



THE SCHOOL FOR FIELD STUDIES

POLICIES & PROCEDURES



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SFS 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 the **Academic Handbook** by reading and signing the **SFS Enrollment Contract**.

ADMISSIONS POLICIES

APPLICATION PROCESS

Students seeking admission to an SFS program are required to submit: the online application form, an official transcript from each college/university attended, an SFS Academic Reference, an SFS Character Reference, and a Participation Approval Form. Students who will not be enrolled in a college or university during their SFS program will not be required to submit the Participation Approval Form.

After all application materials have been received, students are required to complete a phone interview with an SFS Admissions Counselor. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and there are no deadlines for applying. Rolling admissions means that applications are reviewed as they are submitted, and qualified candidates are admitted following the interview.

Admissions decisions will be based on the full review of all application materials as well as the phone interview. SFS programs rely on a cohort model, which involves group-living in unique settings, teamwork, and collaboration. As such, students will be assessed on both academic qualifications and personal fit for the program.

WAITLIST

SFS programs have limited capacity and qualified students may be admitted to a waitlist once the program has reached capacity. SFS Admissions Counselors will provide students placed on a waitlist with available options, including being considered for an alternate SFS program with space available or deferral to a future term. It is not possible to determine when (or if) a space may become available for a student on the waitlist.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Students applying for a semester program with SFS are required to meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be at least 18 years old at the start of their SFS program
- Have completed with a grade of a C or higher at least one course of college-level ecology, biology, or environmental science/studies
- Have earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.8

Students applying for a summer program with SFS are required to meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be at least 18 years old at the start of their SFS program
- Have earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.6

All students enrolled in a college or university must be in good academic and disciplinary standing with their institution in order to participate in an SFS program. Students not enrolled in a college or university, but otherwise meet the eligibility requirements, are welcome to apply.

Any exceptions to the above requirements are made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the SFS Admissions team. Students who do not meet these criteria at the time of their application may be offered admission to a program on a conditional basis contingent upon completing the eligibility requirements prior to the start of the program.

The School for Field Studies (SFS) reserves the right to rescind admissions decisions after a student has been accepted. Examples include if SFS learns of undisclosed disciplinary, academic, or behavioral infractions, if a student no longer meets the eligibility requirements for their program, or if SFS learns of other information that indicates a student would not be successful on the program.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

STUDENT 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, age, religion, sex, gender identity, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, or national origin.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students on SFS programs are active participants on a residential campus home to peers and staff members, and part of a larger local community. Mutual respect among all program participants and affiliates is required for the full duration of the program, as outlined by the SFS Operational Objectives.

The SFS **Operational Objectives** are common sense principles designed to support SFS centers and their students in functioning safely and successfully. The Operational Objectives include:

- Ensuring the well-being, health, and security of students and staff
- Providing high-quality academic programming
- Maintaining positive and cohesive local community relations
- Maintaining local and international standards necessary to successfully operate all centers and SFS Headquarters

Students should consider the Operational Objectives at all times to prevent circumstances that may preclude them from successfully completing the program, disrupting the program experience of other students, or compromising the ability of SFS to operate. Such circumstances can include injury, preventable illness, reckless behavior, poor judgement, or acting in a way that harms community relations. Through pre-departure literature and program orientation, SFS works to empower students to manage their behavior in the following ways:

- Take responsibility for one's own behavior
- Be aware of health, safety, and security risks present in the local area or specific to an activity
- Have good situational awareness
- Behave maturely and in a way that is respectful of local cultural norms
- Know the country or region-specific laws
- Maintain good individual and SFS relationships with the local community and other communities you may encounter

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

As a member of the SFS community, students are expected to contribute to a mutually respectful living and working environment. At all times, the SFS campus should remain a safe and comfortable space for all participants and free from harassment based on race, age, religion, sex, gender identity, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, or national origin. In addition, students are expected to fully engage in the group-living model, which may include participation in campus meetings and team-building activities, assistance with center upkeep, and observance of community agreements.

