



S F S THE SCHOOL
FOR FIELD STUDIES

TANZANIA

Program Manual

Summer 2016

Academic Year 2015-2016

The School for Field Studies (SFS)

Center for Wildlife Management Studies (CWMS)

Moyo Hill Camp, Tanzania



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Overview of SFS Programs

Note that as a condition for participation in an SFS program, you are required to document that you have read, understood, and accepted all academic, safety, administrative, and operational policies, rules, and requirements by reading and signing the SFS Terms and Regulations Statement.

SFS Mission Statement: SFS creates transformative study abroad experiences through field-based learning and research. Our educational programs explore the human and ecological dimensions of the complex environmental problems faced by our local partners, contributing to sustainable solutions in the places where we live and work. The SFS community is part of a growing network of individuals and institutions committed to environmental stewardship.

The School for Field Studies offers semester and summer programs at our field stations around the world. The typical field station is staffed by a Center Director, three resident faculty members, a Student Affairs Manager, and a host of support staff. The academically rigorous and interdisciplinary curriculum of each program is designed to allow students to actively discover and understand the complexities of local environmental, social, and economic issues. Through teaching and research, center faculty and staff introduce students to field research methods, data collection, and analysis, and they promote student interactions and reciprocity with local communities. The curriculum and research projects are driven by local needs and interests. SFS programs integrate academic, research, social, and community activities in a holistic education model.

Unique Elements of SFS Programs:

The Five Year Research Plan (5YRP)

The 5YRP at each SFS field station is the overarching research directive that addresses critical local environmental challenges and explores local solutions working within the community. The 5YRP is generated by our faculty, local stakeholders and actors, and external research advisors. The 5YRP also provides the community and students with a framework for the program curriculum and defines how SFS courses, research, and outreach activities fit into the bigger picture of environmental conservation and sustainable development.

Courses

Semester programs include three, four credit disciplinary courses and a capstone Directed Research course. Some semester programs may also include a two credit Language and Culture course. Each of our summer programs consist of a single four credit course (six credits in Bhutan) that combines the major themes of the semester program into an intense four-week session (six weeks in the case of Bhutan). We offer two sessions each summer, and some summer sessions can be taken back-to-back, offering eight credits in eight weeks.

Core Disciplinary Courses: In semester programs, three core disciplinary courses provide the

background information and skills needed to understand and address complex environmental issues. Each course is designed to provide students with transferable academic credit according to the U.S. University and College system. Courses are participatory in nature and are designed to stimulate inquiry and active learning. Faculty members pose several case study questions to provide students with an interdisciplinary and holistic framework for their process of inquiry into environmental and socioeconomic issues. Case studies guide students through an analysis of an actual local environmental situation or dilemma. Throughout the integrated curriculum, students strive to understand the background, context, and relevance of local issues well enough to enable them to explore potential solutions and alternatives through research and critical thinking. Each course combines lectures, field exercises, assignments, tests, and research.

Directed Research (DR): The Directed Research course is the capstone of the program. Students conduct research that addresses key research questions defined in the 5YRP, and supports the community with environmental planning and action. Each student will join a faculty-led team that will carry out field research, data analysis and communication of results in one or more disciplines including: ecology, natural resource management, conservation science, environmental ethics, and socioeconomics. While the DR data is collected as a team, each student will develop specific aspects of the project into their individual papers (see Directed Research course description for more details). The core skills students will learn through the DR experience are field skills, analytical skills, communication skills and critical thinking, as well as team work and time management. Students present their findings from their Directed Research to classmates, key stakeholders, and other community members.

Field Experience

An important component of the SFS learning model is hands-on field experience. Field lectures, exercises and research help students to connect the conceptual material presented in the course to local realities, learn field research techniques, collect and analyze field data, and develop holistic and critical thinking skills.

Group Living

At SFS field stations, students live and work with other students and SFS staff. Residential life provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate leadership, good communication, teamwork, and other group-dynamics skills.

Connecting with the Local Community

Students engage in a variety of community service projects that are facilitated by the Student Affairs Manager (SAM). The SAM works closely with the Center Director, faculty, community groups, and students to identify and select projects that will help students become grounded in the local context of the issues they are researching, and give back to the community.

The SFS Center for Wildlife Management Studies (CWMS)

SFS-CWMS operates from Moyo Hill Camp in Tanzania (MHC) in the Tarangire-Manyara ecosystem (TME) of northern Tanzania. Northern Tanzania, home of world famous national parks such as Tsavo, Tarangire, Lake Manyara, Arusha, Serengeti, and the Ngorongoro conservation area, offer a tightly packed hub of wildlife conservation. This scenic area is the center of tourism in East Africa and has been the home of the Maasai and Iraqw people for centuries. The area surrounding Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Park are the focus of many comparative studies on animal behavior and vegetation composition and the rich assemblage of local people makes for stimulating opportunities for cultural and social learning.

Through classroom and field activities, students will compare and contrast the socioeconomic, policy, and environmental implications of demographic change, land reform, and wildlife populations for conservation and rural livelihood. Students will begin their study at the field station gaining general knowledge about the wildlife in the region, the pastoralist lifestyle, and principles of wildlife management. They will conduct the Directed Research in the final month of the program. Students will visit multiple national parks, wildlife management areas, local communities, and group ranches or farms throughout the semester. Our Tanzania summer programs focus on wildlife management and research techniques. We will discuss the Tanzania summer program in detail in this document.

Environmental Issues of the Region

Socioeconomic, land tenure, and land use changes have adversely impacted wildlife populations in, around, and between protected areas in key remaining ecosystems in East Africa. The Maasai are currently undergoing changes from a pastoralist to a more sedentary, cash-based economy. Additionally, Iraqw and Maasai farmers and other tribal peoples from East Africa are establishing dryland and irrigated cultivation in the group ranches or private farms. Human populations and land use change in these key wildlife dispersal areas are also increasing. All of these changes are happening rapidly, and they are taking place on semi-arid lands, which are highly susceptible to erosion and other long-term degradation. The quality of wildlife habitat is in turn being impacted by these settlement patterns.

Some of the key impacts on wildlife include habitat degradation, disruption of migration patterns, loss and blockage of migratory routes and corridors, increased competition with livestock for grazing lands, persecution due to intense human-wildlife conflicts, prevalence of bush meat poaching for commercial and subsistence purposes, and decreasing access to freshwater resources. Although separation of wildlife from livestock and crops represents a potential means of reducing conflict, use of fences have had mixed effectiveness in solving this problem. Continued contraction and degradation of wildlife habitats and dispersal areas will likely increase the frequency and severity of conflicts thereby undermining conservation. The resolution of these conflicts requires a regional and local approach as well as a variety of creative alternatives for land tenure, land use planning, and wildlife conservation.

