Summary of the Teaching of Philosophy in Thailand

Philosophy in the National goals of Education
The educational philosophy of the Ministry of Education in Thailand is based on the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy as proposed by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, which envisions a ‘Green and Happiness Society’. The philosophy should be applied to individual, family, community and national level including education. Its principles underlying the construction of the curriculum are based on the ‘Middle Path’ (see below).


Population: 63.444.000 (2006)
Gross Enrolment Ratio
Primary: 106% (2006)
Secondary: 78% (2006)
Percentage of GDP invested in education: 4.3% (2006)
Percentage of government expenditure invested in education: 2% (2006)
Compulsory Education: 6-15 years (2006)

The GER is used in the education sector and by the UN. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics the definition of the GER is the “total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year.” Its purpose is “to show the general level of participation in a given level of education. It indicates the capacity of the education system to enrol students of a particular age group. It can also be a complementary indicator to net enrolment rate (NER) by indicating the extent of over-aged and under-aged enrolment.” It is calculated by dividing “the number of pupils (or students) enrolled in a given level of education regardless of age by the population of the age group which officially corresponds to the given level of education, and multiply the result by 100.”
4 Ibid.
5 http://www.ibe.unesco.org/

This draft country briefing was prepared for comment by RUSHAP, UNESCO Bangkok. Comments are welcome to rushap.bgt@unesco.org
It emphasizes moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity. It furthermore distinguishes between morals and wisdom. Morals mentioned are honesty, integrity, diligence, patience, and perseverance. The development of the curriculum for primary as well as for secondary education is done by the Ministry of Education’s Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development.

**Primary education**
Primary education in Thailand aims to develop “morality, ethics, basic knowledge and ability, and to retain literacy and arithmetic ability.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yearly time allocation per grade in hours³</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Skills</td>
<td>500</td>
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<td>Life Experiences</td>
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<td>150</td>
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<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character development</td>
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<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_One hour is sixty minutes_

**Assessment**
In primary school there are two types of assessment. At the end of grade 2, 4 and 6 an examination is administered. All primary students will have to do an examination at the end of grade 6. The other method refers to the teachers who keep the records of their pupils, which are measure performance in relation to their personal behavioural objectives.

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Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking in Northern Thailand
Report by Thein Lwin and Nan Lung

Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) Northern Thailand project initiated and funded by OSI and IRA provides systematic training in instructional practices to promote students’ active learning and critical thinking. It also contributes to crisis prevention and peace building as recently recognized by UNESCO. The second year activities expanded the project into three regions as 88 teachers were given the full series of workshops led by 22 first year participants. The second year has moved the project toward institutionalization as international volunteers certified first year participants according to RWCT certification standards. Four paired volunteers visited northern Thailand at each workshop period. The volunteers mentored first year participants, provided feedback on training and co-facilitated workshops, observed first year participants based on the standards and certification procedures and initiated the certification of trainers and certifiers. Six teachers were awarded certifiers and nine teachers were awarded trainer certificates. OSI and IRA representatives also visited three workshop sites and observed the workshops for project evaluation.

Since a quarter of the second year money was left after all planned workshops in the second year in each region, the second year budget was approved to extend until the end of October 2004. Therefore, the project has continued into third year. The third year activities expanded the project into six places as 162 teachers have been provided workshops.

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Case studies of philosophy teaching in primary schools: Identified courses called “philosophy” in schools
Not available at this moment.

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⁹ Ibid.
⁴ [http://www.educationburma.net/RWCT/RWCT%20Second%20Year%20Final%20Report.htm](http://www.educationburma.net/RWCT/RWCT%20Second%20Year%20Final%20Report.htm)
Case studies of philosophy teaching in primary schools: Philosophy related teaching in schools

Although no specific national programmes are mentioned, the government does state several learning units as a central aspect of the philosophy. Here follows an example for primary education.

For instance, primary school children in Grade One will be presented with the exemplary unit “Performing Good Deeds Based on Sufficiency Economy.” Those in Grade Two will learn about the topic “Sufficiency Economy Brings about a Happy Life and Contentment.” The learning unit for school children in Grade Three focuses on the topic “Taking Pride in Our Community and Ourselves.” The exemplary units for schoolchildren in Grade Four, Grade Five and Grade Six are on the topics “Valuable Life Relies on Sufficiency Economy,” “Life with Sufficiency Economy Is Not at Risk of Being Poor,” and “The Thai Lifestyle Taking Pride in Sufficiency Economy.”

Secondary education

During lower secondary education pupils will further develop their knowledge, ability and skills. Upper secondary education also “promotes the morality, ethics, and social skills necessary for working, pursuing a career and leading peaceful, social lives.”

| Weekly time allocation per grade in hours<sup>13</sup> |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Subject          | 7  | 8  | 9  | -  | -  |
| Thai language    | 200| 200| 200| -  | -  |
| Sciences         | 150| 150| 150| -  | -  |
| Social Studies   | 100| 100| 100| -  | -  |

<sup>12</sup> http://www.ibe.unesco.org/
Assessment
Schools have examinations for every subject taken and students gather grade points. There is no national assessment at the end of lower secondary education and at the end of higher secondary education.

Case studies of philosophy teaching in secondary schools:
Identified courses called “philosophy” in schools
Not available at this moment.

Case studies of philosophy teaching in secondary schools:
Philosophy related teaching in schools
Not available at this moment.

Identified programmes to provide teaching materials in philosophy
Not available at this moment.

Links


<table>
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<tr>
<th>Art education</th>
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<th>50</th>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One hour is sixty minutes. Subjects mentioned in Italic are prescribed electives.

http://www.educationburma.net/RWCT/RWCT%20Second%20Year%20Final%20Report.htm

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/


Acknowledgements
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