A performance by the Somapa Thai Dance Company on Monday evening, Oct. 29 will highlight the Fall 2012 Thailand Semester at Missouri Southern State University.

The Somapa Thai Dance Company has been performing Thai classical dance in the Washington, D.C. area since 1999. Members were trained in Thailand by the most celebrated dance instructors from the prestigious Department of Fine Arts in Bangkok. The group’s mission is to preserve and promote Thai culture and arts in the United States.

Ira Sukrungruang, author of Talk Thai: The Adventures of Buddhist Boy, will come to campus Nov. 6-7 to discuss his “constant, often bumbling attempts to meet cultural and familial expectations while coping with the trials of growing up” in a Thai-American family in Oak Lawn, Ill., in the 1980s. The book will be read by all MSSU freshmen through their University Experience classes.

Sukrungruang’s visit will include three formal presentations, three book signings/Q&A’s, and participation in the English department’s Visiting Writers Series. He is an associate professor of English at the University of South Florida.

The Gockel International Symposium, which is the centerpiece of the themed semester, will be held Sept. 27-28. The keynote speaker is Dr. Charles Keyes, professor emeritus of anthropology and international studies at the University of Washington. Since the early 1960s, Keyes has carried out extensive research in Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia on Buddhism and modernity, ethnicity, and national cultures.

Keyes will speak at 9:30 a.m. on “Diversity, National Integration and the Questioning of Thai-ness” and at 7 p.m. on “Cosmopolitan Villagers and Populist Democracy in Thailand” on Thursday, Sept. 27. Dr. Mark Mullenbach, an associate professor of political science and director of the international studies program at the University of Central Arkansas, will speak on “Political Change and Instability in Thailand After the Cold War” on Thursday evening and at 10 a.m. Friday on “Government and Politics of Thailand in the 21st Century.” Dr. Norty Wheeler, an assistant professor of history at MSSU, will serve as moderator.

Southern Theatre, instead of performing its usual themed-semester production, will stage a Nang Yai play of large shadow puppets Nov. 1-3 in Bud Walton Theatre. Director Jim Lile and his students will build the puppets, and Brian Fronzaglia and his percussionists will provide music in accordance with each episode.

Other topics to be addressed during the Thailand Semester include Buddhism, the Thai language, medical tourism and sex tourism, seafaring pirates in the Gulf of Thailand and Strait of Malacca, spirit houses, volunteering/internship opportunities in Thailand, and a critical study of “The King and I” (the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical that is banned in Thailand) by Lile and Dr. William Kumbier, professor of English.

The semester will include a Thai film festival, readings by English department faculty, and a Thai cooking demonstration and food tasting. The complete schedule will be available in late June at www.mssu.edu/thailand.
IEP undergoes numerous changes

Change was the operative word for the International English Department in 2011-12.

In September, we bid adieu to Bill Trudeau, director of the IEP since 2003. Trudeau accepted the position of executive director of the ESL Programs at Ohio Northern University. Following a national search in the Fall of 2011, interim director Kimberly Kester was hired to succeed Trudeau.

Kester, who began teaching in the IEP in 2010 as an adjunct instructor, has an M.Ed. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from Grand Canyon University and a B.A. in English Language and Literature from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Kester wasted no time in putting her own stamp on the program. She restructured the curriculum, increasing from three levels of instruction to five. The levels are high beginner, low intermediate, high intermediate, low advanced, and advanced.

“Due to the large influx of students who have very low skill levels, this will enable us to increase our enrollment by offering services to a wider range of students,” Kester said.

The IEP was given permission in March to add a second full-time faculty member for the 2012-13 year. Another national search resulted in the hiring of Kaitlin Gram, who received a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in TESOL from Kansas University in December 2011.

The IEP will also have a permanent classroom in Room 310 of Webster Hall, beginning in August 2012. The program borrowed a classroom in Taylor Hall this year and previously used conference rooms in Blaine Hall (the men’s residence hall).

Several IEP students participated in International Education Day at the State Capitol in Jefferson City on Feb. 29. They also visited Silver Dollar City both semesters.

Another highlight was battling Crowder College in an international soccer game on May 2. Although MSSU lost 4-1, the students had a good time in meeting their counterparts at the Neosho school, several of whom may transfer to MSSU.

Student to study Colombian refugees in Ecuador

Levi Butts, 23, a senior Spanish major at Missouri Southern State University, has won a $5,000 grant from the McCaleb Initiative for Peace project at MSSU. He is a 2007 graduate of Seneca High School.