In the local community, students may encounter beliefs and values different from their own, but it is not the student's role to impart beliefs, ideals, or attempt to solve local societal issues based on a student's personal values. At all times, students are expected to behave in a way that is respectful of local cultural norms and customs. This includes knowing the country-or region-specific laws, wearing clothing that is consistent with and respectful of local dress, being aware of insensitive or inappropriate verbal and non-verbal communication, and respecting local events and holidays.

FIELD WORK PREPAREDNESS

Field work by its very nature is physically and mentally arduous: the days are long, the traveling seldom comfortable, and familiar comforts generally lacking. In order to withstand the pace and rigors of the program as well as any environmental health risks of the country, it is strongly advised that all students be resilient and in good physical health.

Students should proactively address any current or chronic medical or mental health issues before arriving in country, by: 1) procuring full amount of all prescription medications prior to arriving on program, 2) putting in place proper support systems for medical or mental health needs, and 3) consulting with medical and/or mental health providers and the SFS Safety and Student Life Department regarding risk factors, maintenance, and accommodations. Due to the remote nature of the program, medical and mental health care is often not easily accessible.

PROGRAM POLICIES

All SFS programs function under a set of policies that are in place to address and mitigate foreseeable hazards and risks, taking into consideration the local community, culture, and environment. SFS policies are designed to facilitate student safety and well-being, create an environment where students can have a positive experience abroad, and help students manage the rigors of SFS programs. SFS programs can include early mornings, long days in the field, and physically exhausting field exercises. Another major factor that informs SFS program policies is consideration of and respect for the local communities where we operate. SFS policies are designed to promote a safe, healthy, and rewarding experience for all students, SFS staff members, SFS faculty, and the surrounding community. Taking the time to fully consider and understand SFS structure and policies, as well as the reasoning behind them, will help you have a positive experience abroad and promote a healthy and productive environment for all those around you.

Students who do not adhere to the SFS policies are at risk of endangering themselves or others, including increased risk of injury, assault, abuse, severed community relations, and the inability for you or other students to participate on program. Similarly, reckless behavior, or inability to work within the structure of SFS programs can cause negative ramifications for all students, SFS staff and faculty members, and the local community, and can jeopardize the ability of SFS to operate. Therefore, violation of any policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. **SFS policies are in effect for the full duration of Program Time, including field trips, downtime, and rest days.**

Students should be aware that the policies included in this document are not exhaustive, and students will be presented with center-specific policies during the program orientation, such as information regarding appropriate dress code, electricity usage, or use of common spaces. Center-specific policies are subject to change due to changing environmental or political conditions in the program location.

For information regarding academic policies, please review the **Academic Handbook** for your program.

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 in which the center is located. Each Center may have additional restrictions.

DRUG POLICY

Use or possession of any drugs, chemical, or medications that are illegal or interfere with the Operational Objectives of any SFS program or site, is prohibited. Illegal drugs are defined by United States and host-country laws and include prescription medications that are not prescribed to the student. 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 Non-Program Time.

OFF-CAMPUS POLICIES

SFS programs are place-based and rely on a cohort-living model. This setting is different than the living arrangements on most campuses. The schedule of an SFS program is also more intensive than that of a typical university, with early morning starts, full days of fieldwork at times, and limited downtime. In addition to living in the community where your SFS program operates, you will also often spend time learning from community members in the area – whether you are conducting interviews about climate change perceptions, learning cultural traditions, or participating in community events.

SFS programs operate in locations that are typically unfamiliar to students and student behavior on-and off-campus can have direct implications for success on the program. Thus, SFS has off-campus policies in place that most students do not likely

have on their home campuses. These policies are in place to: mitigate risk and practice safe measures in an unfamiliar environment; ensure that students can successfully adjust to the schedule and physical demands of SFS programs; respect the cultural norms of the location, and foster good relationships with our neighbors and local community members.

Campus-specific policies may vary and will be explained to students as a part of the SFS Orientation during the first week of the program.

Sign-Out Policy

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

Buddy System

Students must use the buddy system and travel in groups of two or more whenever leaving the SFS campus, including use of hiking trails, exercise, and travel into town.

