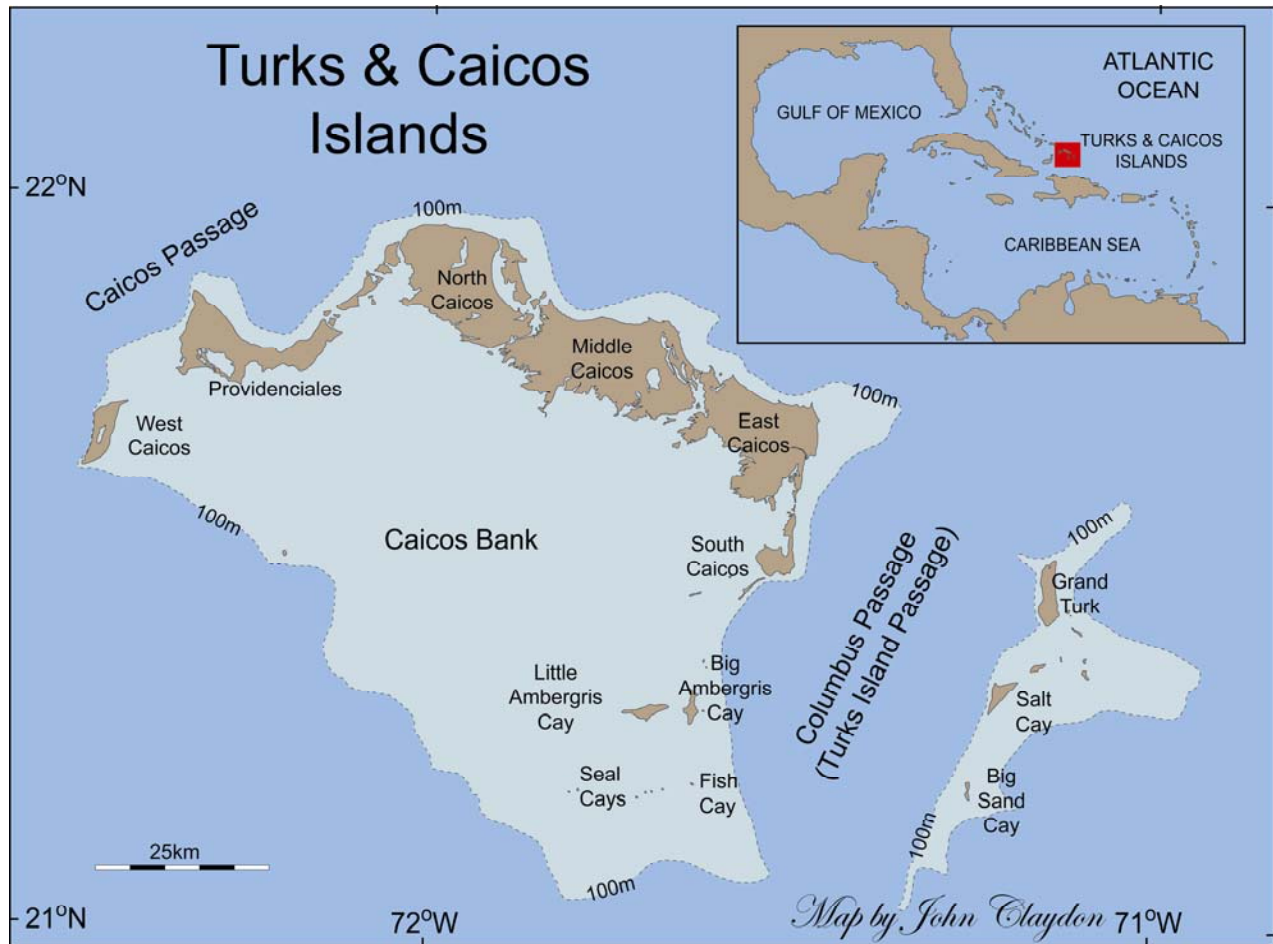


Turks & Caicos Islands

SFS Program Manual
Academic Year 2010-2011

The School for Field Studies (SFS)
Center for Marine Resource Studies (CMRS)
South Caicos, British West Indies



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PLEASE READ THIS MATERIAL CAREFULLY BEFORE LEAVING FOR THE PROGRAM. BRING IT WITH YOU TO THE FIELD AS IT CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

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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

OVERVIEW OF SFS SEMESTER PROGRAMS

The School for Field Studies offers semester and summer programs at each of our five field centers. Each field center is staffed by a 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 realities related to environmental, social and economic problems. 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.

