ISLE Program
since 1982

Student Handbook
"ISLE is best for students ready for personal growth, to expand their worldview, challenge their opinions, and really learn what it is like to be a foreigner. This is what I wanted, and therefore the ISLE program is the single greatest learning experience of my life."

-2010 ISLE Student
INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Amherst, Bates, Bowdoin, Carleton, Gustavus Adolphus, Holy Cross, and Swarthmore Colleges, welcome to the ISLE Program. Since 1982, we have been facilitating cross-cultural educational experiences like the one you are about to embark upon. We have learned a great deal from our cumulative experiences, and this handbook represents our attempt to pass on some of the knowledge we have gained from the past. At times, our comments and exhortations may sound overly prescriptive, and there may seem to be many “dos and don’ts” in the following pages, but please do read these words with care. The advice you will find here is the result of the experiences of many students and faculty who have been on this educational adventure before you. Comments and feedback from your own experiences will be welcomed and may be added to future editions of the ISLE Handbook.

The ISLE Program is a closely monitored program in a number of ways, and for good reasons. For much of the time that the program has been in existence, Sri Lanka has struggled with an ethnic conflict that has devolved into a civil war. We follow the political situation on the island daily. Sri Lanka is also a society that Americans must learn to negotiate by adapting, anticipating, and learning how to be flexible and patient. In order to ensure student safety, and in order for the program to survive, we have had to keep a very close watch not only on the civil conditions and the related political situation in the country, but also on how, when, and where our students move about the country.

Our students’ safety and security are the first and foremost of our concerns. So, please understand that what follows has been considered within that broad framework of concern. Our host families in Kandy also do their best to keep our students safe in an unfamiliar culture. At first, their requests and advice, such as insisting that students return home before dark, may feel restrictive. However, you will soon understand the basic patterns and rationales for living in Sri Lanka in the particular ways that homestay families and the ISLE Program advocate. For instance, students will need to get permission from the Resident Director if they are traveling out of Kandy, the program venue, on their own. In short, the program and your host family will need to know where you are at all times. The security situation can change rather dramatically and very rapidly in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the program operates with a relatively tight rein, and the Resident Director reserves the right to send home any student who does not observe all the safety rules of the program.

One of the aims of the program is to create a unique opportunity for you to learn the art of
living in Sri Lanka, living somewhat like a Sri Lankan student lives with his or her family. You should aim to realize the art of living in Sri Lanka in a way that helps to separate you from the tourist profile, something that can hamper your learning and cultural experience. That means learning to speak Sinhala and/or Tamil, to read Sri Lankan culture, to express yourself in its many idioms (from language to dress to how you carry your body) and, in general, to negotiate your social environment in a manner that meets Sri Lankan sensitivities. As simple as this statement may appear, this will require a lot of conscious effort by you to achieve.

This handbook will give you some helpful hints towards that end. Read it carefully as you start packing for your trip, and then bring it to Sri Lanka to refer to it whenever necessary. There is no doubt that you will learn so much more on site when you get there. The ISLE staff, Resident Director, language instructors, and host families will help you in every possible way they can as you strive to live in and adapt to Sri Lankan culture on its own terms. Nobody expects you to be perfect, and you will certainly not completely metamorphose into a Sri Lankan in four months, but your positive enthusiasm for adapting and learning will be very important factors in shaping the quality of your educational experience.

The ISLE Web Site:
The ISLE Web site has a wealth of information that will help you prepare for the trip. You'll find profiles and photos of previous ISLE students in Sri Lanka, information on life at the Center, biographies of your professors, and more helpful information. There is also a version of this handbook on the ISLE web site, so if you need to reference something and don't have your copy with you, you can always find it there.

The Web site is: http://www.bowdoin.edu/isle/
CHAPTER I: THE BIG VOYAGE

It is very important in the days leading up to your departure in mid-January that you get plenty of rest. The journey to Sri Lanka is very long. Even if all flights and connections are on time, it will take about 40-45 hours from the time you leave your home to the time you arrive in Kandy. It is exhausting. If you are already exhausted before you begin the journey, your first week in Sri Lanka will be very difficult indeed. Sinhala class begins the second day you are on the island, so you need to do your best to be ready to hit the ground running. If you can sleep on the plane on the way over, so much the better. Bring earplugs and/or a sleep-mask if it will help you.