Curfew

Curfew refers to the time by which students are required to sign-in to campus each evening and is not a bedtime. Curfew is in place to preserve the academic integrity of our programs, keep good relations with the local community, and reduce the risk of students being subject to incidents or crimes that tend to occur more frequently in late-night hours. Students who are late to curfew will be subject to disciplinary action. The specific curfew hours for your SFS Center will be provided during SFS Orientation.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION POLICY

Because SFS is a residential study abroad experience, academic credit is granted 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.

SFS awards credit for program completion, which 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.

For more information about participation and earning credit on SFS programs, please refer to the **Academic Handbook**.

VISITOR POLICY

Aside from visiting professionals and guest lecturers, SFS does not allow visitors on site during the program because it is disruptive to the program schedule and the dynamics of the group. For security reasons, no local visitors are allowed on the center property without prior consent from the Center Director. This policy increases the safety, security, and sense of privacy for students and staff.

MEDICAL DISCLOSURE AND APPROVAL

The SFS Medical Approval Process collects comprehensive medical information regarding the physical and mental health of students to allow SFS to best support any medical or dietary needs or restrictions of its students while they are on the program.

The SFS Medical Approval Process is designed to inform, not to exclude. Should SFS have any concerns, the student and/or the student's healthcare provider will be contacted to discuss the student's capacity to participate on program. If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please contact the SFS Safety and Student Life Department.

No student may enter the field until Final Medical Approval is granted by SFS. This includes receipt and review of the SFS Vital Health Record and Physical Exam and Authorization Form. Supplemental documentation from a medical specialist may also be necessary. Inaccurate or incomplete information on any of the SFS medical forms may be grounds for rescinding an offer of admission, recalling a student from the program, or restricting student participation in certain activities. In addition, students are responsible for informing SFS of any changes to their health status that occur after submission of SFS medical forms.

Students requesting physical and health accommodations should contact the SFS Safety and Student Life Department. SFS will work with students, home institutions, and physicians to determine the required level of accommodation and whether or not it can be safely and reasonably maintained on program. While SFS strives to make accommodations for most disabilities, due to the remote nature of the programs, there are varying levels of accessibility, services, and accommodations at each SFS center.

MEDICAL WITHDRAWALS

There are some medical emergencies or conditions that may necessitate medical withdrawal from the program, including injuries and illnesses that prevent full participation in program activities. Final decisions and ability to participate on program are made by SFS.

For information about responsibility for costs associated with medical care on program, please refer to the **Billing and Financial Policies** section of this document.

MOTOR VEHICLE AND BOATING POLICY

SFS students may not operate SFS motor vehicles or motorboats. SFS students may not ride in an SFS motor vehicle or motorboat without an SFS-approved operator. Students may not operate or ride in non-SFS motor vehicles or motorboats without prior Center Director approval. Operating a motor vehicle or motorboat and operating or riding on a motorbike, motorcycle, moped, ATV, or motorized recreational watercraft is prohibited for the full duration of the program, including Non-Program Time. Seatbelts must be worn in all motor vehicles, where available. SFS centers that utilize motorboats 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.

SWIMMING POLICY

Swimming is always at your own risk. Where SFS maintains swimming pools or conducts recreational swimming during program time or on SFS property, protocols and guidelines will be provided to students. Recreational swimming is always optional and may be prohibited on certain programs or in certain regions due to local hazards or cultural practice. On programs where students have the option to swim, there will be a swim assessment and orientation to waterfront guidelines. In such cases, students must successfully complete a swim assessment, conducted by trained SFS staff, before participating in any other swim-related activities.