SFS-CWMS Five-Year Research Plan

The role of SFS-CWMS is to support the efforts of TANAPA and TAWIRI In Tanzania and other government agencies , community ranches, and other groups by providing research and other information that will help identify current socioeconomic and land use changes, and trends and explain how those factors are contributing to human-wildlife competition for space and critical resources. We intend to make recommendations for reducing related conflicts and finding means for achieving sustainable development and wildlife conservation in and around protected areas. Our research will provide information about wildlife population dynamics and habitat suitability for managing key species, enhancing biodiversity protection, and promoting sustainable and responsible human livelihoods. The overall question that drives our research is:

How can changes in land use and resource availability in Tanzania be managed in such a way as to foster the well-being of local communities whilst safeguarding and promoting biodiversity conservation?

Assessment of water resources, degradation, and impacts

There is evidence that water scarcity and degradation in the TME region is causing human-human, human-wildlife, and livestock-wildlife conflicts. We will assess the status of key watersheds in the region, identify the main threats and underlying causes of water resource degradation and conflict, and define the management strategies, ecological restoration, and social governance structures that can be put in place to reverse the degradation of water resources.

Impacts of land reform on demographics, land use, and wildlife conservation

Due to the apparent failure of the 1960s land reform in the region and current trend toward privatization, there is an urgent need to understand the socioeconomic, political, and environmental drivers and implications of land reform for wildlife conservation and rural livelihood in a changing landscape.

Wildlife and range conditions

We will continue with studies of wildlife densities and distributions throughout dispersal areas, including on ranches and in parks. Of interest are the impacts on wildlife dynamics and human-wildlife conflicts of human encroachment on the areas. We are interested in examining range condition, trends, and productivity within the group ranches in the TME, with specific focus on status for livestock and wildlife management. We will measure vegetation productivity and grassland community dynamics.

Community and tourism

Questions to be explored include level of community participation, perceptions, and expectations in wildlife conservation and wildlife-related tourism, and the tourist experience in existing offerings in the region.

Semester Course Descriptions

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Contact Hours</i>	<i>Course Number</i>
Environmental Policy and Socioeconomic Values	4	60	SFS 3020
Techniques in Wildlife Management	4	60	SFS 3710
Wildlife Ecology	4	60	SFS 3720
Directed Research	4	180	SFS 4910
Introduction to Swahili Language and East African Tribal Communities	2	20	SFS 2060

Grades in SFS-CWMS semester courses are determined via exams, quizzes, examinations, field exercises, presentations, homework, and final projects. The specific grading guidelines for each course will be presented in the course syllabus upon arrival to the Center.

Environmental Policy and Socioeconomic Values, SFS 3020

This course provides insight into the broad social context surrounding natural resources to determine effective approaches to resource management. Objectives are to understand socio-cultural context, including hierarchies and power structures; formal and informal decision-making processes; value systems relevant to natural resources, including religious factors and environmental ethics; past and present uses of natural resources; economic factors (local, regional, external); ownership patterns; attitudes and other factors that affect change and their historical basis; and legal basis for enforcement of environmental policy. Students will be introduced to major constituencies that effect conservation (NGO conservation groups, economic interests, etc.) and their underlying philosophies.

Techniques in Wildlife Management, SFS 3710

This course introduces students to the questions, principles, and tools used by resource managers in the East Africa savanna ecosystem. Students study habitat assessment, plant and animal identification, associations and distributions, and other approaches to evaluating the savanna ecosystems. Behavioral, physiological, and social responses of animals to a changing environment will be examined. Field and laboratory techniques for monitoring ungulate populations and optimizing management practices will be presented. Decision-making processes, on which wildlife management programs are based, will be addressed.

Wildlife Ecology, SFS 3720

This course presents students with the information and conceptual background necessary to understand the underlying ecological principles of the East Africa savanna ecosystem. We will focus on the fundamental processes and inter-relationships between the biotic and abiotic environment. We begin with basic ecological principles, setting them against the background of

East Africa. Factors underlying distributions, population biology, and behavioral ecology will be examined, along with competition and predation using African examples. Theoretical models will be discussed in light of our observations on field trips.

Directed Research, SFS 4910

This course is an integral component of all SFS semester programs. The reason for specifying Directed Research, as opposed to basic, applied, or independent research, is that students research a specific topic related to the Center's 5YRP led by our resident faculty. Each student will join a faculty-led team that will carry out field research, data analysis, and communication of results in one or across several of the following disciplines: ecology, natural resource management, and socioeconomics. The aim of this course is to provide students with the opportunity to apply the scientific process in a field research project that addresses a local issue related to the environment. Through the Directed Research project, students will contribute to a growing body of scientific research that informs local conservation, resource management, and economic development decisions. This is a rigorous course designed to introduce students to the real-world challenges of conservation-based field research. The specific tools used in this course include experimental design, field techniques, basic descriptive statistics, and statistical analyses. Succinct scientific writing, graphic and tabular presentation of results, and effective delivery of oral presentations will be emphasized.

Introduction to Swahili Language and East African Tribal Communities, SFS 2060

This course contains two distinct but integrated modules. The Swahili language module offers listening, oral, and written practice of the Swahili language, at a basic level of proficiency, to increase students' communication and comprehension skills. Much of the Maasai population does not speak Swahili, but it is the national language in Tanzania—this phenomenon will be explained in the second course module. The socio-cultural aspects of East African tribes module emphasizes understanding of, and direct contact and interaction with, the native communities with which SFS works, primarily the Maasai and Iraqw. This exposure to culture and language will be reviewed and processed through lectures, field exercises, and classroom discussion. The socio-cultural module is designed to help students experience intense immersion in the culture and be therefore more adept at working effectively in their community-based Directed Research efforts.

Tanzania Summer Course Descriptions

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Contact Hours</i>	<i>Course Number</i>
Session I: Wildlife Management and Conservation	4	50	SFS 3500
Session II: Techniques for Wildlife Field Research	4	50	SFS 3570

Students may enroll in one or both summer sessions in Tanzania. Sequential students (those that attend both sessions) will receive a total of eight credits. Grades in SFS-CWMS summer courses are determined via exams, quizzes, examinations, field exercises, presentations, homework, and final projects. The specific grading guidelines for each course will be presented in the course syllabus upon arrival to the Center.

Wildlife Management and Conservation, SFS 3500

This course exposes students to wildlife management practices and the complex issues involving sustainable wildlife conservation in the Tarangire-Manyara ecosystem of Tanzania. The course combines concepts and principles of ecology, natural resource management, and socioeconomics, which are central to effective and sustainable wildlife conservation.

