

A FRAMEWORK OF CRITICAL GLOBAL ISSUES

SIT develops our programs within a framework of the most critical global issues of the day so that the next generation of leaders has the expertise and intercultural understanding they need to engage all identities, perspectives, and cultures in respectful, enduring, and meaningful responses.



CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

Few contemporary challenges are as urgent or contested as climate change and its impact on our environment. The collective efforts of scientists, scholars, politicians, activists, indigenous communities, and concerned citizens are needed to gauge and mitigate environmental and social impacts. Our programs reflect this diversity of perspectives. Natural science-based programs explore global hotspots, with a focus on ecology, biodiversity, and conservation. Social science-based programs emphasize environmental justice. Students in all programs develop the knowledge and skills to become leaders in shaping environmental policies and balancing ecological outcomes for an uncertain future.



DEVELOPMENT AND INEQUALITY

Pervasive inequality impacts individuals and communities worldwide. Where historic development practices have fallen short of lasting change, local responses offer innovative solutions to build more sustainable futures. Our programs explore these efforts to balance ecological sustainability, economic opportunity, and gender equity alongside the complexities of growth-centric development. Students become deeply aware of what it means to confront inequality as they witness firsthand the work of people engaged in creating more just and fair societies.



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Unequal access to quality education inhibits the potential of millions of girls and women, indigenous populations, people with disabilities, displaced persons and refugees, and communities living in conflict areas. Intercultural, international-based education connects and engages communities as it values differences, confronts inequality, and recognizes common struggles. Our programs develop reflective educational leaders who can open up the world to new generations, advocate for local agency and intercultural communication, and support transformative settings where self-empowerment and human potential can flourish.



IDENTITY AND HUMAN RESILIENCE

The human condition is in change. Human rights and identity. War. Climate change. Economic disparities. Discrimination. Indigenous and marginalized individuals are exploring what it means to be different and equal in a complicated world, and those under pressure from their environment are on the move with mixed migration challenging national, communal, and personal identities. Our programs explore the human condition and the crisis of belonging in an increasingly complex and mobile world. Students gain critical insight on the phenomena of resilience and resistance through listening to the voices of indigenous people and marginalized groups.



GEOPOLITICS AND POWER

Power shifts and power plays challenge outmoded geopolitical models that are failing to ensure global security and stability. Disruptions, though tumultuous, create spaces to interrogate the politics of the past and construct alternative systems of power. Our programs explore the many shocks to the system that give rise to regional independence movements, new forms of populism rife with old nationalisms, and illiberal democracies, and ask, “What next?” Students gain nuanced perspectives from leading political scientists, diplomats, policymakers, and civic activists who are engaged in reimagining our political future.



GLOBAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Healthcare science and health systems worldwide are adapting, expanding, or straining to address the complex and varying needs of vulnerable and underserved populations: children, women, gender minorities, refugees and displaced persons, the elderly, the mentally ill, and the economically disadvantaged. Our programs explore the potential of using both indigenous and new science and technology to support vulnerable populations as well as the limitations and possibilities of contrasting health policy initiatives at the intersections of regional and local governments, global and community organizations, and traditional and indigenous approaches. Students examine the medical and social determinants of health and well-being in urban and rural settings to understand how health carers, policies, and programs can best support those in dire need.



PEACE AND JUSTICE

Conflict—incited by structural inequality, migration, identity and exclusion, resource scarcity, and historical trauma—manifests through war, revolution, and other forms of violent and coercive mobilization. In the face of this reality, the prospect of long-term peace often seems unattainable. Our programs explore how changemakers manage conflict constructively, balance reconciliation and justice, and support post-conflict remembrance and healing. Students evaluate the root causes of conflict to develop evidence-based strategies designed to transform our world into one that is more peaceful and just.