Butts’ project, “Colombian Drug War Refugees in Ecuador,” will expose and humanize the atrocities committed against Colombia asylum seekers and demonstrate the power of peace and hope. His faculty advisor for the project is Dr. Cliff Toliver, associate professor of English.

Butts and Toliver will arrive in Quito, Ecuador on May 20 and spend several days conducting interviews and visiting the United Nations Refugee Agency’s national office in Ecuador and the Colombian Embassy. They will depart for Ibarra in northern Ecuador, near the Colombian border, on May 25 and find additional Colombian refugees willing to share their stories. Short trips to small coastal towns in the area, where many refugees work in the fishing industry, will produce even more material.

Upon their return home on June 1, Butts will write a series of articles and produce a special section for the campus newspaper, The Chart.

“We want to increase among the students, faculty and staff of MSSU, through the collecting and publishing of Colombian refugees’ personal accounts, the awareness of the destructive emotional, psychological and humanistic effects of the ongoing war that the illicit drug industry has caused in Colombia,” he said. “We want to give a voice to Colombian refugees living and creating new lives for themselves in Ecuador, to show that the effects of war may be overcome by cooperation and understanding.”

Dr. José Alvarez, an assistant professor of Spanish who died in the May 22, 2011, Joplin tornado, first introduced Butts to the ongoing Colombia civil war.

“For several months, we discussed, on and off, his experiences as a Colombian immigrant. I listened to his stories and asked questions. Soon, we began discussing a research project. We wanted to go to Colombia and the surrounding nations to interview individuals affected by cartel-related violence and share their stories with the world.”

Butts was in Quito, Ecuador on an MSSU study abroad trip when the news of Alvarez’s death reached him. That led him to get to know two local Colombian asylum seekers, who inspired him to help Colombian refugees living in Ecuador by sharing their accounts of hardship and hope.

The McCaleb Initiative for Peace was established in 1998, when Kenneth McCaleb, who founded and named The Chart while a student at Joplin Junior College in 1939, donated stock then valued at $150,000 to MSSU. Each year, the endowment provides one $5,000 grant to a student-faculty team selected through a campus-wide competition.

McCaleb was shot down on a bombing mission over Germany in 1943 and spent 19 months in POW camps. During this time he became interested in studying the causes of war and ways of achieving peace. He died in 2002.
Outstanding grad to enter Peace Corps

Caitlan (Bermel) Smith, who came to MSSU because of its international mission, is the 2012 Outstanding Graduate in International Studies. She received a B.A. in International Studies and a minor in Latin American Studies in December 2011.

Caitlan, a 2007 graduate of Lee’s Summit North High School, selected MSSU over Drake University. She was accepted into MSSU’s Honors Program and graduated with a 3.65 GPA.

She had several international experiences while attending MSSU. She and her husband, Luke, whom she married in July 2009, received a $4,900 grant from the McCaleb Initiative for Peace in 2011. They traveled to Guatemala in June for an in-depth examination of the many problems surrounding education in that country and produced a supplement to The Chart published on Nov. 4.

The Smiths also spent the Fall 2010 semester at the American University in Bulgaria through the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP). Caitlan’s first study abroad experience came in the summer of 2008, when she completed Dr. Dorothy Bay’s General Biology course in Costa Rica.

Caitlan distinguished herself on campus through her participation in the Model United Nations Club. “She became increasingly accomplished as a Model UN delegate over her four years of participation, finally being asked by Paul [Teverow] and me to head our delegation to Chicago last fall, when we represented Rwanda,” said Dr. William Kumbier, club co-sponsor. “Caitlan demonstrated all the skills essential to being an effective delegate: the ability to undertake challenging research on complex topics, a capacity to work and network quietly but purposefully with other delegates and, crucially, a passion for the issues taken up in her committees.”

“I can think of several things that qualify her as our outstanding International Studies graduate,” said Dr. Paul Teverow, club co-sponsor. “She is a truly engaged student who takes a genuine interest in what she is studying. You can tell this from the questions she asks in class and from the insights she offers on papers and exam essays. She has read widely in a variety of subjects and shows an unusual ability to draw connections between related topics she has studied in different courses. She has developed a strong sense of social justice and has made a personal commitment to promoting it, both in her own community and internationally.”

Caitlan and Luke, who received an English degree from MSSU in December 2011, have been accepted into the Peace Corps. They will leave for West Africa in July on a 27-month commitment to teach English.