Techniques for Wildlife Field Research, SFS 3570

This course exposes students to a suite of wildlife field techniques and methods routinely used to assess wildlife ecology and management policies and practices in East Africa, with specific application to the Tanzania Tarangire-Manyara ecosystem conservation areas. The focus is multi-disciplinary and reflects the complex realities of balancing ecological, economic, and socio-cultural factors in sustainable wildlife conservation and management studies. Students learn foundational skills in observation and evaluations of wildlife, as well as interactive methods used for assessing local community attitudes and behaviors toward conservation efforts and apply these techniques to advance long-term research goals at our Center.

PLEASE NOTE

Semester students will be presented with course syllabi and Directed Research project options once they arrive at the center. Summer students will receive their single course syllabus upon arrival as well. Students are also encouraged to check the website for updated materials as well as peruse past syllabi and projects.

Outcomes and Program Details of SFS-CWMS Programs

In addition to learning extensive field skills, you will learn about many different aspects of wildlife conservation. Mentorship by faculty and other local experts is important, resulting in work that contributes to the conservation of natural resources and the improvement of the socioeconomic well-being of local community members. Below is a list of field skills, field exercises, and topics from past semester and summer programs (not all of these may be offered for a particular program):

Field Skills/Exercises:

- Plant and animal identifications
- Vegetation sampling and range resource assessment
- Wildlife population census
- Wildlife resource and habitat selection

- Monitoring animal behavior
- Social surveys using participatory methods
- Research design, hypothesis testing, data gathering and analysis, and write up of findings

Topics:

- Tropical savanna ecology, wildlife management techniques, and a socioeconomic background to understand wildlife management and human-wildlife conflict
- The role and use of plant resources by local communities: utilization, land ownership, group ranch policy
- Natural resources in the Tarangire and Lake Manyara ecosystems: use, competition, and conflicts
- Maasai and Iraqw community culture and tradition
- Effect of insularization of habitat on wildlife populations
- Identifying and assessing threats to Lake Manyara National Park, build scenarios for mitigating threats
- Land use and socioeconomics in the region

Frequently Asked Question (FAQ)

Q: How much time do we spend learning outside?

A: Many of our academic activities are field based. The actual amount will vary depending on the weather and other factors but you will spend time in the field during field lectures and field exercises.

Q: What is the structure of the program and how much free time will I have?

A: Program activities, including classroom lectures, field lectures, discussions, field research, and community activities will occur six days a week. Students will have very few days off during the programs. The program is intensive and highly structured. On occasion we organize recreational and cultural activities for students. Students will not have the opportunity during the program to spend nights away from the program; although, in some programs, designated weekends off may be planned.

Q: What is the basis for grading the course?

A: Your grade will be assessed through a mix of written exams, quizzes, readings, papers, and other assignments; the specifics are described in the course syllabus (which you receive at the start of the program).

Q: Can I choose my own research project?

A: No. Students will work on projects identified by the Center staff and developed and led by SFS faculty, but you may choose between several projects.

Q: Is the research a group effort or individual work?

A: Students collaborate for field data collection and analysis, but the final paper is written individually even if multiple students work on the same research topic.

Q: Do we go on overnight field trips?

A: Yes, there are several multi-day expeditions during the semester, with possible visits to the world famous Serengeti National Park in northern Tanzania, Tarangire, Ngorongoro crater, and

Lake Eyasi. Summer students will participate in at least one overnight field trip.

Q: How much will we interact with the local community?

A: Community activities and hands-on work will occur during some classes and also beyond academic work. Exact content and amount are dependent on community group schedules during the semester.

Q: What recreational activities are available during the program?

A: Students have one non-program day scheduled each week or so. Staff will organize optional recreational activities for these days. There is a running or walking track within the campus compounds for your daily exercise – and plenty of soccer games!

Academic Affairs

Academic Expectations

Our goal at SFS is to create an academic atmosphere that encourages learning and involvement in and out of the classroom. All students are expected to actively participate in the courses, field research, residential life, and community service. Students come from a wide range of colleges and universities, as well as from a variety of academic backgrounds. There are English majors, ecology majors, pre-med students, economics majors, and many others. We view this diversity of backgrounds as a strength of our programs and a learning opportunity for our students. At SFS you will be intellectually challenged by faculty, your classmates, the community, and in areas unfamiliar to you. You will have the opportunity to take a leadership role in those subjects in which you have expertise. Students are expected to critically analyze the drivers of local environmental, social, and economic problems. Students also participate in field research and communicate their findings with the goal of providing information to decision-makers who can address those problems.

Academic Credit

SFS courses are accredited through the University of Minnesota: Twin Cities (U of M). Students in SFS programs are automatically registered at U of M, unless they come from SFS affiliated universities that grant direct credit (see below). Students registered through U of M receive their grades, credit, and transcripts from U of M.

U of M operates on a semester calendar, and all SFS courses are accredited accordingly. An SFS semester consists of four courses carrying four credits each, for a total of 16 credits. Students in Tanzania, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Cambodia, and Bhutan are enrolled in a fifth course, *Culture and Language*, for an additional two credits, bringing the semester total to 18 credits. At the conclusion of the program, U of M, or SFS for direct credit students, will send one official transcript to the home school of each student. Transcripts are not available until two to four weeks after the close of the SFS program. Summer students participating in one of the summer sessions will receive credit for a single four credit course. Sequential summer students participating in both summer sessions will receive credit for both summer session courses, for a total of eight credits. Transcripts for summer courses are available two to four weeks after the

end of Summer Session 2.

Students from SFS-Affiliate Universities

Students from schools that have affiliate status with SFS typically receive academic credit for their SFS participation directly through their home institution. Applicants should check with their home study abroad advisor or registrar to determine if they attend an affiliate school (you may also check our website). At the end of each program, SFS reports grades directly to the student's affiliated home institution. Each SFS course taken and grade received will appear on the student's regular transcript, which can be obtained through normal home institution procedures. Questions regarding these procedures or requests for information for acquiring course approval at home institutions should be directed to the SFS Admissions Office.

Credit Transfer

The amount and type (major, minor, elective) of credit students receive for coursework done on an SFS program is determined by their home institution. It is strongly recommended that each student keep record of all completed tests, written papers, homework assignments, research papers, lecture notes, handouts, and reading assignments for the student's own future reference, and for possible discussions with faculty advisors. SFS does not assume responsibility for providing copies of these individual documents after students depart a center, with the exception of a student's grades on course assessment items and their final grade (as provided by the SFS faculty).

