



THE SCHOOL FOR FIELD STUDIES

ACADEMIC HANDBOOK

COSTA RICA

 ATENAS, CENTRAL VALLEY

**CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

CONTENTS

SFS Mission and Model.....	4
The SFS Center for Sustainable Development studies (CSDS)	5
About SFS Costa Rica	5
Environmental Issues of the Region and CSDS Research Plan	5
Research Focus.....	5
Preparing for Departure	7
Requesting Learning Accommodations.....	7
E-Library	7
Academic Credit from SFS	7
Credit Transfer.....	7
Academics While Abroad	9
Field Experience	9
Expectations	9
Student Participation	9
Syllabi	9
Grading.....	10
Semester Programs	10
Core Disciplinary Courses.....	10
Directed Research	10
Semester Courses at SFS-CSDS.....	10
Summer Programs.....	11
After your SFS Program	12
Plan Ahead: Obtaining an Official Transcript	12
Accessing SFS Materials After the Program	13
Requesting References from SFS Faculty	13
Representing SFS on your Resume.....	13
Academic Policies and Procedures	14
Grading, Incompletes, and Withdrawal on Courses.....	14
Credit Policy	14
Grading Policy	14
Incompletes.....	14
Policy for Early Departures.....	14
Requesting Review of Final Grades	14
Academic and Research Honesty Policy.....	15
Intellectual Property, Data, and Acknowledgement Policies	15
Data and Educational Materials Ownership	15
Use of Directed Research Data for Scholarly Works and Thesis	15
Research Ethics	16



**SFS MISSION
AND MODEL**

SFS MISSION AND MODEL

SFS creates transformative study abroad experiences through field-based learning and research. Our educational programs explore the social 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 field stations around the world. 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.



**THE SFS
CENTER FOR
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES**

THE SFS CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (CSDS)

ABOUT SFS COSTA RICA

In 1991, CSDS became the fifth permanent SFS Center, first stationed in Las Cruces, and eventually in 1993 located within the fertile Central Valley region in the town of Atenas. The SFS-CSDS program is a field-based, interdisciplinary program focused on the complex issues of sustainable development, with special emphasis on finding balance among biodiversity protection, the sustainable use of natural resources, and fulfilling the economic development needs of local communities. In the semester programs we take a weeklong excursion to another country (in the past this has been either to Nicaragua or Panama) to have the opportunity to compare and contrast the ecological and socioeconomic systems between the two countries.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OF THE REGION AND CSDS RESEARCH PLAN

The Central Valley region and Pacific Coast of Costa Rica are undergoing rapid and largely unplanned development in the agriculture, tourism, and real estate sectors. These areas, encompassing mountains, valleys and plains, host major watersheds of critical importance to the integrity of natural ecosystems and the health and well-being of residents. Forests have become highly fragmented by urban expansion, rural development, and aggregation of agricultural farms. The result is loss of habitat and other environmental services and the destabilization of hillsides, while competition among stakeholder groups for land and natural resources continues to increase.

Historically the dominant land use and one of the largest sources of revenue and employment was large-scale conventional agriculture. However, over the past decade, both the tourism and service industries have become increasingly important for local and national revenue and employment opportunities. The demand on land for real estate expansion and tourism infrastructure increases pressure on water resources, further fragments the tropical forests, and leads to conflict over land use and land tenure. Redefining rural and urban development toward economic, social, and environmental sustainability is a priority in the coming years.

While Costa Rica and its citizens have declared almost 30% of its territory as formally protected areas, research suggests that conservation within these areas is insufficient to secure healthy and functioning ecosystems for future generations. Protected areas are highly influenced by land use practices occurring outside their borders, as well as activities occurring within them. Ecotourism operations, deforestation for agriculture, visitors and services, as well as increased development all impact the species and ecosystems within protected areas. It is apparent that current land use practices and land protection strategies may not be effectively balancing and promoting economic, socio-cultural, and ecological benefits—and are therefore not sustainable.

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

Research Focus

Currently the curriculum and research at SFS-CSDS focuses on answering the question:

How can Costa Rica respond to local and global challenges while securing the functionality of its natural and human systems?