“What I especially admire about both Caitlan and Luke is that they are putting their impressive intelligence and their Missouri Southern training in international issues, along with their study abroad experiences, into life work aimed at helping others, specifically through education,” Kumbier said. “Both are easy going, congenial people, but there is no doubt about the seriousness of their orientation and their intent. We all were thrilled when they were chosen for the Peace Corps; they are perfect for it and ready for that experience!”

Outstanding Graduates in International Studies:

- 2006 – Caleb Gallemore
- 2007 – Katie Hargrove
- 2000 – Candace Moore
- 2008 – Michael Edwards
- 2001 – Jason Shaver
- 2009 – Lora Dean
- 2002 – Jesse Dickerson
- 2010 – Travis Curtice
- 2003 – Katherine Carlson
- 2011 – Megan Davis
- 2004 – April Stanley
- 2005 – Christian Raska
- 2006 – Caleb Gallemore
- 2007 – Kaitlin Hargrove
- 2008 – Michael Edwards
- 2009 – Lora Dean
- 2010 – Travis Curtice
- 2011 – Megan Davis
- 2012 – Caitlan Smith
- 2003 – Katherine Carlson
- 2004 – April Stanley
- 2005 – Christian Raska
- 2006 – Caleb Gallemore

2 students receive Donna Davis Browne Award

Two students from Missouri Southern State University received a $1,000 Donna Davis Browne Award for Study Abroad for Spring 2012.

Lydia McGriff, a junior elementary education major from Seneca, spent the semester in the Missouri London Program. She is involved in the Student Senate, Southern Ambassadors, College Republicans, Phi Eta Sigma, Epsilon Mu Sigma, and is a member of the Honors Program.

Nathanael Bergen, a sophomore international business major from Carthage, is spending the entire year at the University of Wroclaw in Poland. He works as an after-school counselor for the Carthage YMCA and is a semi-professional magician.

The family of Donna Browne, of Joplin, created the endowed award in 2010 to assist MSSU students spending an entire semester in another country. The award helps make study abroad more affordable for MSSU students and underscores the longstanding international mission of the university. Students interested in applying for the competitive award will submit essays about how they think the experience will enrich their undergraduate education and global outlook.

“The children of Donna Browne wanted to recognize their mother’s lifelong passion for travel and exploration of other societies,” said Dr. Chad Stebbins, director of the Institute of International Studies. “We are delighted that they decided to honor their mother in this way.

“Donna and her husband, Leland, are able to meet the students, help them prepare for their time abroad, and correspond with them while abroad,” Stebbins said. “We wanted them to have a direct role in the students’ entire study abroad process.”
Joshua Mason lands prestigious internship

Joshua Mason, Missouri Southern State University junior biochemistry major from Carthage, is packing his bags for a summer-long trip to France.

In the same way as many travelers, he will no doubt enjoy a view of French countryside or a walk in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower.

Unlike most travelers, he’ll be involved in an internship to study immunotherapy for viral-induced cancers. This would include the Epstein Bar virus which has been found in Hodgkin’s Lymphoma, nasopharyngeal cancers and other more obscure cancers primarily seen in the undeveloped countries of the world.

Joshua will study at the Institut Pasteur, one of the world’s most prestigious medical research and microbiology research facilities. The facility is located in Lille, France in the northern part of the nation, near Belgium.

Joshua says his interest in biology has deep roots but began to blossom after he took an Advanced Placement biology class at Carthage High School.

“The teacher of the class had a love for biology,” he recalls. “That really inspired me.”

The teacher, Joyce Martin, is also an adjunct professor in biology and environmental health at Missouri Southern State University.

A few years later, after Joshua arrived at Missouri Southern State University as a student, biology and environmental health professor Dr. Jim Jackson told him he might be particularly suited to biology research.

“Our goal in the biology department is to enable our students to enter a profession as well as receive a degree,” Jackson says. “Essential to this end are many factors and undergraduate research internships like Joshua’s are an essential component.”

Jackson says internships help students in three major ways.

“The first is that they are directly involved in what their professional activities will be which can lead students to, or in some cases, away from professional goals,” Jackson explains.

“Secondly, a student’s understanding and appreciation of a profession is magnified as well as broadened by an internship. Lastly, students are able to network and make connections and become friends with the most important professionals in the field. That has a lifelong benefit.”

Joshua says he was led to the French study facility with some help from Dr. Isiah Warner, a medical investigator and professor of analytical chemistry and biochemistry at Louisiana State University.

In previous semesters, Joshua had interned at LSU concentrating on the nano-technology drug delivery system to target pancreatic cancer cells.

