

Global Master's in International Education

Welcome Letter 2024

DEAR INCOMING STUDENT:

Welcome to SIT Graduate Institute's Global Master's in International Education. As the Associate Dean of the Graduate Institute, I would like to congratulate you on your acceptance into the program—an amazing next step in your academic, personal, and professional development. The faculty, staff, and I are looking forward to supporting you throughout this upcoming journey.

On a personal level, I am particularly honored to invite you into *this degree* because international education is a passion of mine, and the cornerstone of my career. Exactly 20 years ago, I started my master's degree in international/intercultural education, and I wish this Global Master's degree had been an option back then! But I am invigorated by the developments in the field in recent years, and there is much potential for continued growth and transformation—of which you all can be a part.

Importantly, this program has deep roots at the Graduate Institute, though it has taken different forms over the years. From its origins as an on-campus program, to its evolution into this global degree, we strive to balance tradition with innovation. We actively apply feedback from our students, to make curricular and pedagogical improvements, all while keeping a finger on the pulse of the field. We aim to cultivate a strong sense of identity as a unique program, while maintaining a solid connection to the foundations (and innovations) within the field. With our grounding in experiential learning and strong commitment to social justice, I am confident that you will have a powerful and transformative learning experience through this program.

I'd like to tell you about a few recent changes we've made. First of all, while we originally planned for the program to spend the second semester in Vietnam, we were never able to live out our plans, first due to COVID regulations, then due to visa challenges. Most challenges have a silver lining, however, and that was certainly the case here. We were able to pivot to create a powerful program in Nepal. Due to the wonderful relationships we've been able to establish there over the past two years, and positive feedback from students, we have made the decision to officially change the program location for our second semester to Nepal.

Next, we recently underwent an external review for this program. This is a regular process for all schools – you can think of it like a regular check up with a doctor to make sure everything is still healthy and functioning well. We got some great feedback from that review to help us strengthen our program and our course offerings. We are now working to enhance our experiential approach, diversify our assessments, and enhance the course readings. I am looking forward to sharing those updates with you soon. Additionally, we've learned from the experience with our other global master's degrees that, while not necessary, it can make a big difference to have the program chair based in one of the program locations. For the IE program, the former chair, Dr. Sora Friedman, had been based in the U.S., supporting the students remotely while they were studying in the different country locations. Because Dr. Friedman had extensive experience with our previous degrees, she was well positioned to launch this new Global Master's degree. However, now that this newer model is established, we are shifting leadership to appoint a new chair who can be based in Seville, Spain,

and can support you in person as you begin your journey with this program. I will introduce the new program chair as soon as I am able to do so. In the meantime, because of my academic and professional background in International Education, I will be your point of contact for this program.

Please reach out if you have any questions. I look forward to meeting you all and learning more about what brought you to this program!

All the best,

Laura



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