In the classroom and field we focus on questions related to the ecological and socioeconomic impacts of tourism, problems and opportunities of natural ecosystem fragmentation, conflicts and synergies between parks and people, and the science of ecosystem function and connectivity. The research plan will focus on understanding the natural environment and socioeconomic conditions in which these rapid environmental and demographic changes are occurring. We will focus on the question of how the development policies and practices in Costa Rica in the areas of conservation and tourism are affecting

natural ecosystems and local communities. We will examine the theoretical and practical approaches to sustainable development, the conditions for success and obstacles to success, and the current development trajectory. This plan builds on the extensive research carried out by the SFS-CSDS team.

Research will be conducted in three thematic areas: ecological and socioeconomic impacts of tourism, effective management of protected areas, and ecosystem connectivity and function.

Tourism: We will investigate questions such as how do people's perception of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources change as a result of increased visitation? What is the level of preparedness needed to receive and benefit from tourism, while mitigating negative impacts? What is the carrying capacity of visitors in parks with relation to ecological integrity and wildlife disturbance?

Protected Areas: Restrictions of land use have led to conflictive interactions between people and protected areas reflected in the extraction of timber, non-timber forest products, hunting, and habitat loss. This component will analyze the social and ecological impacts of conflict, the effectiveness of the legislation and current management practices to protect biological resources, and the design of policies to balance cultural traditions involving the use of natural resources with the conservation needs of protected areas.

Ecosystems: The fragmentation of natural habitats leads to severe deterioration, sometimes irreversible, of ecosystem function. This in turn affects the long-term viability of many populations of flora and fauna. The immediate issue is the relative rapid and disproportioned change that is taking place in the proximity of many protected areas in the sectors of agriculture and rural development. Research will involve land cover survey of the central-north Pacific region, species inventories, habitat assessments and land use type verifications to generate specific hypotheses on the ecological impacts of land use change near protected areas.



**PREPARING FOR
DEPARTURE**

PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE

REQUESTING LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students requesting learning accommodations should contact the SFS Office of Academic Affairs prior to the start of the program. SFS will work with students, home institutions, physicians, and counselors to determine the required level of accommodation and whether it can be safely and reasonably maintained on program.

Please be aware that due to the structure and schedule of our programs and the routine travel off campus, SFS may not be able to provide the same accommodations students receive at their home school. Additionally, the level of academic support services to which students may have access at their home campus may not be available with SFS. If students have used general academic services on campus, such as a writing center, math/technology center, or tutoring center and anticipate continued access while on an SFS program, please inform SFS as indicated below. The Office of Academic Affairs can advise students regarding the level of academic support at SFS centers and on managing the rigors of an SFS experience.

Learning accommodation requests should be sent:

By email: academics@fieldstudies.org

By mail:

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

E-LIBRARY

Students should plan to rely on the databases and online library from their home institution during an SFS program. SFS does not provide additional access to any e-library resources. Before arriving in-country for an SFS program, students should make sure they know their remote library log-in and password, understand their home school's policy on accessing library materials remotely, and configure their laptop to access their school's online libraries and e-journals before they arrive in the field.

Students unable to access their institution's e-library while abroad or are unaffiliated with an institution during their time abroad should discuss this with their SFS Admissions Counselor or inquire with academics@fieldstudies.org.

ACADEMIC CREDIT FROM SFS

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

UMN operates on a semester calendar, and all SFS courses are accredited accordingly. At the conclusion of the program, one official transcript will be sent to the home school of each student. Transcripts are not available until four to six weeks after the close of the SFS program.

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.

SFS cannot guarantee that students will receive credit for their SFS participation from their home institution. 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 participating in an SFS program. Students intending to receive academic credit at their home institution should speak with their academic advisor and/or study abroad office about how to best proceed. Students should allow time to have their SFS program and individual courses approved by their advisor and other appropriate personnel before the start of the program.



**ACADEMICS
WHILE ABROAD**

ACADEMICS WHILE ABROAD

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. Many field-based academic activities on an SFS program take place outside; however, the actual amount of time spent outside will vary depending on the weather and other factors.