U.S., HOST COUNTRY, AND LOCAL LAWS POLICY

SFS supports and complies with all local laws, and students are expected to abide by the policies of their home institution as well as U.S., host country, and local laws. Students will be briefed on local laws and expectations during Program Orientation. 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. This policy is in force from the beginning to the end of the program, including Non-Program Time. Violation of any policy may result in disciplinary action. Gross violations in policy include, but are not limited to:

- Criminal behavior under U.S., host country, or local laws
- Possession or use, including the threat of use, of a weapon or other hazardous materials, including, but not limited to, a firearm, knife, explosive, or other object that could be considered a weapon while on the program
- Engaging in risky behavior that endangers oneself or others, or jeopardizes the ability of SFS to operate its programming
- Harassment or assault of any kind
- Damage, theft, or unauthorized use of SFS property (including equipment, facilities, and technology) or the property of those associated with the SFS community or the host community
- Defamatory statements about the host country or its community members in public media, including blogs and social media
- Violations of SFS-wide or campus-specific policies
- Obstruction of classes or other program activities

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT POLICY

SFS recognizes the right of all students to work, live, and study in an environment free from sexual harassment. All students are personally responsible for ensuring that their conduct does not sexually harass any employee or student, and must refrain from behavior, either physical or verbal, that may be reasonably considered offensive to others. During Program Orientation, students are provided with information on how to report an incident of sexual harassment or assault to any SFS staff member or SFS Headquarters representative with whom they feel comfortable. SFS will investigate any reported cases of sexual harassment. In the case of sexual assault, SFS will make every effort to support a student, including assisting with access to medical care, the option to report to the local law enforcement, and identifying support systems and additional resources.

VIOLENCE POLICY

There is no place for violence of any kind at SFS. Violence can be verbal as well as physical. Some examples include making threats, verbal intimidation, bullying, aggressive physical contact or behavior otherwise designed to frighten or intimidate. This list is not intended to be comprehensive. Violence of any sort will not be tolerated by SFS and may be grounds for immediate expulsion from the program. This policy is in force from the beginning to the end of the program, including Non-Program Time.

NON-PROGRAM TIME POLICY

Some SFS programs have Non-Program Time (i.e. designated Weekends Away or Mid-Semester Break that are clearly established by SFS staff). During Non-Program Time, students may have the opportunity to travel to other regions of the host country or neighboring countries. While not under the full set of SFS policies, students are expected to observe the SFS Operational Objectives for the full duration of Non-Program Time.

SFS does not provide students with recommendations for activities during Non-Program Time but informs students about the inherent risks associated with travel and certain activities. Please note that students are responsible for their actions, judgement, safety, and well-being during this time.

Prior to travel, students are expected to submit itineraries, including emergency contact information, mode of transportation, and accommodations. Some itineraries may require completion of a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to document potential high-risk activities, mitigating measures, and emergency response plans. Travel to countries or regions may be prohibited depending on current travel advisory levels and SFS policy. The SFS Safety and Student Life Department may prohibit travel to regions with known or foreseeable political unrest, credible threat of terrorism, unstable weather patterns, emerging disease, or other factors of high risk upon review of student itineraries.

Non-Program Time dates are clearly established by SFS staff and travel must be completed within this established time frame. Individual early departures or late returns are not permitted.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

All staff and students are expected to understand and to actively support the standards of behavior as presented in this document (SFS Policies and Procedures), the Field Guide, the Academic Handbook, and the Enrollment Contract, and information provided during the on-site program orientation. Violation of SFS policies may result in one or more of the following disciplinary actions at the discretion of the SFS Center Director in consultation with their staff and SFS Headquarters, where appropriate:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Probation
- Expulsion

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 (i.e. verbal warning, written warning, or probation). Students who receive disciplinary action at these levels are expected to take responsibility for changing their behavior or risk expulsion from the program. Progression of disciplinary action is dependent on severity of the infraction and may not be progressively successive. Any behavior that endangers oneself or others, jeopardizes the ability of SFS to operate, or is a gross violation of SFS policies or U.S., host country, or local law may be cause for immediate expulsion.

In the event of a written warning, probation, or expulsion, SFS will contact the student's home institution with notification of the offense. SFS also reserves the right to involve a student's emergency contact(s) in the event of any behavior that potentially compromises the student's ability to participate in the program. Students who are expelled or who depart early from the program will be withdrawn from all courses and receive no credit and no refund. All outstanding financial obligations to SFS remain in full effect.