SFS cannot guarantee that students will receive credit for their SFS participation from their home institutions. Students should not assume that a prior student's success with credit transfer is a guarantee that their credits will transfer as well. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange credit transfer with their home school *prior* to SFS participation. Students intending to receive academic credit at their home institution should speak with their academic advisor about how to best proceed. Students should allow time to have their SFS program approved by their advisor and other appropriate personnel before the start of the program.

Why SFS Grades Matter!

Students who do not receive academic credit at their home institution (or only receive Pass/Fail credit) are encouraged to perform at their highest capacity while at SFS. Future graduate or other academic programs, as well as certain employers, may request your SFS transcript. Your SFS transcript will have your actual SFS grade (A, B, C, ...), and if you do not perform well at SFS, your poor grade may affect your future admissions or job applications.

Obtaining an Official Transcript

The following transcript procedures apply to all SFS students registered at the University of Minnesota: Twin Cities (U of M) for their SFS coursework. Students from affiliated institutions should contact the Admissions Manager at SFS for information on obtaining an official

transcript.

Students will receive one official transcript in the mail approximately 2-4 weeks after the end of the semester, or after the end of Summer Session 2 for all summer students. This transcript will be sent to the address designated on the Participation Approval Form (direct-credit students) or Transcript Request Form (usually the home school of the student or their permanent address). Transfer of credit is the student's responsibility, so the student must ensure the official transcript reaches the appropriate person at her/his home institution.

Students should wait at least four weeks after the end of the SFS semester or second summer session before requesting additional official transcripts and must request them through SFS for direct credit students or at the U of M directly at:

http://onestop.umn.edu/grades_and_transcripts/official_transcripts

Policies on Grading, Incompletes, and Withdrawal from Courses

SFS courses are rigorous, challenging, and the field based approach mandates that students demonstrate their knowledge of theory and practice by applying such theory and practice to actual problems. Because SFS exams are based on the application of knowledge and the synthesis of concepts and observations, the courses are generally thought of as difficult. Also, don't expect grading to be exactly the same as at your home institution—many students are surprised that different faculty often have different grading strategies. Be sure to engage with your SFS faculty at the beginning of the semester if you are unsure of the grading system.

Courses may not be taken on a pass/fail or audit basis. Letter grades will be reported to U of M and to SFS affiliate schools for every student. SFS does not "round-up" numerical grades (e.g., a final grade of 89.99% receives a letter grade of B+ and is not rounded up to 90.00, or A-).

Letter Grade Scale

A	95.00 - 100.00%	B+	86.00 – 89.99%	C+	76.00 – 79.99%	D	60.00 – 69.99%
A-	90.00 – 94.99%	B	83.00 – 85.99%	C	73.00 – 75.99%	F	0.00 – 59.99%
		B-	80.00 – 82.99%	C-	70.00 – 72.99%		

Incompletes

In general, an incomplete is a temporary status for students who have temporarily left an academic program with the intent of completing outstanding coursework by a predetermined date. SFS programs are internationally-based, field-orientated, and require fulltime on-site participation in all program activities; therefore, SFS does not grant incompletes.

Early Departure

In the case of a student making a permanent departure from an SFS program without completing outstanding coursework, the following will apply:

- **Credit Policy:** SFS does not grant partial or incomplete credit. Due to the

interdisciplinary nature of our programs, students must be present from the first day of orientation to the last day of wrap-up and presentations in order to receive credit for all courses. Any student who departs the program prior to completion will receive a “W” (“Withdrawn”) for the course. If the student must leave due to medical reasons and receives a medical withdrawal, some credit may be awarded at the discretion of the Office of Academic Affairs and the home institution.

- **Student Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of the student to contact their parents as well as make necessary arrangements with their home school regarding financial and credit implications as a result of their early departure.
- **Refund Policy:** See specifics in later section.

Requesting Review of Final Grades

It is the responsibility of the faculty to articulate how grades are determined. It is the responsibility of students to consider these explanations and, if there is a lack of clarity, to request clarification immediately, rather than after U or M grades are received.

Students who feel that there are grade inconsistencies should explain their concerns first to the relevant faculty in writing. Their explanation must be in writing and include both their reasons for requesting a grade review and their specific request. Faculty members have the obligation to respond fully, clearly, and promptly to any student grade inquiries. Students must raise their concerns directly with faculty while at the field site. If a satisfactory solution cannot be arranged between a student and her/his faculty, students may make a written request for an explanation of the faculty member’s decision for presentation to the Center Director for further consideration. The Center Director will review the case with the faculty member, and if a resolution cannot be made, the petition for a grade change will be forwarded to the SFS Dean of Academic Programs for review. The Dean’s review will generally be limited to determining whether fair standards were set and followed. After a student departs a program (i.e., when the student physically leaves the Center), the only grade changes SFS will consider are those which involve mathematical or transcription errors.

Requesting Accommodations for Learning and Physical Disabilities

Students with disabilities are welcome on SFS programs; however, students with disabilities requesting accommodations are responsible for notifying SFS within one week of acceptance to their program. Students requesting accommodation for physical disabilities should contact the SFS Director of Safety and Student Life. Students requesting accommodation of a learning difference should contact the Dean of Academic Programs. Please be aware that the level of accessibility, services, and accommodations to which you may have access at your home campus may not be available with SFS. Please call us at 800-989-4418 for further assistance.

Send physical disability accommodations requests to:

Attn: Director of Safety and Student Life
The School for Field Studies
100 Cummings Center, Suite 534-G
Beverly, MA 01915

Send learning accommodations requests to:

SFS Dean of Academic Programs
The School for Field Studies
100 Cummings Center, Suite 534-G
Beverly, MA 01915

Or by email to:

academics@fieldstudies.org

Academic and Research Honesty Policy

SFS has adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards student cheating, plagiarism, data falsification, and any other form of dishonest academic and/or research practice or behavior (including but not limited to, standards set by any college or institution with which the student is associated). As a result, any SFS student found by SFS to have engaged in or to have facilitated academic and/or research dishonesty will receive no credit (0%) for that particular activity. The faculty make their best efforts to clearly state whenever collaboration between students in the preparation of work is deemed acceptable and the extent of collaboration that is permissible.

In addition to the zero percent (0%) mark for the particular activity, SFS reserves the right, using its sole and unfettered judgment about the severity or recurrence of the transgression, to expel a student from any program in which the student is participating. A student who is expelled from a program will receive a grade of “Withdrawn” for each of the courses of the program. The expelled student will not be entitled to any financial refund from the program.