Semester programs contain the following unique elements:

The Center Five Year Research Plan (5YRP): The 5YRP at each SFS field center is the overarching research directive that addresses local challenges and explores local solutions. The Plan is generated by our faculty, local stakeholders and actors, and external research advisors. The purpose of the 5YRP is to define research priorities and projects that address critical local environmental problems. The 5YRP also provides the community and students with a framework for the program curriculum, defining how SFS courses, research and outreach activities fit into the bigger picture of environmental conservation and development. In 2008 each field center launched the second cycle of the 5YRP.

Case Study Questions: For each program, instructors pose several case study questions to provide students with an interdisciplinary and holistic framework for their process of inquiry into the environmental and socio-economic issues defined in the 5YRP. Case studies guide students through an analysis of an actual local environmental situation or dilemma. The through 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. In the end, students will identify what they know and do not know and what they can and cannot manage regarding the particular issue raised by the case study.

Directed Research (DR): Students in the semester programs conduct research that addresses key research questions defined in the 5YRP and supports the local 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 across several of the following disciplines: ecology, natural resource management and socio-economics. While the DR data collection is with the team, each individual will develop specific aspects of the project into their individual papers (see 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.

Courses: Three core disciplinary courses are given, which provide the background information and skills needed to understand and address the content of the case study questions. 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. Each course combines lectures, field exercises, assignments, tests, and research. The Directed Research course is the capstone of the program. For this course, students assemble information that they learned throughout the semester and apply their knowledge to the directed research projects. All courses are worth four academic credits, except for the language and culture courses at Kenya, Mexico, and Costa Rica, which are worth two academic credits.

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 centers 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.

SFS-CENTER FOR MARINE RESOURCE STUDIES

SFS-CMRS is working with the local community, private industry, and the government to understand marine environment issues and, in turn, determine effective management strategies. More than 1,000 undergraduate students, representing approximately 150 different U.S. colleges and universities, have participated in semester and summer programs at SFS-CMRS. SFS-CMRS is situated in the former hotel “Admirals’ Arms Inn” adjacent to Cockburn Harbour on South Caicos. The Center sits on the rocky coast 40 feet above the ocean. Within a three-mile radius from the Center, in the water, you will find coral reefs, mangrove islands, seagrass beds, carbonate platform flats, and deep water diving. The island population consists of the TCI “belongers,” residents from other Caribbean island countries, and, at the moment, temporary workers from as far away as Sri Lanka.

Environmental Issues of the Region

An imminent increase in tourism poses a substantial threat to the marine and terrestrial environments of South Caicos. Developing a sustainable tourism industry requires that all ecosystems of the island remain healthy. Ecosystem health is vital in supporting the traditional subsistence and commercial fishing industry as well as the evolving beach and marine-focused tourism industry. There are specific threats to the fishing industry, such as over-harvesting, which may negatively affect the island community’s culture and traditions. Furthermore, the presence of large numbers of foreigners (e.g. tourists and hotel employees), may have a dramatic social impact on South Caicos residents.

SFS-CMRS Five Year Research Plan

The main question that the SFS-CMRS addresses as the basis for its research and academic programs is *How can the marine resources of TCI best be managed in order to promote conservation and prepare the local community of South Caicos for the advent of mainstream tourism?* The people of South Caicos presently depend on government jobs, commerce, or the extractable marine resources for their livelihood. Soon the island will experience a transition to a tourism-based service economy. Since tourism here is based in natural beauty (beaches, blue waters, coral reefs, and abundant sea life), the protection and management of the marine and terrestrial environments is vital.

