



Economic Reform and Development

ASIA 3020 (3 credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Vietnam: Culture, Social Change and Development

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

In recent years, Vietnam has emerged as one of the world's most vigorous economies. This course charts Vietnam's transition from a centrally planned to a market-oriented economy and the associated socio-political changes as well as environmental costs. Students examine in detail the major turning point in Vietnam's economic development the *Doi Moi* "Renovation" economic reforms launched in 1986 – and the rapid growth in trade and investment since that time. The course additionally examines development ethics and equity issues within the context of the country's growing market economy and the urban consumer class.

Dynamics and tensions inherent in such fast economic growth and emphasized in this course include:

- Economic development theory including neo-liberalism
- Strategies for poverty reduction and governance issues
- Rural and agricultural development
- Urbanization and migration in an era of globalization Environmental impacts of rapid social and economic change

Excursions to both rural and urban areas in Vietnam, including the Mekong Delta, Central Vietnam, Ha Noi, and Sapa provide students with a variety of unique environments in which to investigate the nuances of development. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to use their own experiences in Vietnam to analyze and question dominant development paradigms. This course is designed to help students develop critical perspectives on contemporary Vietnam and a foundation for their Independent Study Projects.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- *Describe* the planned economic system of Vietnam prior to 1986 and the *Doi Moi* Restoration reforms thereafter;
- *Compare and contrast* Vietnam's planned economy and *Doi Moi* Restoration reforms;

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- *Illustrate* social and environmental challenges in the *Doi Moi* period;
- *Analyze* rural development challenges in the context of rural development models and capacity building;
- *Critically explain* effects of demographic and economic shifts such as rapid urbanization and rural-urban migration;
- *Integrate* knowledge of development theory and actual local level practice through experience in community service projects and hands-on learning;
- *Discuss* different impacts of globalization and modernization in different regions (rural, central highland, urban and mountainous areas);
- *Apply* economic development theory to the Vietnam context in a formal research paper.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of economic change and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

Course Requirements

***Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.**

Each week this course covers major themes in a classroom seminar setting or through field visits, followed by a discussion session every Thursday afternoon. Guided by SIT faculty, the discussion sessions are facilitated by students. Occasionally, local college students join the discussion and share their views on the reading topics.

Course readings are selected from Arkadie & Mallon, *Vietnam: A Transition Tiger* (2012) as well as recent refereed journal articles and selections from other books. Beyond what is listed in the syllabus, supplemental articles are also distributed to students based on current events and relevancy.

Course Schedule

Module I: Economic Growth (10 class hours)

In this module, students examine the history behind Vietnam's transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented economy, its increasing interconnections with other countries through globalization, and the economic consequences of these transitional processes. Students examine the impacts of the *Doi Moi* "Renovation" economic reforms launched in 1986 and societal responses to and influences on these transformations. This module employs readings on economic theory, including critiques and alternatives to mainstream economic policy frameworks. Students consider a range of topical themes relevant to economic development in Vietnam today, touching on new forms of rural development, urbanization, migration, remittances, poverty reduction, civil society, ASEAN, and WTO accession.

Session I: Introduction to the Course

I.1. Overview of Vietnamese Economy

Students receive an introduction to the goals and requirements of the course, discuss the changes in economic policy in Vietnam since 1986.

Required Readings:

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Vietnam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Introduction and Chapter I: "Vietnam's development experience". 1-10.

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Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Vietnam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 2: "Geography, resources and population", 11-26.

1.2 Socialist Model in Pre-Reform Era in Viet Nam

This session introduces main characteristics of the centrally planned, socialist economic model in Viet Nam. We discuss the socialist industrialization strategy and its institutions such as industrial state enterprises and agricultural cooperatives and associated systems such as the planned prices and residential registration. Although this model was not successful economically, it created social achievements that contributed to Viet Nam's economic success in the reform era.

Required Readings:

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 4: "Prelude to reform: the attempted introduction of central planning", 38-55.

Masina, P. Pietro. 2006. *Vietnam's Development Strategies*. NY: Routledge, 49-75.

Session 2: Economic Reform Policy - *Doi Moi* Era in Vietnam

This session focuses policies of economic reform known as *Doi Moi* in Vietnam since the late 1980s. Two issues discussed include: 1) What determined the timing of economic reform, and 2) Why the economy responded dynamically to new conditions and achieved sustained growth.