SFS considers it appropriate to report to a student’s principal academic organization any behavior that reflects on the character, integrity and/or academic ability of a student. Therefore, when a finding of academic dishonesty has been made, SFS will report the decision, as well as the sanction imposed, to any college or institution with which the student is associated, as well as to U of M, the school of record. Through participation in an SFS program, each student shall be deemed to have expressly waived any right to prevent such disclosure that might otherwise exist in law or by contract.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent any college or institution with which the student is associated from reviewing the violation and taking actions pursuant to its own policies on academic misconduct, including its policies on sanctions or the recording of an offense on a student’s record.

SFS Intellectual Property, Data and Acknowledgement Policies

SFS strongly recommends that students keep copies of written papers, homework assignments, research reports, and other handouts from the faculty. The SFS office does not keep copies of these materials and cannot reconstruct paperwork after students return from the field.

In recognition of this institution’s obligation to transfer technology and useful discoveries to local communities, fellow researchers, and society, SFS encourages the creation of scholarly works by SFS faculty, staff, and students as an integral part of its mission. This section should clarify the rules for ownership and use of data generated during the SFS program, and it presents guidelines for the production of scholarly works.

Data and Educational Materials Ownership

SFS is the owner of all academic products developed and research data collected by students while participating in an SFS program or through the use of facilities or funds provided by or through SFS. No student may utilize these data for any purpose other than scholarly works. This

includes, but is not limited to, the production of i) required coursework outputs, ii) reports to approved SFS clients such as Directed Research papers and related products, iii) conference presentations, and sometimes iv) publications, and v) senior theses. The use of these data by students for undisclosed and unapproved personal benefit or commercial application, financially or professionally or in any other way, is not permitted.

Because the research projects conducted at the Center are linked to the Five Year Research Plan, and projects are defined and prioritized by Center faculty, the SFS faculty advisor is considered the principal investigator of the project. As a member of the research team, students who have collected data during their program period will have access to these specific data from their SFS program. Students should discuss their intent to use these data for the explicit purposes of developing senior theses or other scholarly works outside of SFS with their DR advisor, prior to use. In some instances, collected data may not be suitable for these purposes. Please see the next two sections for more specifics on using SFS data for scholarly works and theses.

Using SFS Data Outside of SFS

To avoid unauthorized use of SFS data beyond SFS, and so we require a formal process of requesting permission from the project's principal investigator to use data collected while at SFS to produce scholarly work or use in a thesis. Please submit a written request to the principal investigator, specifying the data to be used and what will be produced with the data. In most cases, the use of such data is not an issue at all, but in certain circumstances it may not be possible.

Scholarly Works

Students may pursue the production of scholarly works using SFS research *only under consultation with and approval by the project's principal investigator* (i.e. the faculty supervising the DR project) or if the principal investigator is no longer with SFS, then approval may be granted by the Center Director or the Dean of Academic Programs. SFS does require students to take the following steps in the development of scholarly works, including a senior thesis, conference presentation, or manuscript for publication:

1. Discuss proposed plans with SFS faculty or Center Director, preferably while still at SFS;
2. Formally request permission from the SFS faculty to use the data for scholarly work outside of SFS;
3. Develop an authorship plan and work plan with SFS faculty, and, in the case of a senior thesis, with their home institution advisor;
4. All authors prepare the scholarly work;
5. Acknowledgements (see below for example) and institutional affiliation details are determined in discussion with SFS and the student's home institution.

In all scholarly works submitted for publication and based upon SFS data, the authors, whether currently or previously students at SFS, are required to acknowledge SFS, the Center, and all SFS employees and students who were involved in the project. In addition, publications or presentations by SFS employees that are based on data obtained by students during the conduct of SFS program coursework will, at a minimum, give acknowledgement to SFS classes who contributed to the research and full acknowledgement to the students who made a significant contribution to the research. The inclusion of students as co-authors by faculty is optional and will be based on merit, contribution, and relevance.

Use of Data for Thesis

Students may have the opportunity to develop some aspect of their SFS Directed Research or summer research work into a thesis at their home institution after the program. They may use the data for that purpose after consulting with their SFS faculty advisor but will not necessarily have access to additional data once they have completed their SFS program. Students should discuss this option with the SFS Admissions Counselor prior to starting the program and with the Center Director and the DR advisor once they start the program. It is also critical that the student discusses this option with their faculty advisor at their home institution before, during, and after their participation in the program. The responsibility for seeking clarity on research requirements from both institutions lies solely with the student.

The purpose of the Directed Research project and summer session research is to contribute to a broad and ongoing research agenda that has been defined by local stakeholders and SFS staff. Therefore, we cannot cater the DR projects to independent student interests or academic requirements at a student's home institution. Similarly, since the DR paper and other research assignments are works produced for an SFS course, students must hand in original work, therefore we generally cannot accommodate using data from research conducted at the home institution. Students and home advisors should bear in mind that students will not have the opportunity to pursue independent research or research on a topic unrelated to the DR. Also, data collection is usually completed as part of a team effort. We have had students discover when returning to their home institutions that their efforts when broken down as part of a team were not sufficient to fulfill a research requirement beyond that for which they were credited through SFS.

The SFS faculty advisor is solely responsible for assessing the content and quality of student work for the DR. Likewise, the student's thesis advisor at their home institution will be responsible for assessing subsequent work. It may be appropriate for students to invite their SFS advisor to serve on their thesis committee.

SFS Acknowledgement Policy

The appropriate acknowledgement of SFS is as follows:

“The Author gratefully acknowledge(s) the key [financial and/or field and/or logistical and/or other] support provided by The School for Field Studies (SFS) [name and location of Center, e.g.: Center for Sustainable Development Studies, Costa Rica]”

NOTE: In the case of both author address and acknowledgement, “The School for Field Studies (SFS)” is always identified and always placed before the name of the Center.

Requesting References from SFS Faculty

Some students request references from their SFS professors for graduate study or fellowship applications. Faculty are not obligated to write a student a letter of recommendation, and the decision to write the letter will be based on the professor’s workload and student’s SFS performance. Students are responsible for maintaining the contact information of their faculty and Center Directors. Since SFS instructors are frequently off in the field engaged in teaching or research, it may be difficult to contact them—expect a slow turnaround time and plan accordingly.

Representing SFS Experience on Your Résumé

Upon completing the SFS program you will have a number of skills and experiences that should serve you in your future studies and professional endeavors. SFS will have given you specific skills in intercultural competence, foreign language, field research, and data analysis that will make your résumé stand out. Thus, SFS encourages you to take full advantage of the SFS experience by representing your participation in the program on your résumé or curriculum vitae. See the box below for preliminary ideas, and study the materials provided in your closure packet upon your return stateside.

SFS on Your Résumé

Education

Study abroad: The School for Field Studies (SFS), [Name of course], [Name of SFS Center], [Location] (# credits, University of Minnesota: Twin Cities), [Program date].