As you get ready for the big trip, you will receive a “Packing Tips” document. Please read it thoroughly as you plan and pack for the semester; it provides practical advice regarding how much money and which essential items to bring in addition to more general packing tips. It also includes advice on gift ideas for your home-stay family and other helpful hints. When packing a good rule of thumb to follow is: take less, and don’t take something that would break your heart to lose. Plan to take one carry-on piece of luggage, and one check-in piece only. Along with two days’ worth of clothing, put important items in your carry-on (such as medicine and travel-size toiletries) in case your check-in bag gets delayed.

Also be sure to pay attention to the ongoing discussion regarding packing and planning on the program’s Blackboard discussion forum. The Executive Director and Resident Director will answer questions as they arise.

Travel to and from Sri Lanka

You are responsible for your travel to and from Sri Lanka. If you utilize the help of our recommended travel agent, Shanika De Alwis (sales@reserve2travel.com, 718-470-2619), you will arrive in Bandaranaikke International Airport on the designated time and date. If all students book with Shanika, you will be able to travel together for most of the journey. The Program will make arrangements to receive you at the airport in Colombo to bring you to Kandy. Kandy is three hours away by road from the airport.

Return Reservations

At the conclusion of the program, the student group will be given a ride to Colombo airport. This is the only ride that the program will provide you to get to the airport. Do make sure your return reservations are made for the morning after the conclusion of the program either to return to the US or to travel in other parts of Asia. It is absolutely essential that you reconfirm your return flights. Failure to reconfirm flights has proved an
expensive mistake for some students in the past, so please make sure you get this done without fail. ALL YOUR FLIGHTS SHOULD BE RECONFIRMED 72 HOURS BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE either in person or on the phone or internet. If you do not reconfirm your return flights, you could lose your reservations, and you may have a difficult time booking another flight.

**A note on changing your return flights**
When deciding to make changes to your return flights, please be aware that airlines may charge a substantial penalty fee to change your return date. In addition to a penalty fee, you will also be charged the fare difference between your original flight reservation and your new one.

**A note on staying in Sri Lanka after the program ends**
If you choose to stay in Sri Lanka after the conclusion of the program, please know that your visa will expire in January. ISLE secures visas that will last for the duration of the program, and although we can try, we may not be able to extend your visa beyond five months.

**Arriving at Colombo International Airport**
Try to get a lot of rest on the plane. Upon your arrival in Sri Lanka you will need to go through immigration and reclaim your luggage. Write the address for the ISLE Center (75 Dangolla Rd, Kandy, Sri Lanka) on your luggage tags. If your luggage is missing, the Director and ISLE staff help you fill out the necessary forms. Before exiting the airport everyone should exchange between $50 and $100 at the money changing station. Keep hold of your luggage and personal belongings until you board the van, as the area around the airport is very crowded.

**The First Few Days in Sri Lanka**
If you fly with other students, the long flights will give you a chance to get to know each other. Upon your arrival at Bandaranaike International Airport near Colombo, the Resident Director and ISLE driver will meet you and drive you directly to Kandy, a city of about 100,000 people in the central highlands of the island. Kandy is the cultural, educational, and commercial center of upcountry Sri Lanka.

You and your fellow students will stay in a modest neighborhood hotel in Dangolla, a quiet neighborhood in the outskirts of Kandy, near the University of Peradeniya and the ISLE Study Center. The first day, you will be challenged to stay awake. It is very important to stay awake until bedtime and to eat all the meals, as well. During your two-day stay at the hotel, you will be oriented to the ISLE Center, the University, and to other nearby places, like neighborhood facilities for daily needs.

The program calendar in Appendix II will give you an overview of events and class schedules for the semester.
CHAPTER II: Orientation Issues

ISLE Study Center Policies and Related Issues

The ISLE Study Center is the hub of program activities. It includes a classroom pavilion, a library, and a study room. While the ISLE staff is accessible, and eager to assist you, please respect the private working space of the staff and Resident Director. Since the Center serves many different needs, its smooth functioning requires adherence to the following policies:

1. The classroom, library, and bathrooms located adjacent to the library are for students’ use. The hours and days that the ISLE Center is open for your use will be clearly posted. Please respect those hours, and do not arrive before the center opens or leave after it closes. If you need a quiet place to study on the weekends when the center is closed, the library at the University is the best place to go.