EXPECTATIONS

At SFS, we aim to create an academic atmosphere that encourages learning and involvement both inside and outside of the classroom. All students are expected to actively participate in all elements of an SFS program, including all SFS courses, field research, residential life, and community engagement. Students on SFS programs come from a wide range of colleges and universities, as well as from a variety of academic backgrounds and majors, such as, ecology, biology, economics, English, political science, anthropology, and many others. This diversity of backgrounds is a strength of SFS programs and a learning opportunity for all students. At SFS students are intellectually challenged by their faculty, classmates, and the community, while studying in an unfamiliar area. Students have the opportunity to take a leadership role in those subjects in which they have expertise. Students are expected to critically analyze the drivers of local environmental, social, and economic problems. Semester students also participate in field research and communicate their findings with the goal of providing information to local decision-makers who can address those problems.

Because SFS is a residential study abroad experience, credit is given for program completion, not just course completion. Attendance from the start of the program to the last day of the program is necessary for students to earn credit.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

SFS gives credit for program completion, and completion means more than just “presence on a program.” It means fully engaged learning, participation in academic and non-academic activities and exercises, and completion of academic tasks and assignments – in the field and in the classroom. The constituents (sending schools or home institutions) and the School of Record for SFS expect that the credit a student earns while at SFS is a result of full participation and successful completion of demanding field-based academic work and all components of an SFS program. All students must participate fully in all Center program activities (academic and non-academic). Repeated voluntary lack of participation (missing class, refusal to perform activities or exercises) or repeated involuntary lack of participation (being physically unable to perform activities or exercises due to illness or injury) may result in student removal from program.

SYLLABI

Students will be presented with course syllabi once they arrive to their SFS Center and exact syllabi for future terms are not available in advance. Sample syllabi from previous semesters are available on the SFS website and can be viewed and downloaded from the specific program page. When reviewing the sample syllabi, please note that SFS programs are different from other travel or study abroad programs. Each iteration of a program is unique and often cannot be implemented exactly as planned for a variety of reasons. There are factors which, although monitored closely, are beyond our control. For example:

- Changes in access to or expiration or change in terms of permits to the highly regulated and sensitive environments in which we work;
- Changes in social/political conditions or tenuous weather situations/natural disasters may require changes to sites or plans, often with little notice;
- Some aspects of programs depend on the current faculty team as well as the goodwill and generosity of individuals, communities, and institutions which lend support.

Please be advised that these or other variables may require changes before or during the program. Part of the SFS experience is adapting to changing conditions and overcoming the obstacles that may be present. Students are encouraged to review these sample syllabi and can also find examples of previous research projects on the SFS website.

GRADING

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.

Grades are determined via various assessments, such as exams, quizzes, practical examinations, field exercises, presentations, homework, and final papers. The specific grading guideline for each course will be presented in the course syllabus, which students will receive upon arrival to the SFS Center. Grading will not be exactly the same as students are accustomed to on their home institutions—many students are surprised that different faculty have different grading strategies and that there can be cultural differences, as well. Students are encouraged to engage with their SFS faculty at the beginning of the semester with any doubts or uncertainties about the grading system.

SEMESTER PROGRAMS

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 provide students with an interdisciplinary and holistic framework for their process of inquiry into environmental and socioeconomic issues. Problem-based inquiry guides students through an analysis of actual local environmental situations or dilemmas. 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

The Directed Research (DR) course is the capstone of the semester program. Students conduct research projects that addresses the key research themes defined in the Strategic Research Plan (SRP) and support the community with environmental planning and action. Students do not choose their own research theme but will work on one of several ongoing projects identified by the Center staff and developed and led by SFS faculty. Students will have the opportunity to indicate their preference between several areas of research. Each student will join a faculty-led team that will develop a specific question and carry out field research, data analysis and communication of results. Projects are carried out in one or more disciplines including: ecology, natural resource management, conservation science, environmental ethics, and socioeconomics. DR data is often collected and analyzed as a team. Students, either individually or in small collaborative groups, will develop findings and incorporate those into their papers (see Directed Research sample syllabus for more details). Final papers may be written individually or in small groups, depending on the structure and dynamic of each project. Some semester DR projects may only have a collaborative (co-author) option. The core skills students will learn through the DR experience are field skills, analytical skills, communication skills, and critical thinking, as well as teamwork and time management. Students present their findings from their DR to classmates, key stakeholders, and other community members.