POLICY FOR DISCLOSURE OF PRIOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All students will complete the **SFS Disclosure of Prior Disciplinary Action** form as part of their enrollment to an SFS program. Inaccurate or incomplete information on this form may be grounds for recalling a student from the program or restricting student participation in certain activities. Students are responsible for informing SFS of any changes to their disciplinary status that occur after submission of this form.

While past behavior does not necessarily reflect the character or future behavior of an individual, disclosed information about previous action(s) is helpful in facilitating a conversation with a student about potential serious ramifications of similar behavior during an SFS program. A history of prior disciplinary action, as defined by both warnings or citations from a college or university and/or criminal charges, has the potential to escalate any disciplinary action that may result from a student's breach of policy or procedure during an SFS program. For example, an infraction that usually results in a verbal warning may result in written warning, which includes notification of a student's home university.

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL OR DISMISSAL

Withdrawal or dismissal prior to the completion of an SFS program will result in loss of academic credit, tuition, and fees paid to SFS. All outstanding financial obligations to SFS will remain in full force. In the event a student leaves a program prior to program completion, SFS will inform the student's home school of their withdrawal.

COMMUNICATIONS, EQUIPMENT, AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS POLICIES

GENERAL EQUIPMENT USE

- Borrowed equipment, on and off premises, is the borrower's responsibility until returned.
- Students are expected to maintain the condition of any SFS equipment that they use.
- SFS cannot accept responsibility for ensuring the safety of students' personal computers, or other electronic equipment, either onsite or in the field.
- In the event that a personal computer is damaged, SFS is not responsible for providing a "loaner" to use but every effort will be made to accommodate your need on a case-by-case basis.
- SFS does not provide insurance for personal property of students, staff, and visitors.

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. The following actions are prohibited while using the SFS network and/or an SFS device:

- Downloading large files for personal use, including music, video, or large quantities of images,
- Streaming audio or video content,
- Downloading any software application without permission from SFS,
- Installing or running any software applications or executable files that are not provided by SFS,
- Moving, reconfiguring, disabling, or removing SFS-owned equipment or software,
- Spamming, hacking, virus distribution, or taking actions that compromise the security of any network system; this includes gaining unauthorized access to remote Internet systems or abusing Internet systems or Internet users,
- Using SFS systems to perform any activities that go against in-country and U.S. law,
- Illegally copying or redistributing copyrighted material,
- Viewing pornographic content,
- 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,
- 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,
- Distributing SFS-owned knowledge without permission or propagating falsified information about SFS

In the event of any violation of this policy SFS reserves the right to suspend or terminate any or all Internet access. These rules can be adapted and changed at any time.

PASSWORD POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The following policies relate to passwords for SFS resources and private student information:

- Do not disclose any passwords to other individuals without permission from SFS.
- 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.

STUDENT RECORDS AND USE OF INFORMATION

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.

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.

THIRD PARTY ACCESS

Based on education privacy laws, parents and legal guardians 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 contact the SFS Director of Admissions to make a written request for a copy of specific information.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

During the enrollment process, students will be prompted to provide information for two emergency contacts. SFS will attempt to notify those persons identified by the student as the emergency contacts in the event of any circumstance that SFS deems to be of an emergency nature, including, but not limited to, any time the student is incapacitated and cannot notify the emergency contact on their own. Emergency contacts may also receive communication regarding pre-program enrollment or admissions information, notification of student arrival to the program, or follow up from the SFS Alumni and Development Office.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO, AND WRITTEN REPORTS

SFS reserves the right to reasonably use any photographs and/or videos which may be taken of any aspect of the program and which may include the image of the student, as well as any written comments or reports submitted to SFS by the student, such as a blog post. This does not include written assignments or communications that are submitted to SFS for assessment or evaluation.

EVALUATIONS

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

BILLING AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

PROGRAM COMMITMENT DEPOSIT

A Program Commitment Deposit of \$500 (semester programs) or \$250 (summer programs) is required to confirm your participation on an SFS program. This is the first payment toward your SFS tuition and not an additional fee. Either you or your home school must submit the Program Commitment Deposit within 10 business days of receiving your Enrollment Contract. Students are not considered enrolled in the program, and financial aid applications will not be reviewed, until this deposit is received.