2. Please treat ISLE facilities with respect (e.g., don’t put your feet on the tables or couches or on the walls of the class room or library). Also, please keep in mind that the staff, while friendly and helpful, are busy people, so please do not take up their time unnecessarily. That said, you should feel free to engage them if you have important questions, as they are excellent sources of information and will be pleased to assist you.

3. The ISLE library has been built up over many years for your reference and the reference of future ISLE students. Handle all borrowed books with respect and care, and refrain from writing in them. Please leave books from the ISLE library for the librarian to reshel. Before borrowing a book, make sure to enter the book title and your name in the register. Please be sure to return all borrowed books promptly at the end of each session, including those from other libraries such as the ICES (International Centre for Ethnic Studies) and the University of Peradeniya.

4. The ISLE library is a lending library only for ISLE students. Outsiders may use the library on a non-lending basis only after seeking permission from the librarian. The ISLE library also welcomes your book contributions; in the past, many ISLE students have left their travel guides and novels in the library for future students.

5. The Study Center’s phone, fax, computers, and e-mail services are very limited and are therefore reserved for staff use only. This rule is necessary to keep the Study Center and the program functioning smoothly. The ISLE Program encourages students to bring their own laptop computers with them to Sri Lanka for their own academic work. Please be aware however, that repair facilities may be limited, and, as with any other valuable item, always be sure to carefully protect your computer against theft or damage. In addition, the Program strongly encourages students to insure their computers against theft, loss or damage.
Each student will be given a cell phone with an initial pre-paid calling card for personal use during the Program. There are many calling cards available to your US families that probably work well, but past participants have recommended the following to us: www.callingcardplus.com. There is also a website they can use to text from the US internationally: www.ipipi.com/doLand.do

For yourself, you can buy phone cards for the cell phones you are provided. They are sold extensively, and you use the same cards to call and text locally and internationally. Once your parents have your phone number, they can call your phones using Skype. This will cost them a small fee on Skype, but it is one of the most cost-effective ways of communicating.

If you bring your smart phone, it should be “factory unlocked.” This means that it can pick up the Sri Lankan networks. In this way, you can use your phone as a “hotspot” rather than buying a dongle. There are also apps like WhatsApp and Viber, which can be used to text and call internationally when Internet access is available.

The university has computer and printing facilities you may use, and you can also visit nearby communications kades (small shops) for fax and e-mail. There is also a wireless USB stick called a “dongle” that is available for purchase from various mobile phone providers. They work almost anywhere wherever there is phone service. You can buy the dongle and sim card for about $27.00. You then pay about $2.50 for a data card with 1.5 GB.

**A note on the use of telecommunications:** In addition to the fact that telecommunications resources at the ISLE Center are very limited, the philosophy of the program is to encourage students to venture outside the Program and Center and experience life in Sri Lanka to the fullest. ISLE students have ample access to communications technology in Kandy, but please be judicious in your use of such technologies.

6. The TV and VCR in the library may be used during the Study Center's open hours; instructions are available at the TV. When using the TV and VCR, please be considerate of the needs of others and do not disturb those using the library.

7. Alcohol consumption and smoking is not allowed in the Center. Please eat in provided spaces. No food or drink is allowed in the library or in the reading room at any time, nor in the classroom while a class is in session. Do not bring food to the Center that you do not plan to eat, and do not discard food, as this is especially frowned upon in Sri Lankan culture and seen as very disrespectful.

8. Cooperate with the staff to keep the Center's space clean and don't leave your books or papers unattended in the classroom, as the wind and rain will easily scatter things.

9. The Resident Director's phone number is (207) 852-2255; the general business number of
the ISLE Center is 94-081-238-9947. Please have your home-stay families and others use the general business number except when there is an urgent need to speak directly to the Resident Director or the staff.

10. Please do not give out the Center’s address or phone numbers (or those of your home-stay families) to persons not well known to you. Students have been made uncomfortable in the past with casual acquaintances seeking them out at the Center or at home. Don’t feel bad about refusing to share any personal information.

