Switzerland: International Studies and Multilateral Diplomacy
Fall 2016

Packing Guidelines

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Luggage
Please pack lightly and include only necessary items. You should be able to carry all your luggage significant distances on your own. Try to minimize both the number of bags and weight of your bag(s) since you will likely be acquiring more belongings while abroad. Usually only one carry-on is permitted on the plane: we recommend a small daypack, which will also be useful for short excursions when on the program.

If carrying prescription medications, you should carry a letter from your doctor to prevent any concerns at customs or in transit. (Please see the “General Health Tips” section in the Safety, Security, and Health pre-departure document.) Please check the current requirements of the Transportation Security Administration (http://www.tsa.gov) as well as those of the airline on which you are flying for domestic and international baggage restrictions.

We recommend that you carry your passports, credit cards, money, and other valuable items in a safety belt.

Clothing Guidelines
You should bring a two- to three-week supply of clothes. Europeans tend to dress more formally than Americans, particularly in Geneva. Also, remember that you may need clothes that are suitable to a business environment for interviews and visits to international organizations. Students on the program generally wear business-casual clothing for three days a week during regular classes, as well as for interviews and meetings during ISP time. You may want to consider this as you pack. Students also generally recommend bringing clothing that you enjoy wearing, as you will wear the same things over and over. Plan to dress in layers—as it gets warmer or colder, you can simply eliminate or add layers. You might find it more expensive to purchase your clothes in Switzerland, but there are many stores in Geneva where you might like to shop.

You should prepare for warm to cool/damp weather with some snow in February and early March. Comfortable walking shoes are a must. Some families ski or have chalets in the mountains, so you may want to plan accordingly.

Equipment
Please bring a money belt to carry your passport, money, and credit cards.
Computers and Other Electronics
It is strongly recommended that you bring a laptop computer. If you bring a laptop, the computer will be your personal property and responsibility, and it is recommended that you insure it. For more information about the personal property insurance that is included in your program fee, please see the Safety, Security, and Health document. SIT is not responsible for any duty tax you may have to pay when you enter the country, theft, or loss.

Computers are not readily available to students on this program. Certain homestay families do have computers at their homes, although this cannot be guaranteed. If you already have one, it is useful (and recommended) to bring a laptop. This will involve bringing both a voltage converter and a plug adapter.

People usually do not rent computers in Switzerland, other than using a cyber café. It is best to have your own laptop computer, as all of the homestays have WiFi. The SIT office also has WiFi, as do several public spaces in Geneva. We advise students not to leave a laptop without surveillance. If you want to have constant, easy access to a computer, it is a good idea to have an extended warranty in Europe in case of repairs. Students do not have access to printers in the SIT office, but they can print documents at the French school.

Please do not bring any electrical appliances without a voltage converter and 2-prong adapter; the electrical current is 220 volts in Europe. Outlets in Switzerland use plug types C and F. You will need to be mindful about your usage of electricity, as you will be sharing the homestay with the whole family.

Gifts
As you might imagine, it is best to be prepared with a gift to offer your homestay family in gratitude for their hospitality and as a means of sharing a part of your culture with them. We suggest one or two gifts that the whole family can enjoy; you do not need a gift for each member. You may also wish to consider gifts for people outside your homestay family. Try to choose gifts that represent you or the part of the country and/or community you live in. Think about what your city, state, or local artisans produce. Draw upon your personal interests or hobbies for ideas. Pack a couple of small gifts for children, such as small games, bubbles, or a Frisbee. Even if your homestay family does not have small children, chances are that you will engage with children in your homestay community. Once you are on the program and learn more about the local culture, you will discover other ways to thank your family. Remember to bring pictures of your friends and family to share.

What You Can and Cannot Obtain in Country
Only bring enough shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, tampons, etc. for the first days. These items are often heavy and space consuming, and they can easily be bought in Switzerland.

If you have further questions, please contact your admissions counselor at 802-257-7751 and/or ask an alumni contact: http://studyabroad.sit.edu/pn/admitted-students/contact-a-former-student/.

Don't miss the Packing List on the Next Page!
These packing guidelines are based on suggestions from past students and your academic director. The clothing you bring may be adapted to your own style, within cultural norms of acceptable dress.
Suggested Packing List

**General**
- 1 pair neat jeans
- 4 shirts (three fairly dressy – short and long sleeve)
- 2 sweaters (1 fairly heavy)
- Underwear (one-week supply)
- 1 set of long underwear (helps fight the cold and damp)
- Socks (one-week supply)
- Warm pajamas or nightgown
- Slippers (people often wear house slippers more than in the US)
- 1 pair COMFORTABLE, everyday shoes which are fairly dressy and good for walking
- 1 pair neat sneakers
- 1 pair winter boots or wet weather shoes
- 1 cold weather, all-purpose coat is necessary (perhaps a raincoat with a zip-in lining would be better than both a raincoat and a winter coat)
- Hat, scarf, and gloves
- 1 money belt for safety reasons

**Women**
- 1 nice outfit – dress/skirt for women
- 2-3 pair pants and/or skirts – casual and dressy

**Men**
- 1 nice outfit – sport coat and tie
- 2-3 pair pants – casual and dressy

**Travel Documents**
- Passport
- Yellow WHO Card or a copy of your immunization record (see the Safety, Security, and Health document for more information)
- Two photocopies of your passport stored separately from your actual passport
- Photocopy of visa

**Health/Toiletries**
- Extra pair of glasses or contacts, if needed
- Contact cleaning/soaking liquid (available in Switzerland, but more expensive)
- Adequate supply of prescription medication (including birth control pills) and vitamins, if needed.

**Other Important Items**
- Small French language dictionary
- Soap and washcloth
- Travel alarm clock
- Fold-up umbrella
- Laptop computer
- Photos of home, school, friends, etc.

**Optional**
- Sports clothes (optional, if exercise/athletics are important to you)
- 1 swimsuit (optional, but recommended)
- Shorts (optional, will only need these during May and September)
- Camera (if you use a film camera, it is important to know that film is very expensive in Switzerland)

*Remember to place all valuable items and prescriptions in your carry-on luggage while traveling and all sharp items in your checked luggage.*