eastern Tibet.



Classroom and students, Karoethang Primary School, Bayan Har County.