The traditional economies of most Caribbean and Tropical Atlantic Island nations, including the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI), are based upon natural marine resources. The complex marine ecosystems that surround most of the TCI provide an expanse of food, physical protection from storms, and a destination for tourist recreational activities such as diving and sport fishing. Although overexploitation of resources and coral reef damage are highly evident in many areas in the Caribbean, recent studies have found that local harvesting levels of marine resources around South Caicos are more or less in a sustainable or

equilibrium state, with spiny lobster being the exception. The coral reefs are still in the best condition of the tropical Atlantic and Caribbean regions.

In 1992, a land and marine park system was approved by the government of the TCI to preserve critical natural areas and habitats, to sustain and manage the harvest of renewable resources, and to promote income-generating ecotourism. Unfortunately, the marine protected areas (MPA) network around the TCI is currently a system of “paper parks”—in that they are present in principle, but very little is understood about their functioning or the status of marine communities and populations within them. The MPAs still require additional enforcement, expansion, and/or relocation in order to achieve dependable resource sustainability and to protect species of biological and economic importance in the region. Local and national government departments responsible for conservation, environmental research, and resource management have fairly effective regulations in place, although monitoring and enforcement is lacking due to logistical and financial constraints.

Meanwhile, a large increase in recreational tourism to South Caicos, based on reef diving and sport fishing, is imminent. Substantial capital investment is taking place in three tourist developments. Development to date has been very gradual, but is rapidly increasing and the impact on the marine and terrestrial environments and the local community will likely be significant. Direct impacts of construction include dredging of bays to create the beautiful bays and beaches expected by tourists, which will significantly impact the marine resources. Once these businesses are operational, South Caicos environments and community will experience significant change, with both positive and negative outcomes.

A new economy with increased employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the tourism services sector will evolve. Present infrastructure is currently being improved, with a new clinic and roads in place and an international terminal being built at the airport. The impacts of increasing tourist visitation on the marine environment will likely include diver impact on the coral reefs, commercial harvesting of reef fish, and bonefish sport fishing. Onshore, the coastal and beach strips are soon to undergo artificial restructuring, and urban facilities and utilities will, in many cases, be stretched far beyond their present capacities. Being outnumbered by tourists, the local community members may become a minority on their own island. Therefore, many actions are needed to prepare for, regulate, and monitor the impacts of these escalations.

The aim of SFS-CMRS' 5YRP is therefore to produce information and knowledge that will help the people of South Caicos prevent, assess, and manage the impacts of tourism on the marine and terrestrial environments, as well as on socio-cultural conditions. The 5YRP has three thematic components or areas of work to complete: i) assessing and monitoring the marine environments and species; ii) conservation and management of marine resources; iii) socio-economic conditions for development. Specific projects

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are developed by Center faculty to answer key research questions posed under each thematic component. Specific projects under component one will be undertaken on the biology and ecology of reef fish, fin fish, and conch, as well as the biodiversity of coral reef, mangrove and seagrass faunal communities. The second component incorporates projects on the restoration of mangroves and reefs and research into increasing the carrying capacity of near shore waters. The purpose of the third component is to gather baseline data on local perceptions and expectations of tourism and the awareness of resources important to the South Caicos economy.

Semester Course Descriptions

<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Contact Hours</i>	<i>Course number</i>
Tropical Marine Ecology	4	50	BI/EE (NS) 373
Principles of Resource Management	4	50	EE (NS) 374
Environmental Policy and Socioeconomic Values	4	50	EE (SS) 302
Directed Research	4	180	EE 491 or 492

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

Tropical Marine Ecology

This course will focus on the interactions of living and non-living components of tropical marine environments and how these shape different ecosystems. Students will examine the benthic and neritic environments from the intertidal areas of South Caicos to its shelf edge, with emphasis on seagrass, mangrove and coral reef ecosystems. Basic ecological principles will be used to explain the interdependencies of species, populations, communities and ecosystems. At the end of this course, students will i) be able to identify most common marine organisms and habitats of South Caicos, and understand their roles in the coastal ecosystem and the fishery of the Turks & Caicos Islands; ii) understand the importance of various ecological processes in coral reef, mangrove and seagrass ecosystems; iii) understand the biology and ecology of the species targeted in the South Caicos fisheries; iv) understand the ecological concepts important in planning and managing MPAs; and v) be familiar with a range of sampling techniques used in tropical marine research.