Semester Courses at SFS-CSDS

Course Title	Credits	Instructional Hours	Course Number
Environmental Ethics and Development	4	60	SFS 3820
Tropical Ecology and Sustainable Development	4	60	SFS 3770
Principles of Resource Management	4	60	SFS 3740
Directed Research	4	20+ days	SFS 4910

Language, Culture, and Society of Costa Rica	2	40	SFS 2050
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Please visit our website (<https://fieldstudies.org/>) for a detailed description of each of the above courses.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

In each summer program, one interdisciplinary course provides the background information and skills needed to understand and address complex environmental issues. These courses are 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 provide students with an interdisciplinary and holistic framework for their process of inquiry into environmental and socioeconomic issues. Problem-based inquiry guides students through an analysis of actual local environmental situations or dilemmas. 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 critical thinking. Courses combine lectures, field exercises, assignments, and tests.

Course Title	Credits	Instructional Hours	Course Number
Session I: Coffee, Chocolate and Sustainable Development in Costa Rica	4	60	SFS 3141
Session II: TBA – new course for 2021	TBA	TBA	TBA

Students may take one or both summer courses. Students that take both courses (sequential or “summer combined” students) will receive eight total credits for the combined summer sessions. Please visit our website (<https://fieldstudies.org/>) for a detailed description of each of the above courses.



**AFTER YOUR
SFS PROGRAM**

AFTER YOUR SFS PROGRAM

PLAN AHEAD: OBTAINING AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

As part of the enrollment process after acceptance to a program, all students must submit the Transcript Request Form (TRF) to indicate the address where they plan to receive their SFS transcript at the end of the program. If this information changes after submission of the TRF, changes should be sent to admissions@fieldstudies.org.

SFS Transcripts

Students from an affiliate institution that provides direct credit will receive a transcript directly from the SFS Registrar.

For semester programs, an official grade report will automatically be mailed to the student's home school within 4-6 weeks of the completion of the semester program.

For summer programs, transcripts will be mailed 4-6 weeks after completion of the summer session 2.

All students will be mailed an unofficial student copy of their transcript. Unofficial copies are mailed to each student's permanent address as listed on their SFS online application form.

Additional transcript requests should always be made directly through SFS as students from affiliate institutions will not have been registered for credit through the SFS School of Record, the University of Minnesota.

Please wait until the initial transcript has been received before requesting additional copies.

To check if your home school is an affiliate institution, visit the SFS website:

<https://fieldstudies.org/alumni/resources>

School of Record Transcripts

Students from non-affiliate institutions or an affiliate institution that does not provide direct credit will be registered for credits at the SFS School of Record and will receive transcripts directly from the University of Minnesota Registrar.

All student grades will be reviewed by the SFS Dean after the end of the session and sent to the University of Minnesota to be processed. Students can expect to receive their transcripts from the University of Minnesota about 4-6 weeks after the end of the program. For summer programs, transcripts will be sent 4-6 weeks after the end of summer session 2.

Transcripts will be sent to the address provided on the Transcript Request Form (TRF). **Note:** students who provided a personal address rather than the address of a college or university on the TRF, should not open the sealed transcript envelope, as it will no longer be considered an official transcript once the seal has been broken and it has been opened.

Additional transcript requests should always be made directly through the University of Minnesota:
http://onestop.umn.edu/grades_and_transcripts/official_transcripts/

Please wait until the initial transcript has been received before requesting additional copies.

ACCESSING SFS MATERIALS AFTER THE PROGRAM

SFS does not keep copies of written papers, homework assignments, research reports, and other handouts from the faculty. These materials cannot be reconstructed after students return from the field. As such, SFS strongly recommends that students keep copies of any materials such as written papers or handouts that they may wish to access after the program has concluded.

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 in the field engaged in teaching or research, it may be difficult to contact them—expect a delayed turnaround time and plan accordingly.