Required Readings:

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 3: "Economic performance and key issues", 27-37.

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 6: "The introduction of *Doi Moi*", 65-78.

Masina, P. Pietro. 2006. *Vietnam's Development Strategies*. NY: Routledge. 100-142.

Session 3: Building Institutions for Macro- and Micro-economic Management in Vietnam

This session introduces an important step of reform in the 1990s to build up market institutions for macroeconomic management, with particular focus on government implemented reform policies in finance and banking to pursue fiscal and monetary stability.

Required Readings:

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: a Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 8: "Ongoing reforms: building the institutions for macroeconomic management", 90-102.

3.1 Restructuring in State Owned Enterprises (SOE) in Viet Nam

State enterprises are the key productive model in a centrally planned economy. This session introduces step-by-step the state enterprise reform process since *Doi Moi*. Current issues and future directions of reform in this sector are also discussed.

Required Readings:

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 10: "State enterprises", 122-152.

Tran, Tien Cuong et al. 2006. Vietnamese State-Owned Enterprises after Equitization: Performance, Emerging Issues, and Policy Recommendations. *Vietnam Economic Management Review*, No. 1, 20-30.

3.2 Reform in Small & Medium Enterprises and Private Business in Viet Nam

Before *Doi Moi*, household and private businesses were restricted but developed rapidly after the application of reforms. This session introduces institutional processes which affected this economic sector.

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Required Readings:

- Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 11: "Household and private business development", 153-175.
- Pham, Ngoc Dung. 2007. Small- and Medium-Sized Industrial Enterprises in Vietnam over the Last Twenty Years of Renewal. *Social Sciences Information Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 25-31.

Session 4: Vietnamese Business Environment

This session introduces business etiquette and customs in Vietnam, including basic protocol, etiquette and culture in the Vietnamese business environment in current times. It entails the discussion with legal professionals, business owners and executives who are living and working in Vietnam.

Required Readings:

- Vierra, Kimberly. 2010. *Vietnam Business Guide: Getting started in Tomorrow's Market Today*. Singapore: Willey Pub. Chapter 4: Navigating Business Landscape, 32-50.
- Kohl, Katerine. 2007. Americans doing business in Vietnam: Communication differences. *Download from website at http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/wsas/student_work/documents/Kohl.pdf on Dec. 4, 2013.*

Module 2: Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation in Viet Nam: Site Workshops and Excursions in Mekong Delta (16 class hours)

This module examines reform processes in agriculture and poverty alleviation policies in the Mekong Delta through site workshops and excursions. Economic growth in the post-reform period has contributed to a reduction in the poor as a proportion of Vietnam's overall population. This module examines the process of poverty alleviation and factors related to the continuing poverty of some subpopulations in Viet Nam.

Session 1: Agriculture & Poverty Alleviation in the Mekong Delta.

This session examines achievements and challenges in the post-reform era. Particularly, this session introduces strategies for reducing poverty in rural Vietnam. Main agriculture activities, such as rice farming and crop diversification, and improved farmer access to markets are presented. Session hosted by Can Tho College for Rural Development in Hoa An.

Required Readings:

- Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Vietnam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 12: "The pattern of economic growth". 176-203.
- Neil Adger, P. Mick Kelly and Nguyen Huu Ninh. 2001. *Living with Environmental Change: Social vulnerability, adaptation and resilience in Vietnam*. Routledge: New York. Chapter 1, 3-34.

Session 2: Microfinance Program in Mekong Delta.

This workshop on rural microfinance strategies in the Mekong Delta is hosted by Can Tho College for Rural Development in Hoa An.

Required Reading:

- APEC Report. 2011. Promoting Sustainable, Market-Based Microfinance: Viet Nam Case Study and Lessons Learned for APEC Economies. 2011/GFPN/WKSP/008, 1-26.

Multiple Sessions: Community Engagement

Community engagement activities in rural villages deepen understanding of this module's content by providing direct exposure to rural livelihoods through hands-on learning with villagers. Community engagement activities include:

- Field Visit in Hoa An: Visit and talk with villagers to learn about their livelihood and practice interview skills in conjunction with the class on Field Methods & Ethics.