E.g. The School for Field Studies (SFS), Tropical Rainforest Studies, Centre for Rainforest Studies, Queensland, Australia (16 credits, University of Minnesota: Twin Cities), Fall 2008.

Field Experience

[Year of experience] “[Title of your DR project]”, [brief description of the skills you developed; e.g., field survey of birds in forests and roadsides, scientific presentation]. [Location], [Time

span; e.g., July-Aug].

E.g. 2008 “Growth rate of *Calycophyllum spruceanum* in fields and forests,” experimental design, field data collection, scientific writing and oral communication. Peru, Sep-Dec.

Safety

Safety Philosophy & Strategy

Safety is never an absolute. The best approach is to strive with integrity towards an ideal safety potential. That means doing the necessary work to ensure safety. It means doing due diligence in identifying what the hazards are and weighing options to either reduce the exposure to the hazard, or to mitigate its effects. It also means planning how best to respond to incidents.

Together, we have worked with safety and risk managers, students, educators, travel experts, staff, students, medical professionals, lawyers, technology providers, insurance companies, regulatory and law enforcement agencies and our Board of Trustees to develop, implement, enforce and support all the elements of the SFS Safety Strategy.

We recognize that the location of our sites and the nature of our research activities may present greater and qualitatively different risks than those found on a college campus within the US. SFS is committed to managing these risks in order to meet the goals of our international, field based programs.

As part of our safety strategy, we require standards for behavior intended to maximize safety for our students, our staff, for the communities in which we work and for our school. No one approach to behavior management will work for everyone. Therefore it is important that you clearly understand the SFS standards before you choose to commit yourself to participating in our programs.

We understand that students over the age of 18 years are adults and are responsible for their own decisions and the resulting consequences. We recognize that these choices include deciding whether or not to participate in our programs. We work hard to ensure that programs and Centers are safe, educational, stimulating, secure, fun, and dynamic environments where staff and students successfully work together. Therefore, we hold adult students accountable for following SFS policies, Center-specific rules and for respecting the Operational Objectives. The decision to ignore or violate them or to endanger the safety or security of others will result in disciplinary action. The decision to support The Safety Matrix and work together will lay the foundation for tremendous experiences and world-changing possibilities.

Our safety strategy includes the following:

The Safety Matrix: Our school-wide program policies, Center-specific rules and protocols, SFS

Operational Objectives and the Safety Curriculum for our staff and students are a comprehensive effort to promote safety and mitigate unforeseen events.

Safety Support Systems: The technologies, documents, structures and procedures concerned with relevant safety information gathering/dissemination, communication, contingency plans, protocols, evaluation, improvement and review.

Community Relationship: It is important for SFS students and staff to be contributing, responsible members of, and have an excellent relationship with, the communities where our Centers are located.

SFS-Wide Program Policies

These are in effect at all times for everyone participating in or visiting any SFS program or location. Each policy is discussed in more detail later in this document.

- Alcohol Policy
- Drug Policy
- Time Off Policy
- Sign Out Policy
- Visitor Policy
- Early Program Departure Policy
- Motor Vehicle/Boating Policy
- Swimming Policy
- Policy on Local Laws
- Sexual Harassment Policy

Center Rules and Protocols

Additional rules and protocols pertaining to curfew, swimming, time off, *et cetera*, may be in place at each Center. Briefing of the Center Rules and Protocols, as well as discussion of local hazards, will be part of orientation upon arrival to the Center.

Operational Objectives

These are the common-sense agendas designed to support our SFS teams' functioning safely and accomplishing our work. SFS works to empower students and requires them to manage their behavior in order to achieve the following objectives and aims:

- Safety and Security
- Academics
- Local Community Relations
- Legality
- Liability
- Ability of Centers to Conduct Business
- Ability of SFS Headquarters to Conduct Business

These Operational Objectives have different implications at different Centers. During the on-site orientation, each agenda will be clarified for each particular Center.

Disciplinary Procedures

Violations of any SFS-wide policies, Center-specific rules and protocols and Operational Objectives may result in one or more of the following disciplinary actions:

- Verbal warnings
- Written warnings
- Probation
- Expulsion

All staff and students are expected to understand and to actively support the standards of behavior as presented in our written materials and in our on-site orientations. While all staff are responsible for understanding and enforcing our standards for behavior, all formal disciplinary measures for students are at the discretion of the Center Director in consultation with his or her staff and Headquarters, where appropriate. Generally speaking, behavioral issues arising out of misunderstandings or that are not overly compromising to SFS Operational Objectives will be addressed with education, clarification and intermediate disciplinary measures (warnings/probation). However, any behavior that significantly compromises the Operational Objectives or any violation of SFS policy may be cause for immediate expulsion. SFS reserves the right to contact parents/guardians in the event of significant alcohol abuse, unsafe behavior, or any behavior that potentially compromises a student's ability to participate in our program. In the event that you are asked to leave the program, SFS will return you to the point of program departure at your own expense. At this time, any and all responsibility on the part of The School for Field Studies will cease. Students who are expelled or who depart early from the program will be withdrawn from all courses and receive no credit. All outstanding financial obligations to SFS remain in full effect.

SFS School-wide Program Policies

These are in effect during all programs and at every SFS site, including on field trips. By signing the School for Field Studies Terms and Regulations Contract, you agree that you have read and understand, and will abide by all SFS policies as documented in this Manual and admissions materials and as presented at the Centers. Violation of any policy will result in disciplinary action. SFS reserves the right to interview, investigate, search for and confiscate evidence, contraband, alcohol, drugs or paraphernalia and to contact local authorities.

Alcohol Policy

No possession or consumption of alcohol is permitted on SFS property including any SFS vehicles, common areas, student quarters, Center grounds, field trip sites or during any program activities. Any use of alcohol that in any way compromises the Operational Objectives will be addressed and may include disciplinary action. The permissible drinking age is defined by the laws of the country that the Center is located in.

Centers may have additional restrictions. Please check with the Student Affairs Manager or Center Director regarding pertinent local laws.

Drug Policy

Use or possession of any drugs, chemical or medications that are illegal or that interfere with the Operational Objectives of any SFS program or site, is prohibited. Illegal drugs are defined by United States and host-country laws. SFS reserves the right to interview, investigate, search for and confiscate any substances or paraphernalia in violation of this policy. SFS has a zero tolerance illegal drug policy – violation of this policy will result in expulsion. This policy is in force from the beginning to the end of the program including time designated as "time off."