The types of cancers he will study have an immunological basis, something that some may not realize about the disease.

“Viruses deplete the immune system to the point where it cannot recognize cancer cells,” Joshua explains. “The ultimate goal is to determine how to obtain an immune tolerance to these types of cancers.”

Does Joshua anticipate difficulty in navigating daily life in the French city?

“I have been working on French a little bit,” he replies. “One thing that will help is that the Institut Pasteur is an English speaking school and it is very well known for its international student population. There are people of over 60 nationalities there.”

The MSSU student says he is well aware that the trip to the Institut Pasteur is a golden opportunity.

“It is a selective process,” he says. “There are four students from the nation who are going.”

The internship in France is one of the cogs in the wheel of education and experience that will lead Joshua toward large goals:

“This project this summer is one that I hope I will continue into doctoral studies,” he said. “This one of the reasons I am excited about this trip and my project.”

Upon his return, Joshua will make presentations on his internship at the Institut Pasteur as part of his International Studies grant, at a symposium in Illinois and at Missouri Southern as part of his Senior Honors Program Thesis.

Joshua says although the path may be challenging, his career goals are relatively simple:

“I want to get my Ph.D. and be a researcher,” he says. “I’d love to do medicinal research in cancer biology, specifically immune biology.”

Joshua Mason left for France on May 15. He is scheduled to return on Aug. 11.

Jensen to intern in Brazil

Kelsey Jensen, who will graduate in December 2012 with a degree in international studies, has been selected for a summer internship with the U.S. Embassy in Brazil.

Jensen will work with advisors to Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to Brazil, from June 4 to Aug. 6 and focus on the relationship between Brazil and the United States. The internship will be split between Brasilia and Sào Paulo.

She will live with a host family provided by Rotary International. This will be her second time in Brazil: in 2008-09, as a high school student, she lived with four host families and learned Portuguese.

Dr. Ann Wyman, associate professor of political science, helped Jensen secure the internship through the U.S. Department of State.
MSSU participates in Model Arab League, again

For the 20th year in a row, Missouri Southern State University has sponsored a student delegation to participate in the Model Arab League. Under the direction of the delegation’s advisor, Dr. Conrad Gubera, 12 MSSU students representing Egypt participated in the Southwest Model Arab League at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock March 8-10. Egypt was selected for representation by MSSU because it was the featured country during the Fall 2011 Egypt Semester on campus.

In the Arab Court of Justice, Egypt (MSSU) won its case against Sudan (UALR) regarding water rights on the Nile River. Chase Tolin, a sophomore political science major from Galena, Kan., received recognition as the winning attorney who pled Egypt’s plaintiff position in the case. Michael Ori, a senior sociology major from Joplin, received the Outstanding Delegate Award presented in the Arab Heads of State Council for his portrayal of Egypt’s supreme military general who had been the country’s temporary leader since the February 2011 revolution.

Other members of the MSSU delegation included Clint Jorris, Ricky Rubrecht, Larissa Cross, Rachel Allnutt, Michael Pisanti, Agie Mai Jammeh, Caitlan Smith, Michael Ori, and Dr. Conrad Gubera.

Other universities participating in the Southwest Model Arab League included Baylor, Arkansas, Arkansas-Little Rock, Arkansas Tech, Air Force, Central Arkansas, Texas Wesleyan, Centenary, Oklahoma Baptist, Oklahoma Christian, and Texas A&M-Commerce. MSSU received recognition for being the only university in Missouri to participate and for its record of consistent participation since 1993.

Six Swedish students spend a month on campus

Six students from Mullsjö Folkhögskola, MSSU’s partner university in Sweden, spent four weeks on campus in April working with David Varmecky, an assistant professor of art.

The students and five others who couldn’t make the trip are enrolled in an online Graphic Design class taught by Varmecky and making a book of selected Shakespeare sonnets, in English and Swedish, with illustrations. Varmecky first met the 11 students in late January during a trip to Mullsjö.

The renowned Swedish photographer Örjan Henriksson, a member of the Mullsjö Folkhögskola faculty, accompanied the group to Joplin. He is teaching an online class in Studio Lighting Techniques for six MSSU students and met with them while on campus earlier this semester and also this week.

The Swedish students stayed in the MSSU residence halls and experienced university life in “middle America.” They also took photographs, went horseback riding, and visited art galleries in surrounding cities. Ashley Eriksen, a senior studio art/graphic design major who interned under Henriksson last fall in Mullsjö, served as the group’s tour guide.