Research Direction 2008-2012
How can SFS-CMRS support the government and local community to better manage the marine resources and prepare the local community of South Caicos for the advent of mainstream tourism?

**Component 1:
Assessing & Monitoring of
the Marine Environments &
Species**

**Component 2:
Conservation &
Sustainability of Marine
Resources**

**Component 3:
Socio-economic Conditions
for Development &
Conservation on South Caicos**

- Key Research Questions:**
- Present status of marine habitats
 - Local & regional changes
 - Measurable impact of global climate change on marine habitats
 - Best indicators for measuring reef health and stress
 - Present status of commercially and ecologically important marine organism stocks

- Key Research Questions:**
- Role of fishing reserves and protected areas and their effectiveness
 - Settlement and habitat requirements for early life stages of Queen Conch
 - Status of commercial fisheries
 - Management of exploitable reef fish
 - Effectiveness of marine habitat enhancement and restoration
 - Status & management of turtle populations

- Key Research Questions:**
- Current level of resource awareness & how it can be improved
 - Social implications of a collapse in commercial fishery stocks
 - Impact of development on near shore habitats
 - Perceptions of tourism
 - Economic value of sport fisheries
 - Feasibility of recycling and waste disposal

Case study 1:
The status of the marine resources that are currently considered important to the ecological and socioeconomic well being of the TCI environments and inhabitants



Case study 2:
Management strategies that assist in maintaining or improving the status of the marine resources in the TCI and contribute to economic development and diversification

Courses:
Tropical Marine Ecology • Principles of Resource Management
Environmental Policy & Socioeconomic Values • Research

Principles of Resource Management

This course is intended to introduce the various disciplines and tools required to understand and manage marine resources. During this course, a link will be made between Marine Ecology and Environmental Policy. Topical areas include: fisheries management, marine conservation, fisheries enforcement, marine protected areas, integrated coastal zone management, and strategies for sustainable development. Following this course, students should i) understand the basic concepts of resource management and be able to apply that understanding to marine resources, particularly those important to the TCI; ii) have a working knowledge of the tools available for assessing the status of marine resources; iii) understand how marine protected areas can serve as a valuable management tool for integrated coastal management; and iv) have an appreciation for the complex integration of ecological processes, socioeconomic values, and policy issues that makes managing coastal marine resources a challenge.

Environmental Policy and Socio-economic values

This course introduces students to the concepts and methods of policy and socio-economic analysis, as applied to the marine environment of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Students will learn to apply economic and social tools and to understand the causes of and potential solutions to a variety of complex issues facing marine policy makers and managers. While the course will use the situation in the TCI as a source of many examples and applications, it will also look at international and regional institutions, markets and policies beyond the island. After completion of the course, the student will be able to i) list and explain the assumptions and theories behind economic decision-making when applied to natural resources, ii) describe a variety of ways in which people place value on natural resources, iii) apply economic tools used to assess natural resources and be able to place values on non-market assets, iv) explain the need for environmental policy and discuss the practical and ethical issues that arise, v) describe the potential economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of tourism development on small island developing states, and vi) explain the costs and benefits of marine protected areas when used as a policy tool.

Directed Research

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 that is led by our resident faculty. 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. 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 socio-economics. 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 research 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.

PLEASE NOTE

Students will be presented with their particular selection of directed research project(s), a case study description, and course syllabus once they arrive at the center. Students are also encouraged to check the website for updated materials as well as peruse past syllabi and projects.