REPRESENTING SFS ON YOUR RESUME

Upon completing an 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 below for preliminary ideas:

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.



ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As a condition for participation in an SFS program, students are required to document that they have read, understood, and accepted all academic, behavioral, safety, administrative, and operational policies, rules, and requirements in this document and in **SFS Policies and Procedures** by reading and signing the **SFS Enrollment Contract**.

GRADING, INCOMPLETES, AND WITHDRAWAL ON COURSES

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. SFS gives credit for program completion, not just course completion. Attendance from the start of the program to the last day of the program is necessary for students to earn credit.

Grading Policy

Courses may not be taken on a pass/fail or audit basis. SFS will report letter grades, as determined by the SFS letter grade scale (below), to UMN 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.

Policy for Early Departures

In the case of a student making a permanent departure from an SFS program without completing outstanding coursework, the **Credit Policy** will apply. Moreover, 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. More information about medical withdrawals or dismissals from an SFS program can be found in **SFS Policies and Procedures**.

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 transcripts are received.

Students who feel that there are grade inconsistencies should explain their concerns first to the relevant faculty in writing while at the field site. 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.

If a satisfactory solution cannot be arranged between a student and their faculty while at the field site, students may make a written request for an explanation of the faculty member's decision for presentation to the Center Director or lead faculty for further consideration. The Center Director or lead faculty will review the case with the faculty member.

If a resolution cannot be made with the Center Director or lead faculty at the field site, the petition for a grade change will be forwarded to the Dean of the School 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.

ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH HONESTY POLICY

SFS has 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 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 may receive a grade of "Withdrawn" (W) or "Failure" (F) 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 UMN, 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.

More information about program dismissal and disciplinary action can be found in **SFS Policies and Procedures**.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, DATA, AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT POLICIES

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. "Scholarly works" include, but are 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.

Use of Directed Research Data for Scholarly Works and Thesis

Because the research projects conducted at the Center are linked to the Strategic 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 may pursue the production of scholarly works, such as a senior thesis, using SFS research *only under consultation with and approval by the project's principal investigator* (i.e. the faculty supervising the DR project). If the principal investigator is no longer with SFS, approval may be granted by the Center Director or the Dean of the School. In some instances, collected data may not be suitable for purposes such as a thesis.

The purpose of the Directed Research (DR) project is to contribute to a broad and ongoing research agenda that has been defined by SFS staff. Therefore, SFS 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.

For students hoping to develop some aspect of their SFS Directed Research into a thesis at their home institution, the responsibility for seeking clarity on research requirements from SFS and their home institution lies solely with the student. Students should discuss this option with their SFS Admissions Counselor prior to starting the program, though approval will not be able to be granted in advance of the program. Once on the program, students should communicate their interest with the Center Director and their DR advisor and seek approval while on 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. 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. Past students have discovered 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 requires 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) and institutional affiliation details are determined in discussion with SFS and the student's home institution.

SFS Acknowledgment Policy

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.

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) Center for [name and location of Center, e.g.: Center for Rainforest Studies, Australia]”

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.

Research Ethics

The research our faculty and students conduct complies with the research ethics rules and guidelines in the country in which they are working, and when applicable, permissions are obtained for research on human subjects, animal subjects, and for the extraction of biological samples. Additional vetting for human subjects research is made by the SFS Office of Academic Affairs to ensure standards of ethical practice and protection of subjects are met.

Photography

Students are encouraged to bring cameras to the field. Still photography and video photography are allowed during many academic program activities, but may be restricted based on location, social cultural context, and/or the disposition of a speaker or lecturer. Students should understand that US laws do not apply while abroad. Photography in some public spaces may not be allowed by non-citizens and equipment may have to be surrendered to authorities upon request. Students should always check with local staff on standards of use of photography while in the field. Students should not bring to the field camera equipment that is intended to be operated remotely from the user. This means **DO NOT** bring: camera traps, drones, balloons, or other photographic equipment that is not intended to be held by the operator. Remote operated cameras may be seen by international authorities as surveillance equipment – and in many contexts be illegal. SFS faculty often have permissions/permits to use remote photography for research. These uses are permissible and will be performed with SFS approved equipment.