

Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program

Class XVII

Scribe Notes

Seminar 12

January 6 - 8, 2016

“Broadening Our International Understanding”

Wednesday January 6

Scribe: Kristin Alsup

The morning started out with a discussion on Customs and Trade. Anthony Cambas, with a little discussion help from Assoumane Maiga, led the discussion which flowed ceaselessly for the entire. I am sure it could have lasted much longer – and personally I wouldn't have been disappointed.

They discussed what the roles of customs and trade officials are today in this country and other developed countries versus what they were traditionally and still sometimes are fascinating. We learned about trade facilitation and how simplification, harmonization and standardization can make or break economies around the globe.

Trade agreements and being a member of the World Trade Organization, World Bank, and World Customs Organization show the world the interest in being a part of a global economy – but we learned so much more about what the term actually means. Everything from risk management to food security and from economic development to diplomacy can play a part of customs and trade. There is no one-size-fits-all answer to any of the questions when it comes to working with different countries on many of these issues and yet each of the countries is held to the same standard when it comes to trade agreements.

After the discussions about trade and customs there was a very long discussion with Nhung Nguyen and Josh Ringer about Vietnam. Nhung grew up north of Hanoi and as a young woman had a unique perspective when talking to a group like ours. Ringer is very fond of visiting and working in the area and was very ready to share dos and don'ts of how to interact with the people who live in the area in a way as to not cause offense. Many of these discussions also centered around history of the sites we would see, where to visit if there was free and available time, and the cultural significance of all of the locations on our to-do list.

One of the most exciting parts of this discussion was to learn more about the Lunar New Year celebrations and what the celebrations entail. Since we are arriving shortly after the New Year, we look forward to seeing some of the celebrations and the decorations left over from this period.

At the end of the discussion, there was a short amount of time devoted to discussing some of the downfalls or challenges of Vietnam currently. Land ownership and rights were among some of the most difficult questions to answer. Leases and how to invest in the land when you don't own it is an issue for many farmers – in addition to the loss of good quality farm land due to modernization.

Another one of the top issues is the diminished clean water supply due to China's ability to dam up the rivers as they come into the country. The pollution and the lessening of the water supply cause more problems over time and are an issue to be dealt with in the future.

After a break for lunch, Dr. Rod Hall, Oklahoma's State Veterinarian, spent some time discussing the proper protocol in keeping our "public health" priorities while traveling abroad. This discussion included not only how to keep ourselves healthy, but the biosecurity issues we should have in place to ensure the safety of Oklahoma and U.S. herds of livestock as we travel abroad and return home. This could be a huge issue and it needs to be taken seriously.

We had some free time to deal with some of our class business. Following that discussion, we traveled to SST Software in Stillwater to learn more about what the company does. I had no idea, and honestly still have a hard time understanding everything that they are doing.

We learned how to draw the lines in the fields and how we could map and grid all sorts of things. We pretended like we had results and learned how to map where to put our inputs across the fields. The idea of getting the data and comparing it, and where all of this information could lead us is astounding to me. Where can agriculture go? Where will it go? I can't wait to see.

The design team at SST is making everything look more user friendly. Anything that is eye-appealing is going to draw more people in and they will want to be a part of something that looks professional more so than something that looks like it was thrown together. It was at this point I began to think about how all of the different jobs working together in agriculture make the industry strong and how one doesn't function as well without the others.

When the demonstrations at SST were finished, we had dinner catered by Kim's Cuisine – which is about as authentic Vietnamese as you can get in Stillwater. I had the chicken Pho and it was pretty delicious. I also had some of the shrimp spring rolls and the sliced pork meatball spring rolls – both were very good. I realized some of the people in our group may lose a lot of weight on the trip because they are scared to try new things because of the way they look. I can't wait. I will gain all their weight while I sample everything they are scared of eating.