Time Off Policy

Program schedules are divided into periods of "Program Time" and "Non-Program Time". Program Time is any time that a student is on SFS property or riding in SFS vehicles or engaged in a program related activity or traveling to or from a program related activity. During such time all School Policies and Center Rules are in effect. Consideration of the Operational Objectives is always in effect.

When not on SFS property, in an SFS vehicle, engaged in an SFS program related activity, etc., there may be time that is clearly designated "Non-Program Time". During time off, students are solely responsible for their own safety and well-being. Consideration of the Operational Objectives is always in effect.

Sign Out Policy

All students must sign themselves in and out of the Center so that they can be located in case of an emergency.

Visitor Policy

Aside from visiting professionals and guest lecturers, SFS does not allow visitors on site during the program because it is disruptive to the program schedule and the dynamics of the group.

For security reasons, no local visitors are allowed on the Center property without prior consent from the Center Director. This policy increases students' and staff's safety, security, and sense of privacy.

Motor Vehicle/Boating Policy

SFS students may not operate SFS motor vehicles or motor boats. SFS students may not ride in an SFS motor vehicle or motor boat without an SFS-approved operator. Students may not ride in non-SFS motor vehicles or motor boats without prior Center Director approval. Seat belts must be worn in all motor vehicles, where available.

SFS Centers that utilize motor boats have additional Center-specific protocols including maximum occupancy, approved seating, personal flotation devices, radio protocols, rescue and first aid equipment in compliance with all local regulations.

Local Laws Policy

SFS supports and complies with all local laws. You will be briefed on local laws and expectations soon after arriving at the Center. Any violation of a local law will result in SFS disciplinary procedures and in addition, may subject you to local penalties such as fines, arrest or deportation.

Swimming Policy

Swimming is always at your own risk. In all programs, swimming is always optional and you may terminate a swim at any time you deem it necessary. Where SFS maintains swimming pools or conducts recreational swimming during program time or on SFS property, protocols and guidelines will be presented. In Panama and TCI, where swimming is integral to the program, there will be a swim assessment and a presentation of guidelines. In such cases, students must successfully complete a swim assessment, conducted by trained SFS staff, before participating in any other swim-related activities.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of The School for Field Studies to respect the rights of students to work and study in an environment free from any type of sexual harassment and to investigate and resolve any reported cases of sexual harassment. Each administrator, faculty member and student is responsible for ensuring a work and learning environment free from sexual harassment. SFS policy specifically prohibits any faculty or staff member from having a sexual relationship with a student at any time while the student is enrolled in an SFS program. In addition, no SFS employee shall threaten, promise, or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that any student's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the student's status with SFS, including but not limited to influence on grades or recommendations.

Moreover as a part of its overall nondiscrimination policy, SFS prohibits all forms of harassment of others because of race, color, religion, sex, age, sexual preference, national origin, physical or mental disability, or veteran status. In particular, an atmosphere of tension created by disparaging racial, ethnic, sexual, or religious remarks does not belong in the SFS workplace or learning environment and will not be tolerated.

Communications and Information Systems Policy

The School for Field Studies is continually developing its technology infrastructure, providing exciting new possibilities for school-wide connectivity, research, and information sharing. The SFS IT Director is responsible for the development and management of these systems. In order to maintain the integrity, reliability, and performance of this foundation, all students must follow the policies and procedures shown below.

General Equipment Use:

- Always check with an SFS faculty member before attaching any personal (non SFS-owned) computers, laptops, printers, or other network devices to the network.

- Borrowed equipment, on and off premises, is the borrower's responsibility until returned.
- Students are expected to uphold the condition of any SFS IT equipment that he/she uses. Be careful not to expose equipment to food, liquids, excessive sunlight, heat, cold, humidity, or magnetic fields.

Abuse of Systems:

Abuse of systems is defined as an intentional action that threatens the stability, functionality, or performance of any SFS or non-SFS system. These prohibited actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Downloading or storing music, video, or large quantities of pictures/photographs for personal use.
2. Installing or running any software applications or executable files that are not provided by SFS.
3. Moving, reconfiguring, disabling, or removing SFS-owned equipment or software.
4. Gaining unauthorized access to or abusing SFS systems or any remote Internet systems. This includes spamming, hacking, virus distribution, or taking actions that compromise the security of any network system.
5. Using SFS systems to perform any activities that are illegal in the country where the employee is located. This may include gambling, making illegal purchases, or copying/distributing copyrighted material,
6. Accessing, downloading, uploading, saving, receiving, or sending material that includes sexually explicit content or other material containing vulgar, sexist, racist, threatening, violent, or defamatory language.
7. Deleting or changing digital documents without the consent of the document creator or owner. If the document creator or owner is not known or is not available, obtain a faculty member's approval before proceeding.

Password Policies & Guidelines:

- Passwords are the keys to SFS resources and private student information.
- Do not disclose any passwords to other individuals.
- Do not e-mail passwords or record passwords where they may be easily obtained by others.
- When you are finished using a computer, always log out before leaving.

Terms and Regulations Contract

Note that as a condition for participation in an SFS program, you are required to document that

you have read, understood and accepted all academic, safety, administrative and operational policies, rules and requirements by reading and signing the SFS Terms and Regulations Statement.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

SFS Rights Policy

All members of The School for Field Studies community are entitled to certain basic rights. These rights include, but are not limited to, the right to live in an environment free from harassment based on race, religion, gender, handicap, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, or national origin.

Disabilities

SFS is prohibited by law from making any inquiries about disabilities prior to an admissions decision. If a potential student voluntarily provides this information during the admissions process, it will be kept in strict confidence and will not affect admissions decisions. If you have a disability, please indicate it on your medical form. If you wish to request academic accommodation, notification must be in writing by a qualified professional and submitted prior to the start of the program.

Confidentiality of Student Records

Student Right of Access

The School for Field Studies maintains confidential files on all SFS students. These files contain material submitted as admissions requirements, financial aid application material, all contracts, medical records, and academic grades.

SFS reserves the right to request updated transcripts from accepted students at any time. Unless otherwise detailed in the terms of your acceptance, you are expected to maintain the academic standing achieved at your home institution (as evidenced by enrollment status and GPA) at the time of acceptance. SFS may rescind offers of acceptance made to students whose academic standing changes.

You are free to take reasoned exception to data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. You are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which you are enrolled. You have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, you are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which you are enrolled, and for full participation in all aspects of the program.

Directory Information

Certain information, known as "directory information," may be released by SFS. This information includes your name, address, phone number, place and date of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and teams, dates of attendance, awards received, and other similar information. If you do not wish this information released to others,

you must make written notification of this to the SFS Admissions Manager.

The Admissions Office will prepare a list of students on each program. This list, containing names, addresses, phone numbers and schools, will be sent to each student approximately one month prior to the start of the program. If you do not wish to have your address or phone number included on this list, you must contact the SFS Admissions Office no later than two months prior to program departure.