Program outcomes – what you will take away from the program

In addition to learning extensive field skills, you will learn about many different aspects of marine protected areas. Below is a list of field skills, field exercises, and topics from past semester programs that will give you an idea of the scope of the program (not all of these may be offered for a particular program):

- Visual survey of reef fish and coral populations
- Seagrass and mangrove Identification
- Fish identification
- Coral identification
- Queen conch stock assessment inside and outside of a Marine Protected Area
- Marine protected area zoning exercise
- Habitat assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment
- Interview techniques and assessment of tourism development
- Field research (underwater research techniques, interdisciplinary, marine ecosystem-based)
- Experimental design, hypothesis testing, data gathering and analysis, critical reading and scientific writing
- Tropical marine ecology, marine resource management and socio-economic background that will enhance your understanding of environmental problems in the TCI
- Marine protected area (MPA) management, and how MPAs can be used to maintain or improve the marine resource status in the TCI
- Mentorship by faculty and other local experts, resulting in work that contributes to the Center's five year research plan
- Marine research methods using snorkeling as a tool

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, field exercises, and restoration activities. Directed research time also includes a significant period spent outside for data collection.

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

A: Academic activities, which include classroom lectures, field lectures, discussions, and other activities, occur six days a week, and students will have very few days off during the semester (with the exception of Sundays and a five-day mid-semester break). Academic and other organized activities often run from 8 am until 8:30 pm during the work week. This requires students to have strong time management skills in order to stay up-to-date with course readings and assignments. The program is intensive and highly structured.

Q: Can I choose my own research project?

A: Students are presented with three to four possible directed research topics that are defined in the 5YRP. After choosing a topic, students then choose a specific aspect of the topic to research and to develop into their individual paper.

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: No, our field sites are all right outside of our gates. We may go for an optional overnight to the island across the way for recreation, but this depends on group interest.

Q: To what extent will we interact with 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. At least two hours of community outreach will be offered each week.

Q: What recreational activities are available during the program?

A: SFS-CRMS waterfront staff lead recreational snorkeling and scuba diving. We play a lot of volleyball at CMRS, often taking on teams from town. Students enjoy walking and jogging in town.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Academic Expectations

The academic atmosphere we try to create at SFS is that of a community of learners. All students are expected to actively participate in the courses, field research, residential life, and community outreach. 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, and economics majors. We view this diversity of backgrounds as a strength and a learning opportunity. At SFS you will be intellectually challenged by faculty, your classmates and the realities you see around you, and in areas unfamiliar to you. You will have the opportunity to take a leadership role in those areas in which you have expertise. Students are expected to critically analyze the drivers of local environmental, social and economic problems and to develop field research and communication skills with the goal of providing information to decision-makers who can address those problems.

Academic Credit

All SFS courses are accredited through Boston University (BU), and students in SFS programs are automatically registered at BU, unless they come from SFS affiliated universities (see below). Students registered through BU receive their grades, credit, and transcripts from BU. This is a requirement, not an option. There is a fee for the services involved in the registration process for which all students will be billed.

BU operates on a semester calendar and all SFS courses are accredited accordingly. An SFS semester consists of four courses carrying four semester credit hours each for a total of 16 credits. Students at Kenya and Costa Rica 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 semester, BU will send each student a grade report and one official transcript. SFS fall semester students will be registered for BU's fall semester (ending mid-December), and SFS spring semester students will be registered for BU's spring semester (ending mid-May). Transcripts are not available until six to eight weeks after the close of BU's semester.

Students from SFS-Affiliated Universities

Students from schools that have affiliation status with SFS typically receive academic credit for their SFS participation directly through their home institution. Applicants should check with their home school 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 affiliate advisor of the affiliated home institutions. 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 use in acquiring 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 copies of all completed tests, written papers, homework assignments, research papers, lecture notes, handouts, and reading assignments for the student's own future use, and for possible discussions with faculty advisors. SFS does not assume responsibility for providing copies of these after students depart a Center, with the exception of a student's grades on course assessment items and their final grade.

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 credit will transfer as well. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange credit 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 future admissions.