Financial Aid Estimates

If your participation is dependent upon the amount of aid you will receive from SFS, you may email your SFS Admissions Counselor to request a financial aid estimate prior to paying the Program Commitment Deposit. The entire SFS financial aid application must be completed and submitted to be considered for an estimate, and estimates are provided after a student has been accepted to a program.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Tuition and room and board charges will be posted to a student's SFS portal about 30 days prior to the billing deadline for their session. For students who apply after the billing deadline, tuition is due at the time charges are posted. Please refer to the SFS website to review these deadlines, which can be found here: <https://fieldstudies.org/admissions/costs/>.

OUTSTANDING BALANCES

No student having an outstanding tuition or room and board balance will be allowed to participate in an SFS program unless approved by the SFS Finance Department.

Deferred Payments

If a student will have funds disbursed to them that will not be available by the time the program begins either by their home school or through federal financial assistance, the student may be permitted to go into the field upon completing and signing a Deferred Payment Form. The Deferred Payment Form indicates that the student accepts personal responsibility for all outstanding tuition funds, including expected federal funds, and commits that the balance will be paid within 5 business days upon receipt of aid funds.

Release of Transcript

No official transcripts will be processed if a student has outstanding financial obligations due to SFS.

EXPENSES RELATED TO MEDICAL CARE

While on program, students are responsible for all costs associated with travel to advanced medical care for treatment of pre-existing or non-emergency issues, including transportation and accommodations for themselves and an accompanying staff member. The cost of all medical services - including medicines, hospital treatment, and certain travel expenses for the participant and accompanying staff - will be charged to and paid for by the student. SFS must be reimbursed for any medical and related expenses within 10 days of program completion. No official transcripts will be released for a student with outstanding financial obligations to SFS.

SFS LOAN REPAYMENT

As part of an SFS financial aid package, qualifying students may be offered loans administered by SFS. These loans must be repaid through monthly payments which begin one month after return from the field. Defaulting on payments may result in the requirement of the balance owed by you and your co-signer including late charges, collection fees and the withholding of grades and official transcripts.

GENERAL REFUND POLICY

Under certain circumstances, SFS offers refunds for the following payments only: the program deposit, tuition, or room and board. SFS will not offer refunds for any other costs associated with the program, including but not limited to flights, flight cancellation fees, other transportation expenses, visas, immunizations, or any other expenses related to program participation. In the event of a dismissal from an SFS program no refunds will be issued.

SFS's duties and obligations may be modified or suspended immediately, without notice, because of *force majeure* events, including, but not limited to, fire, acts of God, war, governmental action (including without limitation declaration of emergency or exercise of emergency powers), terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, or any other event beyond SFS's control. If such an event occurs, SFS's duties and obligations may be modified, suspended, or postponed until such a time as SFS, in its sole discretion, may safely resume operations. In the unfortunate event of a forced program cancellation, SFS may, in its discretion, extend or amend the program schedule if SFS is able to resume operations, in order to make up for a closure. In the event of *force majeure* circumstances, there is no presumption of a refund of any kind including for tuition, fees, or charges, and room and board. If a refund is offered, it will be at SFS's discretion.

For information regarding the refund policy for Summer 2021, Fall 2021, and Winter 2022 programs, please refer to the SFS website. The information below pertains to Spring 2022 programs and all programs thereafter.

Student Withdrawal Refund Policy for Semester Programs

Students who voluntarily withdraw from an SFS program, or withdraw because a home institution requires it, are entitled to a refund based on the following schedule:

- If withdrawal occurs 91 or more days prior to the start of the program, SFS will issue a full refund excluding the deposit, or a student may apply the amount paid to a different SFS program, depending on available capacity. Payment or refund of a difference in program costs may apply.
- If withdrawal occurs within 90 to 61 days prior to the start of the program, SFS will issue a 50% refund excluding the deposit.
- If withdrawal occurs within 60 days prior to 14 days after the start of the program, SFS will issue a 25% refund excluding the deposit.
- If voluntary withdrawal occurs 15 or more days after the start of the program, or if a withdrawal is mandated by a home institution, or if a student is asked to leave the program, SFS will not issue any refund, as indicated in the General Refund Policy.

