

MA IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

WELCOME LETTER 2024-2026

Dear student,

Congratulations on your decision to begin SIT's part-time master's degree program in Sustainable Development this May! I would like to welcome you to the program - the next step in your academic, personal, and professional development. The Sustainable Development faculty and administration look forward to supporting you throughout this exciting journey. I'd also like to take this opportunity to share some important information about the program that will hopefully answer some of your questions regarding what to expect. This letter and the pre-program materials found in the Admitted Students section of the SIT website contain important information about your upcoming studies and should hopefully be useful as you prepare for the program. Please be sure to review both thoroughly.

ORIENTATION

You are invited to participate in SIT's online orientation. The purpose of the orientation is to provide students with information about the Graduate Institute, the services available to them, introduce students to staff, and provide a space for students and faculty to begin to get to know one another. All new students from all of the Graduate Institute's hybrid programs will participate in two general morning sessions. There will also be a separate Sustainable Development session for SD students only. There will be a total of 3 sessions. They include:

- **Monday, May 20, 2024 - 9:30-11:00 AM ET** (overall introduction to SIT and President's welcome)
- **Monday, May 20, 2024 - 12:00 - 1:00 PM ET** (SDP-only orientation)
- **Tuesday, May 21, 2024 - 9:30-11:00 AM ET** (SIT administrative offices will provide an overview of their services).

I strongly recommend that you join all three sessions live. However, if you can't make it, the sessions will be recorded. The meeting links will be sent to all students a few days before the meeting dates. Keep your eyes open for them! Additional orientation information will be provided by SIT's offices of Student Well-being, Information Technology, the Library, the Registrar, and Career Services in the form of pre-recorded videos. These will be accessible through SIT's 2024 student orientation Canvas site toward the middle of May.

SUMMER TERM 2024

The summer term begins on May 20 and ends on August 9, 2024. A complete calendar for your program is available in the admitted students section of the SIT website.

For your first term, you will take two courses. They include *Human Flourishing in the Anthropocene: From Development to Regeneration* and *Policy Advocacy for Social Change*. In *Human Flourishing in the Anthropocene: From Development to Regeneration*, you will venture into the history of international development, from the middle of the 20th century to the present. In *Policy Advocacy for Social Change*, you will learn about the policy formulation process and ways in which policy can hinder or catalyze social change. We will discuss details of the courses during our group meeting on May 20th.

As part of the summer term, the SIT Graduate Institute will host a summer residency on the SIT campus in Brattleboro, Vermont from June 23 to June 2. During the residency, students from several hybrid programs will converge on the campus to engage in coursework. The residency is a good opportunity to begin to get to know your cohort, other students in the Graduate Institute, as well as SIT faculty and staff. For the Sustainable Development Practice program, students will be required to attend the residency from June 23 through June 29. During the residency, students will attend classes all day (both inside the classroom and outside). For this reason, it will be important for students to dedicate the entire day, each day, to their studies and be prepared to dedicate all their time to their classes. Housing is available on the SIT campus – this is optional and entirely dependent on student preference. Small hotels and Airbnb’s can be found throughout Brattleboro, as well. All students are requested to arrive during the day on June 22nd to the SIT campus to participate in the welcome dinner. More information will be available as the dates draw closer.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO PREPARE FOR THE PROGRAM?

It is common for students to want to get a head start on their studies. Before doing so, I suggest taking a minute to assess your situation. During the next two years, you are going to be busy (good busy). Therefore, it will be important for you to strengthen your existing time management skills and to also acquire new ones. I

suggest taking advantage of the time you have now to do some reading about and practicing of time management skills that you will put to use in the coming months. Also, because you will be busy with school and balancing different obligations in the next two years, I suggest dedicating time to things that you will unlikely have time for, including social, familial, and other obligations (and joys).

To support you in making the most of your academic growth during your SIT program, I recommend that you begin to deepen your knowledge and understanding of current topics in sustainable development through critically engaging with issues that are local to you as well as topics that are of your particular interest. I strongly suggest exploring open access literature (through hubs like Google Scholar, Research Gate, and Web of Science), podcasts, films, and other resources relevant to your sustainable development interests.

Please receive the warmest of wishes and heartfelt welcome from the sustainable development practice team. We look forward to meeting you soon and to our work together in the coming years.

All the best,



Aly Dagang, PhD
Chair, Sustainable Development Practice Hybrid MA