Obtaining an Official Transcript

The following transcript procedures apply to all SFS students registered at BU for their SFS coursework. Students from affiliated institutions should contact the director of admissions and institutional relations at SFS for information on obtaining an official transcript. Six to eight weeks following the conclusion of the summer students will receive one official transcript in the mail. This transcript is sent to the student's home (permanent) address and NOT to the student's home school registrar. Transfer of credit is the student's responsibility, and, as such, the student must deliver the official transcript to the appropriate person at her/his home institution.

Students should wait at least eight weeks after the end of the BU summer session before requesting additional transcripts. Students should plan accordingly when making transcript requests as they must be made in writing, and may take several weeks to process.

To obtain additional official transcripts, students should write to:

Transcript Office	Include the following information:
Office of the University Registrar	- Your full name
Boston University	- Date of birth
881 Commonwealth Avenue, 2nd Fl	- Social Security number
Boston, MA 02215	- The course number and dates you attended
	- A check made payable to BU (transcript fee)
	- Your signature on the letter

Call the Transcript Office at (617) 353-3616 to confirm fees before writing your check!

Policies on Grading, Incompletes, and Withdrawal

SFS courses are rigorous, challenging, and the case study 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 synthesis of ideas and observations, the courses are generally thought of as difficult. Don't expect grading to be similar to your home institution—many students are surprised by how hard SFS professors grade.

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Letter grade scale, GPA:

A = 92.50 - 100.00% = 4.0

A- = 90.00 - 92.49% = 3.7

B+ = 87.50 - 89.99% = 3.3

B = 82.50 - 87.49% = 3.0

B- = 80.00 - 82.49% = 2.7

C+ = 77.50 - 79.99 = 2.3

C = 72.50 - 77.49 = 2.0

C- = 70.00 - 72.49 = 1.7

D = 60.00 - 69.99 = 1.0

F = < 59.99 = 0

Courses may not be taken on a pass/fail or audit basis. Letter grades will be reported to BU 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-).

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 foreign-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.

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: If departure occurs within the first 14 days of an SFS program, students will receive a "W" ("Withdrawn") for each of the four courses and will be reimbursed 25% of their total program cost, less deposit and registration fee. If departure occurs after the first 14 days of an SFS program, students will receive a "W" for each of the four courses and will not be reimbursed for any amount of their total program cost.

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 BU grades are received.

Students who feel that any grading basis or grades are unfair should explain their concerns first to the relevant faculty **IN WRITING**. Their explanation must be **IN WRITING** and include both their reasons for believing the unfairness exists and their requests for specific changes. Faculty members have the obligation to respond fully, clearly, and promptly. Students must raise their concerns directly with faculty while at the course 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 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 requesting accommodations for disabilities are responsible for notifying the SFS Safety Director for physical disabilities and the SFS Dean for learning disabilities. Notification of this disability must be made in writing and submitted within one week of acceptance. This written notification is required to allow time for SFS to review the specific requests. The written notification must be submitted to the appropriate SFS office from the student's home institution (i.e., the office responsible for the provision of accommodations for disabilities). The letter must include (a) the student's specific disability, (b) a description of the functional limitations imposed by the disability, and (c) the recommended accommodations. Be sure to indicate your center, semester or summer session of study, and home institution on any correspondence or documentation. 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 at our field stations.

Send physical disability accommodations requests to:
SFS Safety Director
The School for Field Studies
10 Federal Street, Suite 24
Salem, MA 01970

Send learning accommodations requests to:
SFS Dean
The School for Field Studies
10 Federal Street, Suite 24
Salem, MA 01970

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 will use its best efforts to make it clear whenever joint efforts and collaboration between students in the preparation of work product are 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 repetition of any 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 and a notation of “Academic Suspension.” 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 final determination of guilt has been made, SFS will report the final decision, as well as the sanction imposed, to any college or institution with which the student is associated, as well as to BU, the accrediting institution. 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 work 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, 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 for the explicit purposes of developing senior theses or other scholarly works. For purposes of clarifying authorship and acknowledgement, students who are contemplating publication of their SFS research must discuss their intention with their DR advisor.