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- Organic Farming and Rice Farming in Hoa An village
- Install Bio-digesters for farmers in Hoa An village
- Field Visit to My Khanh Village: Hands-on Learning on Local Government at the grassroots level

Required Readings:

Nguyen, V.C. (2011). Small-scale anaerobic digesters in Vietnam- development and challenges. *Journal of Vietnamese Environment*, 1(1), 12-18.

Supplemental Readings on VACB Models are also distributed. VACB is an integrated farming system that includes gardens, fish ponds, pigs or poultry, and biogas.

Session 3: Lecture on Sustainable Rural Development

This session introduces rural development projects implemented in rural Mekong Delta. These projects include: agricultural diversification, water resources and community based rural livelihoods. This session is hosted by Can Tho University in the Mekong Delta.

Required Reading:

Bui, Van Hung. 2004. Rural Diversification: An Essential Path to Sustainable Development for Vietnam. In *Reaching for the Dream*, Beresford and Tran Ngoc Angie. Denmark: Nordic Institute for Asian Studies, 183-215.

Session 4: Site Visit and Discussion on Rice Cultivation

Rice production in the Mekong Delta has seen phenomenal increases in recent years. This session introduces research on high-yield rice varieties and provides the knowledge base on rice farming and food security-related policies in Vietnam. This session is hosted by the Mekong Delta Rice Research Institute.

Required Reading:

Ives, Mike. 2013. In Mekong Delta, rice boom has steep environmental cost. *Report on Yale Environment* 360. Posted on July 11, 2013

at http://e360.yale.edu/feature/in_mekong_delta_rice_boom_has_steep_environmental_cost/2670/

O' Rourke, Dara. 2004. *Community-Driven Regulation: Balancing Development and the Environment in Vietnam*. The MIT Press. Chapter 1, pp. 1-27; chapter 2, 28-51.

Module 3: Urbanization and Internal Migration in Vietnam (10 class hours)

Economic growth has fueled urbanization and urban population increases mainly through rural-to-urban migration. This session examines urban growth and its components in pre- and post-reform eras, through which students understand and are able to compare underlying political and economic factors of urban change in the two periods.

Session 1: Urban Growth

This session examines the urbanization rates in Vietnam. In the last decade, the country witnessed a rapid proliferation of urbanized areas, with a rising number of towns and cities. The largest of these cities, Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi Capital, are the growth engines of the country. With its newly attained status as a low middle income country and its ambitions to achieve higher levels of human development, Vietnam is facing challenges in basic social service provisions for urban populations. .

Required Readings:

World Bank. 2005. "Issues and dynamics: Urban system in developing East Asia: Viet Nam".

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Le, Sang. 2004. *Urbanization and Urban Areas in Vietnam in Pre- and Post Reform Eras: 1979-1989 and 1989-1999*. Chapter 4: "Urban Growth in Pre- and Post-Reform Vietnam: Patterns and Components of Growth, the 1979-1989 and 1989-1999 Inter-Censal Periods." 67-86.

Session 2: Migration

Economic growth is closely related to internal migration. In the pre-reform era, internal migration was controlled by the government but in the post-reform era it was mainly affected by market forces, especially rural-to-urban migration flows. This session examines patterns of internal migration and its determinants in the two periods.

Required Readings:

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: A Transition Tiger*. Canberra: ANU E Press. Chapter 16: "Poverty, location and internal migration," 139-251.

Hardy, Andrew. 2003. State Visions, Migrant Decisions: Population Movement since the End of the Vietnam War in *Postwar Vietnam: Dynamics of a Transforming Society*. Hy Van Luong (ed.) Singapore: Rowman & LittleField Publishers. 107- 137.

Le, Sang. 2007. *Urban Migration in Pre- and Post-Reform Viet Nam*. Proceeding of Conference of Migration, Development and Poverty Reduction. 195-227.

Session 3: Urban Housing

This field visit introduces students to the development of Saigon South New Urban Area, a sign of increasing internationalization and a transition to new forms of urban life in Vietnamese Society.

Required Reading:

Harms, Erik, 2011. *Saigon's Edge: On the Margins of Ho Chi Minh City* University of Minnesota Press, 2011. Introduction: "Saigon, Inside Out"; Chapter 1, "Bittersweet Transitions: Urbanization on the Fringe of the City"; Chapter 6, "The Problem of Civilization on Saigon's Edge."