The last event of the night took us to Iron Monk Brewery. The tour, led by Dave Monks, was a blast. He is one of the founders and the brew master. It was both entertaining and fascinating. His passion for the process of how you brew beer and the chemistry behind it was impressive. Beyond that, the intricacies of how you can alter the flavor so drastically by simply changing a little here or a smidge there was interesting. I enjoyed getting to sample their products – the results of their hard work are quite different from many things available around Oklahoma. It was a wholly exciting experience.

Thursday January 7

Scribe: Amanda Ford

The agenda for Thursday was made up of class presentations about Vietnam and presentations from guest speakers about international travel. Class presentations started with Norton, Forrester, and Horn presenting on geography and climate. Sidwell, Steinert, Mulligan, and Rana presented on agriculture in Vietnam. Transportation, communications, and infrastructure were covered by Crouch, Alsup, and Street. Lyle, Murray, and Simic presented on the economics of Vietnam and the Philippines. Thornton, Smith, Combs, and Grissom covered culture and religion. Government and military was presented by Sandmann, Hartin, and Nichols.

Mr. Joe Nelson, Assistant Director of Annual Giving, OSU Athletics, gave a very moving presentation about his time serving as a Seabee in the U.S. Navy stationed in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Mr. Nelson did two tours of duty in Vietnam between 1968 and 1970. Seabee is the common term for Construction Brigade (CB – Seabee) in the U.S. Navy. Seabees were welders, carpenters, electricians, and other types of construction workers. Many times in Vietnam they would work to rebuild or repair roads and bridges as they were destroyed in warfare. Mr. Nelson told many personal stories and brought some of his old army gear to show the class. All of Mr. Nelson's presentation was very moving and informative. We are extremely grateful he agreed to share with our group his experiences.

After lunch Hannah, Cowan, and Payne spoke about health and education.

We then had another guest speaker, Dr. Keith Teague, OSU Professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Dr. Teague first traveled to Vietnam in 2007 and has been back many times since then. He gave a very informative presentation on things we can expect to see and find in Vietnam. He gave us tips on what foods to try, how to cross the busy streets, and how to hail a legitimate taxi.

We then traveled to First United Methodist Church's Storehouse to complete a community service project. Some members of group worked in a back room to sort and organize food that had been donated to the food pantry. Others in the group went through the pantry with clients to help them get their food items and then load those items in their car.

To wrap up the night, we headed to the home of Randy and Mary Wedel. We had a great meal and enjoyed great company and fellowship. Along with all class members, we were also joined for the day by Rose Bonjour, Dr. James Trapp, and Craig Woods. All three will be accompanying us on our international seminar.

Friday January 8

Scribe: Coleen Thornton

Packing for Vietnam

Dr. Sue Williams told us to be prepared to handle our own packing and to have as few pieces as possible, then reduce weight! Backpacks are recommended!

Our OALP jackets should be adequate for this trip. Leave your heavy jackets in Oklahoma. Take very rugged, inexpensive clothes so that they don't get damaged in the laundry or on the trip.

Start the packing process early! Follow the list!!!! Take half the stuff and twice the money!

Pack the bag a day before you leave. Make sure to weigh the bag early. Put in an extra duffle bag!

Wear stretch clothes (high tech) that are very comfortable for the plane flights.

Suggested carryon items include:

- Cell phone
- Sanitary wipes
- Tissues
- Chargers

- Mini purse with organization for travel – can place in carryon
- Change purse to separate U.S. dollars and foreign currency
- Makeup
- Inflatable neck pillow
- Eye shades
- Misc.: Toothbrush, earplugs, snacks, Benadryl/Tylenol PM, perfume, deodorant, three days of medication in carryon – can place the tags for the prescription on jewelry bags for small amounts of medication
- Small digital camera and storage card
- Books, electronic reader
- Slippers or something with rubber soles
- Recharger fully charged

Packing for checked bag:

- Plan 2 sides – all outer clothing on one side, health care, etc. on the other side
- If you keep everything organized and in the same place all the time, this will insure that you have everything
- Don't take any expensive jewelry – take only one set of inexpensive jewelry
- Place all pills in zippered bags with tags – use roll up makeup bag
- Take only small containers of shampoos, etc. and number them so that you use all up in first container and then throw away
- Insect repellent containing DEET to put on ankles, neck, wrists, clothes
- Use space-saver vacuum pack bags to pack and take an extra for dirty clothes

Silk or polyester underwear is recommended. Take bathing suit and cover up. Dark colored walking shoes are best. Take shower shoes or rubber flip flops. Bring a hooded jacket or small umbrella. A folding/compact duffle bag to pack items is useful for moving items from day bags and offers options for how to manage the luggage. Use all one color theme. Take a hat – crushable or buy locally.

A crepe black pant suit travels well. Bring two pair of jeans and twill pants treated with heavy starch. High-tech T-shirts and dress blouse work well. Sweater sets are appropriate for dinner functions. Throw in scarves for color. Cargo pants with zippers are good.

May need more than one travel size container. May want to put liquid travel containers in zippered bags to keep from spilling due to flight pressure changes. Take extra zippered bags for miscellaneous options during the trip. Take your own small sunscreen. Take your own washcloth or scrubby and soap.

Don't take all the luggage to every place if you can leave it behind. Lock backpacks or zippered areas. Mark luggage so that it's easily identifiable with yarn, kerchief, or other.

Dr. Trapp, Associate Director of OSU Extension

Dr. Trapp grew up in Kansas. He received degrees from Kansas State and Michigan State. He went through ROTC and was commissioned in Military Intelligence for Agricultural Economics but was cross-trained in infantry. He is an Agricultural Economics/Livestock Economics faculty member.

Craig Woods, Agricultural Communications Services

He will be filming various aspects of the trip to send back to Oklahoma. He is going in place of Ron Hays who had a conflict.

Philippines – James Lasquites, Ph.D. candidate in Plant and Soil Sciences at OSU

The country is a mixture of races. We should go to Philippines for a much longer time. There are over 7000 islands which make up the country. There are three main island groups. The Philippine people like air-conditioning so long-sleeves in light fabrics work well. There are four climate types depending on location – pronounced wet and dry seasons, all wet, all dry, and moderate. The country receives lots of rain. Typhoons and floods are pool parties. People like the rain and enjoy playing in it. The country has had many different influences. Magellan discovered the Philippines in the 1520s with a Spanish and Catholic influence. There are Malays, Chinese, Pacific Islanders, Spanish, Americans, and Japanese. The language has over 170 dialects. Filipino is a “broken English”. F is pronounced P and V is pronounced B. Their sentences are shortened. There is no TH sound as it is pronounced like a T.

Their unit of money is the Philippine peso where currently 1000 pesos is equal to \$20 US dollars. Do not use or have lots of cash as there is a lot of crime. Don't trust people who are overly kind – they are likely con artists.

A Sari-Sari Store is a one-stop shop convenience store. Passing while driving is called overtake.

There are several traditional foods. Adobo is boiled meat with vinegar and soy sauce. Lumia is a spring roll. Puto is a steamed rice cake with cheddar cheese. Other common foods include roasted pig, stir fried vegetables, crab and other seafood, coconuts, cassava, and mango and other fruits. Anything sweet is called dessert. Halo-halo is a popular dessert which is a mixture of shaved ice and evaporated milk.

Philippines love to sing. They will give the microphone to whoever they want to sing, especially those who have consumed some beer.

Philippine people are happy people. Farms are family affairs. There are an equal number of males and females in farming. They like to tell their stories – they like to talk. Filipinos are open and hospitable.

For your safety, avoid walking in dark alleys. Don't wear any expensive garments or jewelry. Don't use electronics in the open. Watch out for motorcycles.

Beware of bullet planting in the airport in Manilla. Don't let anyone touch your luggage. Don't let them open your luggage and make sure they don't have anything in their hands when they search. Plastic wrap or locks on luggage is strongly suggested.