

MA in Diplomacy & International Relations

Welcome Letter 2024 - 2025

DEAR INCOMING STUDENT:

Welcome to the SIT Graduate Institute's Global Master's in Diplomacy and International Relations! You have chosen to study diplomacy and international relations in a period of tremendous change, uncertainty, and complexity. Old norms of international order are being reevaluated as pressing challenges, such as complex emergencies, war, environmental disruption, refugee and migration movements, financial crises, and right-wing populism emerge. How the international system will respond and adapt is uncertain. All issues considered, this is a fascinating period in which to examine global affairs and regional politics.

We would like to take this opportunity to share with you some important information about the program and to answer some of your questions regarding what to expect.

YOUR DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FACULTY

Dr. Bruce W. Dayton (Chair)

My name is Bruce W. Dayton. I'll be playing several roles across your yearlong program. First, I lead the two-week foundational seminar at the start of your program in Washington. I also will be teaching the four-week online class you'll take titled Negotiation, Mediation, and Dialogue. I'll also be serving as the academic advisor for many of you. In this capacity I'll start working with you from day one to identify possible practicum placements and topics for your final capstone paper. Finally, as overall Chair of the program I'm responsible for organizing our team of professors and ensuring that you receive a quality experience throughout your time at SIT.

I've been working in the field of international peace and conflict studies for over fifteen years. My research and training focus on intermediaries in peacebuilding, citizens' diplomacy, and political leadership. My books in that field include *Constructive Conflicts: From Emergence to Transformation*, now in its 6th edition, (Rowman & Littlefield, 2022); *Perspectives in Waging Conflicts Constructively* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2017); and *Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation* (Routledge, 2009), all co-authored with Louis Kriesberg. My previous academic appointments include Associate Director of the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, Research Co-Director the Intra and Inter-State Conflicts at the Program for the Advancement of Research on Collaboration and Conflicts, and Assistant Research Professor, all at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. I'm trained in a field called 'political psychology' and served for six years as Executive Director of the International Society for Political Psychology.

DR. Goran Jovanovic (Co-Chair)

My name is Goran Jovanovic. I would like to warmly thank you for choosing our program. Our faculty and program staff share the same goals for you to gain the best from our program and maximize your experience with us. In general, my role and that of the program staff will be to coordinate the many facets of the SIT Global Master program, guiding you through your learning experience.

I have broad experience in teaching and international education. As a professor of international relations, my focus has been on globalization and global governance, international organizations, IR theories, foreign policy and diplomacy, political communication, and strategic foresight. I have taught in universities and business schools across Europe, North America, Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caribbean. My academic background is in international relations (PhD / Master, University of Geneva), American studies (Smith College, MA), development (University of Geneva) and sociology (University of Belgrade). I was an IR department head at the International University in Geneva and scientific director at the Research Center on Audiovisual Sources of Contemporary History at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva. Besides publications in international relations and political communication, I have produced many educational films and documentaries on contemporary political issues.

Dr. Imraan Buccus (Associate Chair)

My name is Imraan Buccus and I'll be playing a lead role when you get to South African in the spring. While in South Africa we will be exploring non-western perspectives on international relations, south-south diplomacy, and the politics of the African Union. My PhD is in political sociology and I have a master's degree in social policy from the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). I have published widely in the area of participatory democracy and South Africa's liberation struggle. My background is in student politics; having pushed for South Africa's isolation from the international community during the anti-apartheid struggle. The program in SA has developed close ties with our partner organization, Accord (Africa Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes) which is Africa's largest conflict resolution NGO.

GET TO KNOW YOUR COHORTMATES

Because of privacy laws, SIT is unable to share personal information about future students with other future students. However, in the weeks to come we'll ask a member of your cohort to set up a Facebook or WhatsApp group so that you all can start to get to know each other and if desired, share information about your transportation and accommodation in the United States, Switzerland, and South Africa. We will send this information once available; please note that it is not intended to duplicate or replace official information and is for personal purposes only.

ACADEMIC AND GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

The SIT Global Master program in Diplomacy and International Relations is unique, but it shares the same basic tenets and philosophy as other SIT Graduate Institute programs around the world. The education you will receive in the classroom through lectures, course materials, and discussions will provide a framework of information that will be enhanced through visits to state agencies,

intergovernmental organizations, and American, European, and South African international NGOs. The various components of the program are designed to expose and subsequently immerse you in many diverse elements of the international and diplomatic setting, while the assignments are designed to help assimilate the academic with professional competence and skills. This approach demands that students be both intellectually curious and independent learners and writers.

The program addresses these issues with classroom courses supplemented by lectures and briefings in international and regional institutions in Washington, Geneva, Brussels, Cape Town and Johannesburg. Interactive research studies and field excursions will deepen your understanding of the contemporary international issues and the challenges faced by organizations that foster multilateral diplomacy, peacebuilding, human rights, security, economic cooperation, and environmental accountability.

This program fully integrates the SIT Graduate Institute philosophy, expecting a great degree of flexibility and willingness to learn about other cultures, as well as respect for the values and norms of the host community and of the fellow group members. Throughout the program, you will be exposed to different perspectives, views and interests on statecraft, diplomacy, and international relations.

PRE-ARRIVAL READINGS

Information regarding required books to purchase prior to travel and required pre-reading can be located on the Preparing for your Program tab of the admitted student webpage. Please note that you will have several hundred pages of reading to complete prior to the program start in Washington, so please plan to insure you have enough time to purchase the books and complete the readings.

We also advise that you begin to regularly review publications with significant coverage of international news stories, commentary, or interesting developments in global affairs. Choose sources that cover international events from different perspectives and locations to better understand how global events are framed in different ways by different outlets. Online sources of information with significant international coverage include the New York Times, the Economist, BBC News, Al Jazeera, China Daily, Times of India, and Le Monde, among others. You may also want to review prominent policy-relevant journals in international affairs, such as Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, and World Politics.

IN CLOSING

We know that you are making a huge investment of time and money to pursue your master's degree. To that end, we want to emphasize that all of us are very excited to begin collaborating with you and supporting your professional development journey. To help you prepare, also on this web site you'll find a calendar for the entire program, a guide on how to prepare for your arrival in both countries, visa and travel information, books to purchase and readings to complete prior to the start of the program, and important health and safety tips. Additional information will be shared in the months to come, but in the meanwhile, should you have any questions, feel free to contact admissions officer Maira Tungatarova regarding financial aid, travel and visa questions, and other administrative details, or Bruce W. Dayton regarding the curriculum, program details, or about working in the field.

We wish you all the best as you prepare for this exciting learning experience, and we look forward to meeting you soon.

Sincerely,

Bruce W. Dayton, Goran Jovanovic & Imraan Buccus