Waibel, Michael. 2004. The Development of Saigon South New Urban Area: A sign of an increasing of internalization and polarization in Vietnamese Society. *Pacific News*. Nr. 22. July-August 2004. 10-13

Module 4: Political and Human Resource Development: Process and Challenges (10 class hours)

The first half of this module introduces political and human resource development challenges and explores the emerging tourism industry in Vietnam. The second half in this module unfolds through a series of field trips, site workshops, and community engagement activities in central and northern Vietnam. The excursions help students examine differences in regional developmental processes and lay the foundation for selecting Independent Study Project (ISP) sites and ISP advisors/contacts.

Session 1: Political Development

This session introduces different aspects of Vietnamese political development and practice, including Party rule, democratic development, constitutional development and the rule of law. This session raises questions for class discussion, such as: "Who and what have been the central political forces in Vietnam during the modern period and how might we understand them?", "What are the Vietnam's prospects for democracy and the development of the rule of law?"

Required Readings:

Arkadie & Mallon. 2012. *Viet Nam: a Transition Tiger*. Canberra; ANU E. Press. Chapter 17: "Achievements of Doi Moi and future challenges", 252-266.

Hayton, Bill. 2011. *Vietnam: A Rising Dragon*. Yale University Press. Chapters 4: "Grandfather is watching you", 69-89

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Session 2: Human Development & Future Challenges

This session introduces issues of education, particularly higher education in Vietnam and human resource development. It explores the political, social, and cultural forces that are shaping Vietnam's modern educational system and how the human resources meet the demands of the market economy. This session also provides students with the knowledge of education reforms in Vietnam.

Hayden, Martin and Lam Quang Thiep. (2010) Vietnam's Higher Education System in *Reforming Higher Education in Vietnam*. Harmen G. Hayden, Martin and Pham Thanh Nghi. New York: Springer. 15-30

Multiple Sessions: Regional Development Processes and Challenges: Grand Educational Excursions to Central and Northern Vietnam

During the excursion to Central Vietnam, students examine sustainable tourism in the Vietnamese context. Additionally, students learn about Hue culture and the last feudal Nguyen Dynasty. Students have the opportunity to visit My Son and Cham holy sites, while learning about Cham architecture and music. A highlight of this excursion is visits to the ancient cities of Hue, Hoi An and My son recognized as UNESCO World Heritage sites. In Cu Lao Cham, an island marine park also known as Cham Island Biosphere Reserve, students learn about plans for sustainable development in the area with an emphasis on preserving the environment and enhancing the income-generating capacity of the local people.

Three site-workshops in Hoi An and Hue led by local specialists in their fields:

1. Site-Workshop in Hoi An: Introduction about History, Culture and Preservation of Hoi An ancient town.
2. Site-Workshop on NGO projects in Hoi An.
3. Site-Workshop on History, Culture and Preservation of Hue Royal City.

Required Readings for Central Vietnam:

Griffin, T. 2003. An optimistic perspective on tourism's sustainability. In *Sustainable Tourism: A Global Perspective*. edited by Harris R., Griffin T. and Peter William NY: Butterworth. 14-20.

Doan, N. T. K. (2010). Sustainable tourism development in Vietnam. In T. Hundloe (Ed.), *Linking green productivity to ecotourism: Experiences in the Asia-Pacific region* (pp.249–263). Tokyo: Asian Productivity Organization.

During the excursion to Hanoi and Sapa in the North,

Students attend seminars at Hanoi National University and Faculty for International Studies focused on current challenges facing the Vietnamese economy and how the state envisions dealing with these challenges. While the students are traveling (in Ha Noi and Sapa), site visits and guest lectures by academics, officials, and practitioner experts provide additional practical depth to the course.

Session 3: Roles of Civil Society in the Vietnamese context.

This session examines the concept of civil society in the Vietnamese context. It presents international debates and changes in Party policy that accept the necessity of social work and education by organizations outside the state administration and the increasing role to be played by non-profit organizations. This session is hosted by Hanoi National University.

Required Reading:

Wells-Dang, Andrew. 2010. Political Space in Vietnam: view from the "rice-roots". *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 23 No.1, March 2010. 93 -112.

