

MA in Diplomacy & International Relations

DEAR STUDENTS:

Thank you for considering SIT's MA in Diplomacy & International Relations! I'd like to take this opportunity to share some important information about the program and to answer some of your questions regarding what to expect. This letter and the student resources web pages contain important information about the program and should prove useful whether you are exploring what makes this program unique or preparing to join us as an admitted student.

DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FACULTY

Dr. Orli Fridman (Chair)

Dr. Fridman holds a PhD in conflict analysis and resolution from the Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on peace studies and memory studies with interest in comparative conflict studies. She writes extensively about memory politics and memory activism in Serbia and in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia. In her writing and teaching, she brings comparative knowledge, experience and expertise from the Balkans and the Middle East (with focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict)

Dr. Imraan Buccus (Associate Chair)

Dr. Imraan Buccus will play the lead role when you get to South Africa in the spring. While in South Africa Imraan will work with you to explore non-western perspectives on international relations, south-south diplomacy, and the politics of the African Union. Imraan's PhD is in political sociology and he has a master's degree in social policy from the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). He has published widely in the area of participatory democracy and South Africa's liberation struggle. His background is in student politics; having pushed for South Africa's isolation from the international community during the anti-apartheid struggle.

GET TO KNOW YOUR COHORTMATES

Because of privacy laws, SIT is unable to share personal information about future students. However, a couple of months before the program begins, we will ask a member of your cohort to set up a WhatsApp group, just for the group, so that you all can start to get to know each other and if desired, consider possible housing and roommate scenarios as well. 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, Vienna, 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 contemplating 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, please explore the other documents posted on this webpage. 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 Dr. Orli Fridman regarding the curriculum, program details, or about working in the field.

Sincerely,
Orli Fridman