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## **Fulbright Senior Scholar extends Sac State's global reach**

Sacramento State History Professor Michael Vann is ideally suited to teach in Indonesia as a Fulbright Senior Scholar. He has been developing a world history curriculum for Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, since September and will complete his fellowship in June.

As a Southeast Asia history specialist, Vann has been to the region more than a dozen times, conducting research and attending conferences in Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia as well as surfing throughout Indonesia's 17,500 islands.

Vann believes teaching world history is essential for creating educated citizens who can work in the greater Pacific Rim's increasingly interconnected business world.

"I'm deeply committed to teaching both world history and Southeast Asian history at Sac State because the subjects are essential for preparing our students for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," he says. "As the Pacific Rim becomes increasingly integrated, it is extremely important for our graduates to understand the history and culture of the people they will be working with."

Vann says that a foundation of knowledge of Southeast Asian history will make Sac State graduates "not only better citizens of the world but also much more effective business people," adding that it's integral at the University because of its many students whose families are from the region.

"I regularly have Filipino, Hmong, Khmer, Vietnamese and Thai students who are eager to learn about their cultural heritage. Conversely, California's increasing diversity is a good argument for all Sac State students to better understand the region. I hope in the near future to be able to reciprocate this scholarly exchange and host an Indonesia scholar at Sac State."

Born in Honolulu, Vann completed his degrees at UC Santa Cruz. Before coming to Sac State in 2005, he was an instructor of business English at the Metropolitan Business College in Hanoi, Vietnam, and a visiting assistant professor in the

Department of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, where he trained Marine Corps officers who were posted to the U.S embassy in Jakarta.

Vann's primary research is on the history of colonialism in Southeast Asia, and he has published on the history of the French in Vietnam. He's currently researching a project on Lawang Sewu, a 100-year-old Dutch train station that is today Indonesia's most famous haunted house. The building is an excellent example of colonial architecture and is the former headquarters of the Japanese secret police, which carried out a number of executions there during World War II.

In July, Vann will be making a documentary on colonial Phnom Penh with his Sac State history colleague Professor Jeff Dym. This project is funded by a grant from the Center for Khmer Studies. He also is scouting sites to shoot a documentary on colonial Jakarta, Semarang or Surabaya, the major port cities of Java.

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State's Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

– Alan Miller

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