Third Party Access

Based on education privacy laws, parents have no right of access to the records of students in post-secondary institutions.

Beyond the directory information mentioned above, only those faculty and employees of the educational institution who have a legitimate educational interest in your record may be permitted access to it. Information will not be released to any other parties without your written permission. In an emergency, information may be released if your health and safety is at stake, and if the person receiving the information is in a position to act on it.

If you wish to review your file, you must either make an appointment to do so with the Admissions Manager, or make a written request for a copy of specific information.

Evaluations

The faculty will complete written evaluations of each student at the end of each program. These evaluations are used in evaluating candidates for SFS internships, and are not made accessible to students or outside parties.

Questions regarding the above information should be directed to the Admissions Manager.

Contractual and Financial Obligations

Statement of SFS Responsibility

In organizing and managing these programs, The School for Field Studies, its agents, employees, and staff give notice that they act solely on behalf of and for the benefit of the participants, on the express agreement that SFS shall not be liable, financially or otherwise, for non-performance or unsatisfactory service; for the injury to persons including death; for loss of, or damage to property; for accident or delay; and/or for expenses arising from strikes, weather, quarantine, sickness, government regulation, civil unrest or war, or from any act or omission of its agents or employees, and/or airline, railroad, bus company, automobile rental agency, hotel, or other supplier of service.

The School for Field Studies is a not-for-profit, 501(c) (3) corporation located in Beverly, Massachusetts, U.S.A. All matters relating to or arising out of or involving in any way a

student's relationship with SFS shall be governed by Massachusetts law and any legal dispute shall be determined by a Massachusetts court.

SFS reserves the right to refuse any applicant admission to any program if s/he is deemed unsuited for the program for any reason. All courses, fees, and dates are tentative until verified and confirmed in writing by The School for Field Studies.

The School for Field Studies admits students of any sex, religion, race, sexual orientation, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of The School and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, race, sexual orientation, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other School-administered programs. SFS is an equal-opportunity institution.

Program Changes

SFS programs are obviously different from a semester on your home campus, travel or adventure programs, and other study abroad programs. Each session is unique and often cannot be implemented exactly as planned for a variety of reasons. There are factors which, although closely monitored, are beyond the control of SFS. For example:

- Some programs take place in highly regulated and sensitive environments, usually requiring special permits.
- Some projects depend on the goodwill and generosity of individuals and institutions which lend support.
- Tenuous weather situations or natural disasters or changes in political conditions may require last-minute changes or cancellation of specific activities.
- Faculty and staff changes occur due to health, personal matters, performance evaluations, and other factors.

SFS reserves the right to make changes before or during a program. Indeed, part of the challenge is in adapting to changing conditions and overcoming the obstacles they may present.

Course Cancellations

In rare cases, circumstances make it necessary to cancel a proposed course or program. In the event of a course cancellation prior to course commencement, SFS will refund any tuition or deposit monies you have paid. SFS will not refund any monies if a cancellation occurs once a program is in session; therefore, it is highly recommended that you investigate trip cancellation insurance. Circumstances that might precipitate a cancellation include political unrest, weather-related problems, or a medical epidemic or emergency.

Refund Policies

Full tuition is due 60 days prior to program commencement.

Semester

If you withdraw by notifying SFS in writing, the following amounts will be refunded:

- Withdrawal 61 days or more prior to the first day of the program = 100% refund of total program cost (less deposit).
- Withdrawal 60-31 days prior to the first day of the program = 50% refund of total program cost (less deposit and registration fee).
- Withdrawal 30 days prior - 14 days after the start of the program = 25% refund of total program cost (less deposit).
- Withdrawal 15 or more days after the start of the program, or if you are asked to leave the program = no refund.

The non-refundable deposit may be transferred to an SFS course within the next 12 months, subject to approval.

Financial aid candidates: deposits are refundable if withdrawal is less than 10 days following financial aid offer. (You must complete and return the financial aid application within 10 days of acceptance to qualify for refund status on the deposit).

Application fees are non-refundable.

Summer

If you withdraw by notifying SFS in writing, the following amounts will be refunded:

- Withdrawal prior to 60 - 22 days before the start of the program = 100% refund of total program cost (less deposit).
- Withdrawal 21 - 0 days prior to the start of the program = 50% refund of total program cost (less deposit).
- Withdrawal after the program starts = no refund.

Financial aid candidates: deposits are refundable if withdrawal is less than 10 days following financial aid offer. (You must complete and return the financial aid application within 10 days of acceptance to qualify for refund status on the deposit).

Application fees are non-refundable.

Loan Repayment Policies

Each year, approximately 30% of the SFS student body is assisted with loans from the Merck Family Student Revolving Loan Fund. The availability of loan monies is contingent upon the timely repayment of loans by previous borrowers to provide funding for new loan recipients. The repayment period for each loan is stipulated at the time the loan is made in the Loan Agreement. You are responsible for making monthly payments on your loans starting the month after your SFS program concludes.

Any loan for which payment is one month or more late will be considered in default. Grades

will be withheld from any student considered to be in default and the student's co-signer will be expected to assume payment. SFS charges interest on overdue loan balances at the rate of 15% per year, compounded monthly.

If you are having temporary difficulty meeting your repayment obligation, you should contact the SFS Finance Department to arrange a mutually agreeable, revised payment schedule.

Scholarship/Loan Student Reporting Requirement

If you receive a scholarship or loan for an SFS program, you are required as part of your award contract to write a three to five-page report to SFS and your scholarship sponsors within one month of program completion. This paper should detail reasons for joining the program and activities in which you participated, and should address the value of the program, personally and academically.

Policy Regarding Outstanding Tuition Balances

No student having an outstanding tuition balance will be allowed to participate in an SFS program unless the Admissions Manager has approved an exception due to late receipt of financial aid funds (for semester programs only). If funds due to you by your home school or through federal financial assistance are not available at the time the program departs for the field, you may be permitted to go into the field if you sign a promissory statement accepting personal responsibility for all outstanding tuition monies, including expected federal funds, and committing that the balance will be paid by the end of the program. No grades will be awarded until all outstanding tuition monies are paid in full. Any payment received from a student with an outstanding tuition balance will be applied first to that balance.

Policy Regarding Other Outstanding Fees

You may occasionally incur expenses that are temporarily covered by the Center staff and/or faculty. This may include, but is not limited to, medical expenses, phone bills, and charges for damage done to SFS facilities and/or equipment. You must pay these expenses in full prior to your departure from the program. No grades will be awarded until all outstanding fees are paid in full.