



SAFETY

SECURITY

& HEALTH



SIT

Graduate
Institute

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SAFETY AND SECURITY

SIT Graduate Institute places the highest priority on the safety and security of all students. SIT’s experience with and knowledge of risk assessment, emergency preparedness, and crisis management allows us to adapt quickly to dynamic challenges. Because socioeconomic, political, environmental, and medical conditions vary widely across the more than 40 countries in which SIT operates, health, safety, and security measures are specifically tailored to each location and to current circumstances.

Students are thoroughly briefed on safety considerations during in-country orientation and are continuously updated throughout the semester if and when circumstances change. Moreover, your local program staff will help you navigate your new surroundings. They’ll provide firsthand exposure to local norms, model culturally appropriate behavior, and give you precautionary advice about the local environment. The experiential design of the academic program will also contribute to your ability to analyze your own behavior in relation to the host culture, thereby helping you make sound decisions about your safety and security.

Students are expected to adhere to all safety and security parameters as instructed by in-country staff and to be well versed on all policies detailed in the Graduate Student Handbook. As is the case anywhere, there is much you can do on the program to ensure your own safety by simply taking responsibility for your behavior and being extra vigilant in new situations. Being careful about food and beverages, dressing appropriately for the culture and climate, and maintaining your wits, sound judgment, and flexibility will go a long way toward maintaining your well-being.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

SIT Student Affairs is available 24 hours a day to respond to and manage student emergencies. Students will be provided with local emergency contact information during in-country orientation. If you call our student support team outside of U.S. business hours, you will be greeted by an answering service and forwarded to an on-duty SIT Student Affairs staff member.

To reach the 24 hour emergency team, please call **(802) 258-3212**

In the event of an emergency, SIT may inform your designated emergency contact person of the situation.

CELL PHONE POLICY

As part of SIT’s commitment to student safety and security, all students are required to have a working smart phone capable of making and receiving both local and international calls throughout the duration of the program. For that purpose students are required to either (a) bring an open, unlocked smart phone from the U.S. to the program that is able to accept a local SIM card, and is compatible with and usable at the program location, (b) work with the program staff within the first week upon arrival in country to purchase a smart phone locally, or (c) bring a dual SIM smart phone. During orientation, with assistance from SIT staff, students will learn how to purchase and use an appropriate local SIM card, and how to acquire minutes for calls and texting. SIT Study Abroad requires that each student have a **local number** for communication with program staff and academic contacts.

While we recognize that alternative communication methods can be free or cheaper than cell service i.e. Facetime, Skype, WhatsApp, etc. those programs alone

do not satisfy our need for regular communication with the local program staff and partners, nor do they meet our emergency communication needs. Therefore, local cellular capacity on each student's phone is required for the duration of the program. Students are required to maintain a minimum amount of phone credits at all times for emergency calls. Full compliance with this policy is expected.

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT

Please make sure you review the U.S. State Department's Consular Information Sheet for the country or countries you will be traveling to. This is available at:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>

Should there be developments that require program itinerary alterations, SIT will communicate immediately with all participants regarding those proposed changes or program contingencies.

Before the program begins, SIT will register all U.S. students with the U.S. State Department. **However, if you are traveling independently before or after the program, we strongly recommend that you register your travel plans.** Please go to <https://step.state.gov/step/> and follow the steps to register.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

Alcohol and drug consumption carry serious safety and legal risks and may lead to cross-cultural misunderstandings. If you choose to drink, consider that there are behaviors which may be acceptable in the United States (excessive drinking, staying out very late) that are unacceptable in most places in the world for both safety and cultural reasons. You will be asked to fully integrate into the host community. As such, you must respect the concerns of locals and their generosity in opening their community to you.

Illicit drug use is strictly prohibited and is grounds for dismissal from the program. Be advised that legal penalties for drug users in many countries are severe, and the authorities generally operate on a presumption of guilt. SIT and local program staff will be unable to assist students facing legal trouble resulting from drug use.

GENERAL PROGRAM TIPS

Remember that while you are a student in a cultural education program, you are also an ambassador for your home country, and SIT Graduate Institute. We ask all students to abide by all policies and guidelines in order to help maintain those important relationships as well as their own safety and well-being. Failure to abide by established guidelines may result in disciplinary measures. The following are safety tips for your time on the program:

- Follow the advice of locals (in particular your program staff)—e.g. if people in the area do not go jogging and tell you not to, listen to them and don't do it.
- Do not visibly display or flamboyantly use material possessions such as iPads, laptops, digital cameras, name-brand sunglasses, smart phones, etc. in communities where such items are economically out of reach for most of the population.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash in your pockets or daypacks. Bring a money belt that can be worn out of sight under your clothing.
- Dress conservatively; try not to draw attention to yourself by dress, speech, or behavior. Modest dress is encouraged for all program participants.
- Stay in groups, particularly at night.
- Be very aware that the use of alcohol will impair your judgment and that this may cause you to misinterpret already unfamiliar cultural cues. It also makes you a more likely target for would-be criminals. Excessive consumption of alcohol is subject to disciplinary action.

ILLNESS, ACCIDENT, AND EVACUATION INSURANCE

All SIT Graduate Institute students are automatically enrolled with SIT's accident and illness insurance as part of their program fee. SIT partners with International SOS to provide medical services for the duration of your program. International SOS has been providing high quality global medical and security services for over 25 years. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency, the

highest quality medical care will be arranged for you.