Scholarly Works

SFS students are encouraged to publish their research work in the form of scholarly works. Scholarly work includes the publication of results as a senior thesis, presentations at conferences, and journal articles and book chapters, among others. Since the interpretations and conclusions put forward in scholarly works reflect the opinion and intellectual property of the author/presenter and not that of SFS, such scholarly works are owned by the author.

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). 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. Indicate potential interest in using SFS research subsequent to the program during their interview with SFS admissions counselor;
2. Discuss proposed plans with SFS supervisor, preferably while still at SFS;
3. Develop an authorship plan and work plan with supervisor, and, in the case of a senior thesis, with their home institution advisor;
4. All authors prepare the manuscript;
5. Acknowledgements and institutional affiliation details are determined in discussion with SFS and the student's home institution;
6. In the case of a publication submission, the manuscript is submitted upon approval by all authors, the SFS dean, and, in some cases, the permitting authority in the country where field work was conducted.

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. There may be instances in which students may be employed by SFS faculty to create specific intellectual property as a work for hire, or hired to create intellectual property generally. Such students will be asked to review and sign a single-page acknowledgment to clarify ownership of the works they create.

Use of Data for Thesis

Students may have the opportunity to develop some aspect of their SFS Directed Research work into a thesis at their home institution after the program. They may use the data for that purpose 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 is to contribute to a broad and ongoing research agenda that has been defined by local stakeholders and SFS staff. Therefore, we generally 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. 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 does not tailor DR projects to allow students to fulfill external work requirements. 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.
- We wish to avoid unauthorized use of SFS data beyond SFS, and so we now require a more formal process of requesting permission from the project's principal investigator to produce

scholarly work. In most cases, the use of such data is not an issue at all, but in certain circumstances it may not be possible.

- Students should bear in mind that data collection is usually 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.

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 Marine Resource Studies, South Caicos]”

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 contact information of their faculty and center directors. Since SFS faculty 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. Do not list your professor as a reference before you get their agreement.

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] (4 credits, Boston University), [Program date]

E.g. The School for Field Studies (SFS), Tropical Rainforest Studies, Centre for Rainforest Studies, Queensland, Australia (16 credits), Fall 2008.

Field Experience

2008 “[Title of your DR project]”, [brief description of the skills you developed; e.g., field survey of birds in forests and roadsides, scientific presentation, 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 participation 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

The School for Field Studies

- 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, www.fieldstudies.org

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

In most of our programs (Kenya excepted), time is divided into "Program Time" and "Time Off". 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 "Time Off". During time off, students are solely responsible for their own safety and well being. During time off, SFS rules and policies, with the exception of the drug policy and local law policy, are not in effect. 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. To minimize the impact on the program, SFS requests that all guests of students visit on the same day. The mid-semester break is an opportunity for students to visit with friends and family off-site. Typically, Visitors' Day is the day after the mid-semester break, but this date is scheduled each session on a Center-by-Center basis so please be sure to check with your Admissions Counselor to confirm the date. Make sure your friends and relatives are aware that all visits to the Center must be scheduled in advance. Those interested in visiting should contact SFS Headquarters at (978) 741-3544 after the start of the program. Overnight housing at the Center is not available, but there may be accessible accommodations nearby.

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. Note: There is no Visitors' Day during summer programs because they are too short and too tightly scheduled.

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 TCI, where swimming is integral to the program, there will be a swim assessment and a presentation of guidelines.

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

Introduction: 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. Please see the Academic Handbook for further information.

Confidentiality of Student Records

Student Right of Access

The School for Field Studies

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 Director of Admissions and Institutional Relations.

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 Department no later than two months prior to program departure.

Third Party Access

Except in the case of students who are 17 years of age and under, 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 Director of Admissions and Institutional Relations, 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 Director Admissions and Institutional Relations.

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 Salem, 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, such as in Kenya and Mexico.
- 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 Director of Admissions and Institutional Relations 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.