Notice of withdrawal prior to the start of the program must be submitted to SFS in writing at admissions@fieldstudies.org

Notice of withdrawal after the start of the program should be submitted in writing to the program Center Director.

Student Withdrawal Refund Policy for Summer and Winter Programs

Students who voluntarily withdraw from an SFS program, or withdraw because a home institution requires it, are entitled to a refund based on the following schedule:

- If withdrawal occurs 52 or more days prior to the start of the program, SFS will issue a full refund excluding the deposit, or a student may apply the amount paid to a different SFS program, depending on available capacity. Payment or refund of a difference in program costs may apply.

- If withdrawal occurs up to 51 days prior to the first day of the program, SFS will issue a 50% refund excluding the deposit.
- If voluntary withdrawal occurs after the start of the program, or if a withdrawal is mandated by a home institution, or if a student is asked to leave the program, SFS will not issue any refund, as indicated in the General Refund Policy.

Notice of withdrawal prior to the start of the program must be submitted to SFS in writing at admissions@fieldstudies.org

Notice of withdrawal after the start of the program should be submitted in writing to the program Center Director.

SFS Cancellation Refund Policy

If SFS cancels or suspends a program for reasons unrelated to force majeure events, students are eligible for a refund based on the following schedule:

- If program cancellation occurs before the start of the program, SFS will issue a full refund of program deposit, tuition, and room and board. Alternatively, a student may elect to apply the amount paid to a different SFS program, dependent on available capacity, and contingent on approval of the home institution. Payment or refund of a difference in program costs may apply.
- If program cancellation occurs after the start of the program, SFS will issue a pro-rated refund of the program deposit, tuition, and room and board based on the week of cancellation, informed by SFS's ability to negotiate refunds from vendors. The final value and form of this refund will be determined by SFS at its sole discretion.

INSURANCE AND UNEXPECTED CIRCUMSTANCES

INSURANCE

SFS provides all students with Emergency Evacuation and Repatriation Insurance for the duration of the program but does not extend coverage for personal travel before or after the program. Students on SFS programs are required to procure their own comprehensive health insurance, valid in the country (or countries) in which the program operates, for the full duration of their SFS program. SFS does not review individual insurance policies to ensure comprehensive international coverage; it is the students' responsibility to ensure that the insurance coverage meets the requirements.

SFS does not provide personal property insurance, and theft and loss or damage to personal possessions is the liability and responsibility of the student.

SFS does not provide travel insurance for airfare or reimbursement for trip cancellation.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

SFS is authorized to modify, suspend, or cancel programs should such decisions be warranted by a change in health and safety conditions or the best interests of the program, including changes to the itinerary, accommodations, or other services contained in the description of the program.

TRAVEL DISRUPTIONS

SFS is not responsible for reimbursing travel expenses for programs cancelled, rescheduled, or evacuated due to acts of war or civil unrest, strikes, weather, quarantine/epidemics/pandemics/sickness, government regulations, or failure of equipment, power, or communications.

FORCE MAJEURE

The duties and obligations of the School for Field Studies (SFS) may be modified or suspended immediately, without notice, because of *force majeure* events, including, but not limited to, fire, acts of God, war, governmental action (including without limitation declaration of emergency or exercise of emergency powers), terrorism, extreme weather events, tropical storms, and named windstorms, epidemic, pandemic, or any other event beyond SFS's control. If such an event occurs, the duties and obligations outlined in the Enrollment Contract may be modified, suspended, or postponed until such a time as SFS, in its sole discretion, may safely resume operations.

In the unfortunate event of a forced program closure, SFS may, in its discretion, extend or amend the program schedule if SFS is able to resume operations, in order to make up for a closure. In the event of *force majeure* circumstances, there is no presumption of a refund of any kind including for tuition, fees, or charges, and room and board. If a refund is offered, it will be at SFS's discretion.