**VIET 249:** Urban Vietnam - Work and Culture (3 credits)
I&S; VLPA
Early Fall Exploration seminar abroad

**Description**

*Urban Vietnam: Work and Culture* studies the vibrant changes as well as the persistence of historical legacies in Vietnamese society and culture since the country became unified in 1975. This course examines the roles of state, society, and individuals in driving or resisting these changes, particularly since the 1990s, the era when Vietnam enthusiastically embraced the global market economy and demands for cultural conformity and homogeneity fell by the wayside. Massive rural-to-urban migration and new opportunities for women to challenge patriarchal barriers created radically new urban cultural environments. Vietnamese people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, with different political and religious beliefs, and different sexual orientations have cooperated, clashed, and continuously renegotiated their cultural values to cope with the rapid change. The course will ask students to analyze and debate contemporary social phenomena in Vietnam from an interdisciplinary perspective, with the goal of improving communication skills and cross-cultural understanding.

**Grading**

Participation: 15%
3 response papers: 60%
Final biographical project: 25%

**Course objectives**

After taking Viet 249, students are expected to:
- Develop a critical, multidimensional understanding of modern Vietnam
- Explain and examine a social, political, or economic phenomenon in Vietnam with logical arguments and factual evidence
- Demonstrate a genuine intellectual curiosity, empathy, and cultural sensitivity in the interaction and examination of cultures different from their own
- Become better informed global thinkers and effective cross-cultural communicators
- Enhance their critical thinking and writing skills

**Required textbooks (downloadable on Canvas)**