In the past, several Mullsjö Folkhögskola students have decided to attend MSSU after first visiting the campus in April. MSSU has had a partnership with the Swedish school since 1994, when former Art Department Head Jim Bray made the connection between the two institutions. This summer, five MSSU students and Frank Pishkur, associate professor of art, will spend a month in Mullsjö through the annual “Summer in Sweden” study abroad program.

Ryan Lewis, a senior sociology major, will spend the Fall semester at Mullsjö Folkhögskola completing a photography internship with Henriksson.
For over 25 years, the Model United Nations Club, sponsored by Dr. William Kumbier and Dr. Paul Teverow, has provided MSSU students the opportunity to learn about the work of the most important international organization ever devised, to explore current global issues and to understand the positions taken by different UN members on these issues.

Each year, our students participate as delegates from a UN member state in two major college-level conferences: the American Model UN in Chicago, held each November, and the Midwest Model UN, held each February in St. Louis. This year, our club represented Rwanda in Chicago and Egypt in St. Louis.

Preparation for the conference includes researching complex and timely issues, such as the Israel/Palestine question, trafficking in persons, promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, bacteriological and toxin weapons, or minimizing the impact of natural disasters. Students learn about the nature and urgency of these topics and about some of the proposed solutions. They also write — and this is the most challenging part — position papers that reflect not the solutions they personally favor but rather the policies and interests of the country we represent.

At the conference itself, however, our delegates must persuade others that these positions offer just and effective solutions to the problems at hand. Because they play the role of diplomats, they must negotiate with students representing other UN member, build consensus, and forge resolutions that reflect common interests.

This year, our delegations of six to seven students went to each conference exceptionally well prepared. They showed leadership in sessions that simulated the proceedings of various UN committees and working groups. It was very satisfying to see some of our first-time delegates develop and flourish, moving from uncertain and hesitant participation to full-out enthusiasm just in the course of a four-day conference. Our student delegates held their own and more with students from major universities across the nation and, in some cases, from overseas.

To prepare for their work at the conferences, students this year had the option of taking Model UN as a three-credit course in the fall semester, thereby receiving academic credit for the substantial research and writing they would otherwise have done voluntarily as club members. We will be offering this opportunity again this fall and are very pleased to see that the number of students who want to participate in both the class and the club is clearly on the rise!

### American Model UN Rwanda Delegation

Chicago, Nov. 18-22, 2011

- Caitlan Smith, permanent representative
- Agie Mai Jammeh
- Wil Kimbrel
- Patricia Luna
- Michael Pisanti
- Lorena Silva
- Luke Smith
- Kerry Vickers

### Midwest Model UN Egypt Delegation

St. Louis, Feb. 15-18, 2012

- Wil Kimbrel, head delegate
- Agie Mai Jammeh
- Patricia Luna
- Michael Pisanti
- Alexandra Starks
- Chase Tolin

---

**Stebbins chairs Study Missouri**

Dr. Chad Stebbins, director of the Institute of International Studies at MSSU, is serving as chair of the Study Missouri consortium this year.

Study Missouri is a grassroots organization of 40 colleges and universities across Missouri dedicated to promoting international education. The mission is to support and enhance the capacity of member institutions, individually and collectively, to foster international experiences and cross-cultural competence among students, faculty and citizens in Missouri and to facilitate communication, cooperation, and expansion of international educational activities and exchanges in the State of Missouri.

Study Missouri sponsors the annual International Education Day, which is held the last Wednesday in February in Jefferson City. This year, more than 400 international and domestic students visited the State Capitol to learn about state politics, promote the benefits of cultural exchange and awareness, and connect with fellow global students.
Contributors to MSSU International Mission Endowment

(as of May 1, 2012)

Tourist level ($10 to $99)
- Jeff Billington
- Vedita D. DeFreitas
- Lisa (Ball) Olney
- Jenny Ertel
- Benjamin Ertel
- Phyllis DeTar
- Brenda Durbin
- Maria Hinkle
- Brooke Pierce
- Henry Noll
- Daria Claiborn
- Amanda Zook
- Lance Sharrock
- David and Virginia Lindsey
- Billy L. Rasbury
- Virgil McCoy
- Harrison Kash
- Michael and Shari Porte
- Jersvy McKnight
- William and Carolyn Orbin
- Lorraine Whittington
- Walt Walker
- Karla Fenix
- Erin Patton
- Sarah Seibert
- Dr. Sarah Schlink
- Linda Atkinson
- Donna Martin
- Ron Robson
- Allen and Kay Meriam
- Calvin and Vicki Cassady
- Jenna (Bass) Clark