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Session 4: Strategic Partnerships and Trade: Vietnam's Relationship with the world in the last 20 years.

This session introduces Vietnam's comprehensive relationships and trade partnerships with major countries in the world, including USA, EU, China, Japan, South Korea, and ASEAN. The lecturers present the concept of "strategic partnership" that Vietnam has developed with these countries. The session presents also the current South China Sea dispute and the international debates surrounding it. This session is hosted by Hanoi National University.

During the time in Hanoi, students also have the opportunity to do the following:

- Meet with top historians and members of the Vietnamese National Assembly to discuss current political topics.
- Visit major historical sites, including Van Mieu temple, the first and oldest university in Vietnam; the Presidential Palace; and the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology.
- Visit the newly excavated historic Forbidden City, Thang Long, the royal city built in the 11th century after Vietnam gained independence from Chinese occupation and rule. This visit is of particular interest for students interested in archaeology.
- Meet with government officials and residents to discuss the preservation of cultural heritage sites.
- Observe the work NGOs such as Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam, ActionAid, UNICEF, and UNDP are conducting in Vietnam.

Final Session in Hanoi: Review Regional Development and Overall Course Themes (2 class hours)

The final session summarizes the issues of regional development in central and northern Vietnam and the overall themes on economic reform and development in the host country. This session helps students prepare for the final exam. The Final Examination is conducted at the end of the Grand Excursion in Hanoi Capital immediately prior to the ISP period.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

1) Presentation & Lead Discussion (20%)

Each student is expected to present once during the term for 10 minutes and lead the discussion after their presentation. The presentation and discussion will be based on the reading for the week, but students are expected to also incorporate their own ideas. Presentations and discussions will be commenced in the second week of the course. Further details for this assignment will be covered in class.

2) Village Case Studies (20%)

While in rural settings, students are given the chance to participate directly in village life. This can take a variety of forms, from helping with farm work to conducting case studies in pairs. The assignment (with integrated community engagement) requires students to note firsthand observations while also analyzing the issues of rural development models and capacity building as they apply to the village. Students are then asked to integrate their broader knowledge of Vietnam with their personal experiences to prepare a group oral presentation based on the case study. Each group will conduct one case study and each group will present the findings at the end of the Mekong Delta Excursion. The written paper is due before the homestay period in Ho Chi Minh City. Grades are based on group effort, organization, and a comprehensive analysis of each case study.

3) Research Paper on Development (30%)

Working on this assignment will be a cumulative process ending in an 8-10 page paper. Students have wide latitude regarding the topic and research approach for this paper. For instance, students may choose to discuss their topic or research question with business owners or economists working in Vietnam, or they

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may choose a specific development related topic (health, education, water resources, rural-urban migration, conservation efforts, etc...) Students will be expected to discuss the usefulness of at least one economic theory covered in the course and to demonstrate their understanding of that theory's application in a Vietnamese-specific context.

The research paper must be submitted on time before the Grand Excursion to northern Vietnam. Unexcused late papers will be reduced one grade (e.g. A become B) for each late day.

4) Final Examination (20%)

The final exam for the course consists of two essay questions given to students one-day prior and a set of short answer questions. The goal of the exam is to give students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of development issues both within the macro and micro contexts and to use the analytical skills they have been developing as part of the course, in preparation for writing the critical independent study project paper. This final exam will be conducted at the end of the Grand Excursion, just before the ISP period.

5) Participation (10%)

This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Class Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually don't, and also means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

Assessment:

1) Presentation & Lead Discussion	20%
2) Village Case Studies	20%
3) Research Paper on Development	30%
4) Final Examination	20%
5) Participation	10%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

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Expectations and Policies

All assignments should be typed and double-spaced. Spelling and grammar are part of grading criteria; careful proofreading and editing are essential parts of the writing process. I will be happy to read a rough draft of any assignment at least two days prior to the due date. Please note: description is not analysis. While there is a place for description of people, events or organizations in your assignments, be aware that extensive description is not a substitute for critical analysis based on independent thinking and understanding. The more your writings reflect synthesis of theory observation and reflection, the more successful your work will be.

Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.

Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.

Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).

Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the program handbook given to you at Orientation.

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