This coverage includes:

- Full reimbursement for all medical expenses associated with an acute illness
- Emergency reunion benefits for one immediate family member
- Medical evacuation in the event of serious emergency
- Security evacuation expenses

Students should note that routine physicals, dental work, and other customary medical care are not covered by this plan. This plan covers accidents and illness only. Please see the health and insurance tab on our website for a full description of coverage. <https://graduate.sit.edu/admitted-students/climate-change-and-global-sustainability-pre-departure/>

Each student is strongly encouraged to budget appropriately to ensure enough personal funds are available to cover medical expenses prior to reimbursement. This typically takes three weeks. In severe medical emergencies, we will work with International SOS to arrange for direct payment. Any covered medical expenses that have been paid out-of-pocket will be reimbursed according to the terms of coverage after the submission of the appropriate claim form. When you pay for services rendered, make sure to request receipts that you can later submit with your insurance claim form.

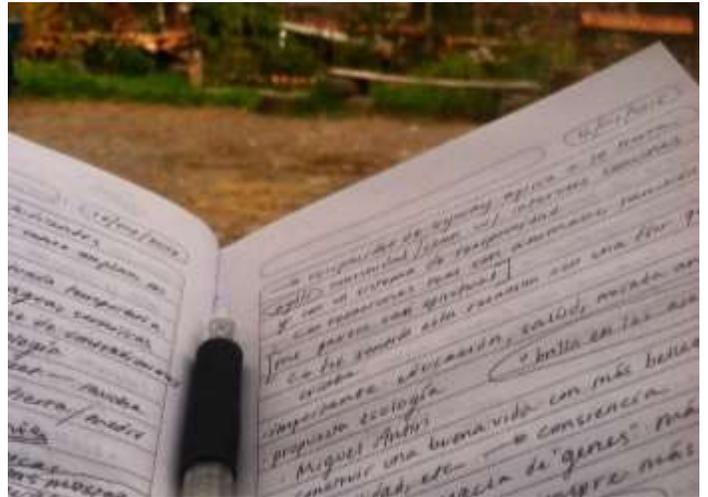
PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students should be aware of their environment and their belongings throughout the program and take care to protect against theft whenever possible. SIT encourages students to purchase personal property insurance independently to cover any valuables such as computers and other electronic devices in the event of loss or theft. If you do experience theft or loss of items, please inform in-country program staff right away.

Please note: It's a good idea to bring a thumb drive with you on the program. As a precaution, always be sure to back up information stored on laptops, memory drives, and digital music players. SIT recommends frequent backups of important documents, including all academic work. Store your backups in a separate physical location and/or online.

HEALTH GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Maintaining good health is critical to having a successful



semester. To help you do that, we have provided Health Guidelines and Requirements for your program, which can be found [here](#).

It is very important that you read this document as early as possible and examine it with your medical provider. The guidelines include required and recommended immunizations as specified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and World Learning; a suggested calendar for immunizations and other prophylaxes; and valuable information on how to avoid exposure to common carriers of disease. Please call your admissions counselor with any questions.

GENERAL HEALTH TIPS

Here are some important health-related tips based on SIT's experience:

- **Bring a full semester's supply of important medications with you.** We realize that it may be difficult or expensive to fill a prescription for this period in advance. However, it is often impossible to send medications to program sites due to high import taxes, customs seizures, program travel, etc.
- Using physician's letterhead stationery, have your doctor/physician write the names of your prescriptions and a description for each one. Make sure prescriptions include generic names. This note

will be helpful in an emergency, and you should carry it with you while traveling, in case you are questioned by immigration authorities.

- Important medicines **should be carried on the plane with you**, not in checked luggage.
- If you are asthmatic, bring an ample supply of inhalers for the entire program, as these cannot be mailed to you from the United States.
- If you have any serious allergies, be sure to bring an extra epinephrine kit and an antihistamine.
- If you wear contact lenses, bring your own solutions. Bring a pair of glasses as a back-up; if you lose your contacts, you may have difficulty replacing them. In addition, some people find it difficult to wear contacts in a different environment.

Please take care of all necessary dental work and allow for ample recovery time prior to your program.

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Cultural adjustment, academic challenges, a full schedule of classes, travel, field-based activities, and the dynamics of your SIT group can present new challenges to maintaining a good attitude and healthy emotional state. It is important to consider coping strategies in advance. For some students, this may mean personal journaling, exercise, music, leisure reading, or coffee/tea at your favorite local café. Thinking ahead and planning for the ups and downs of your time abroad will ensure that you have the tools that you need to take good care of yourself and contribute positively to a learning community.

If you have used counseling services on a regular basis, SIT advises that you discuss this program with your mental health professional as early as possible prior to departure. In some cases, students have elected to maintain a phone or email relationship with a provider in the US, as local resources can be limited.

WHO CARD OR IMMUNIZATION RECORD

The International Certificate of Vaccination (also known as the WHO card) is a card used to record medical information such as immunizations and other medical history. Many countries require a WHO card or immunization record to enter the country. You may obtain a blank WHO card from a Travel Clinic or online at: http://www.who.int/ihr/IVC200_06_26.pdf. Please consult your physician and Health Guidelines and Requirements (found with your pre-departure documents [here](#)) to learn about recommended and required immunizations and country regulations regarding the WHO card.

Countries, or localities within countries, may change immunization requirements at any time, so it is important that you have this document available. Without this proof of immunization history, you may be denied entry to certain countries/areas. We recommend keeping your WHO card or immunization record with your passport and other important documents, as well as making a photocopy that you keep separately.