Sightseer level ($100 to $199)
- Carol Harris
- David Adams
- Brooke Roberts
- Dr. Harold Bodon

Wanderer level ($200 to $299)
- Carolyn Lowry
- Ron Mitchell
- Floyd and Mary Sue Belk
- Trisa Moss
- Angela (Scott) Wyatt
- Jeff Hollingshead
- Larry and Elizabeth Deffenbaugh

Adventurer level ($300 to $399)
- Richard Walter
- Betty Harris
- Hish S. Majzoub
- Kiki (Coffman) L’Italien
- Dr. Linda Hand
- Dr. Ann Wyman
- Lance and Sharon Beshore

Explorer level ($400 to $499)
- Russell and Wendy Fugate
- Bob and Bea Higgins

Swashbuckler level ($500 to $999)
- Lisa Nelson
- Cynthia H. Schwab
- Rod Surber
- Teresa R. Massa
- Stacey (Crouch) Kunkel
- Matthew Kunkel
- Pat and Carolyn Phelps

Globetrotter level ($1,000 or above)
- Jeré G. Marcum
- John M. Cragin
- W. Robert Corley
- Jerry and Nancy Perry
- Dr. and Mrs. John Windle

You can donate online at http://www2.mssu.edu/foundation/onlinegift.htm and restrict your gift by clicking the button and typing in International Mission Endowment.
‘Land of Civilization’ intrigues campus

The Great Sphinx, the pyramids, the pharaohs, King Tut, Cleopatra, mummies, the Nile, the Egyptian revolution of 2011. Who couldn’t find something fascinating about Egypt?

The Fall 2011 Egypt Semester drew a total of some 8,000 students, faculty, and community residents to the 40 events – guest speakers, concerts, films, readings, even an all-Egyptian meal in the Mayes Dining Hall. This particular “themed semester” seemed to strike a chord with just about everyone.

Here are just a few of the things we learned about “The Land of Civilization”:

• Egypt has at least 110 pyramids.
• King Tut reportedly died of anthrax poisoning.
• Egypt has the world’s third-oldest and fourth-largest film industry.
• Oil, tourism, the Suez Canal, and worker remittances (Egyptians working in the oil fields in the Gulf and sending the money home) are the major components of the economy.
• Egyptian cotton is the best in the world.
• The official population of Cairo cannot be determined, but estimates are as high as 20 million.
• Egypt is the most important state in the Middle East. It’s the heart of the Arab world. What happens in Egypt has implications for the rest of the Arab world.
• Egypt has had only four presidents since becoming a republic in 1953: Muhammad Naguib (1953-54), Gamal Abdel Nasser (1954-70), Anwar El Sadat (1970-81), and Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011). Sadat won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1978 but was assassinated three years later.
• Some of the causes of the 2011 Egyptian revolution, which began on Jan. 25, were police brutality, blatant corruption, increasing poverty rates, and the Tunisian revolution that began a month earlier and led to the overthrow of President Ben Ali.

• The U.S. provides a considerable amount of foreign aid to Egypt, topped only by what it sends to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel. The U.S. helped sustain the 30-year Mubarak regime with its annual $1.3 billion of military aid.

While several of the Egypt Semester presentations focused on the current political situation, we also explored the magnificent culture of this country. The Academy of Egyptian Dance, based in San Diego, presented “HARAM! Unveiling the Mystery of the Forbidden Dance” to an audience of 850 on Oct. 25 in the Taylor Performing Arts Center. The Seattle-based MB Orchestra, formerly of Alexandria, Egypt, brought “Melodies of the Nile” to the stage on Nov. 10.

Several of the MSSU departments also make their own contributions to our themed semesters. Southern Theatre presented Shakespeare’s “Antony and Cleopatra” to 689 fans during a five-night run in October. The Southern Symphony Orchestra featured “A Musical Pyramid: A Concert of Egyptian Music” on Nov. 3. The English department coordinated three readings, including The Book of the Dead. The First-Year Experience program and the Institute of International Studies teamed up to bring Rosemary Mahoney, author of Down the Nile: Alone in a Fisherman’s Skiff, for three presentations and three book signings/Q&A sessions in November. All MSSU freshmen read Down the Nile, as it was selected as the common reader for 2011-12.

Our attention now turns to southeast Asia, as we begin readying for the Fall 2012 Thailand Semester.