11. No pets are allowed in the ISLE Center, and students are strongly discouraged from adopting strays.

12. Student driving of motorized vehicles is prohibited for the duration of the program.

13. Sri Lanka has 28 holidays compared to 11 in the U.S. In order to operate our program efficiently we cannot honor all of them. So, you may notice that we continue to hold classes on one or two Poya (full moon) days during the semester.

14. Students must pay a $250 security deposit in advance of the program. This amount is fully refundable at the close of the semester, provided that students have incurred no damage to books, cell phones, or other ISLE or homestay family property, and no unpaid or overdue charges or fees are outstanding. Refund of the security deposit, as well as awarding of grades, is also contingent upon students having completed and returned all required evaluation forms.

**Passports and IDs**

In the past, a number of ISLE students have lost their passports and money, causing grief not only for themselves, but also for ISLE staff, who have had to go to great lengths to help the students replace their important documents. This includes filing police reports in Kandy and traveling to Colombo, in order to notify the U.S. Embassy and the Sri Lankan Department of Immigration. Fortunately, you can take simple common-sense steps to avoid such an unpleasant situation. Following are some guidelines to help you minimize the possibility of suffering such a loss.

1. Please give your passport to the Resident Director to be held at the ISLE Center. Keep a copy of the first page of your passport handy at all times; the Resident Director will later give you a copy of the final visa page to carry with you. If you need your passport for any particular purpose, please make sure to bring it back to the Center immediately after your use. If you do this, you will have your passport at the end of the program when you really need it.

2. Carry your international student identity card and University of Peradeniya library card at all
times, in addition to the copy of your passport and visa page. They will serve as acceptable identification in lieu of your passport. They also have the advantage of identifying you as a student to ticket-takers at cultural sites, where you might otherwise be charged inflated tourist admission fees.

**Money Matters: Cash, ATMs and Credit Cards**
Avoid carrying large amounts of cash around, especially in busy areas. Regardless of what form of transport you use, never carry much cash with you. Perhaps bring $200-$300 cash with you to Sri Lanka, but carry a small portion of that with you on the regular basis. Keep your valuables and your money in an inconspicuous place, out of sight or under lock and key at your homestay. Don't tempt anyone inadvertently by leaving valuables and money in plain sight, and carry only what you think you will need each day.

1. Students can exchange currency at the airport or at local banks in Kandy like Bank of Ceylon. A photocopy of your passport is usually needed to exchange money. At some banks, like Commercial Bank, you must present your actual passport to exchange money.

2. ATM machines are available in increasing numbers, and you usually will get the best exchange rate using an ATM. Keep in mind, however, that ATMs do charge a fee in addition to fees your own bank charges for using the service.

3. Students who bring Traveler's Cheques often find them very difficult to cash. Avoid this inconvenience by only bringing cash, ATM cards and/or credit cards.

3. Be aware of the risk of credit card fraud. During one recent program, several students and the Program Director's credit card numbers were hacked into while they were in Kandy, and were apparently used to charge items in other countries. This is not to say that you should not bring or use credit cards, but you should be aware of this risk and where possible limit credit card use.

4. How much money you will need depends a bit on your personal spending habits. Here are Sri Lankan equivalents of a few common items.
   - Rice & Curry (vegetarian) $0.84 - Rice & Curry (with meat) $1.30 – Haircut $0.77 - $2.50 - Three wheeler (from ISLE Center to Kandy) $3.50 – Bus (from ISLE Center to Kandy) $0.20 – Bus (from Kandy to Colombo) $3.00

**Traveling Around Kandy**
Traveling around Kandy can be done efficiently; 3-wheelers (small taxis) are usually the best
bet in terms of saving time, and are reasonably economical if you can share with another student. Many distances are walkable, and walking is a great way to get to know your new neighborhood and environment. It is about a 30-45 minute walk from the ISLE Study Center to the arts faculty, pool or gymnasium at the University of Peradeniya. When it is not overly crowded, city buses are cheap and easy to ride. ISLE staff will also work with students to advise them on transport options, and assist them with transport logistics, both locally in and around Kandy, and when they are planning their Independent Field Study projects. The ISLE Van will transport students to program activities, lectures, and field trips.

**Health and Travel Insurance**

ISLE students are covered by the ACE Executive Assistance Program, however this is not a substitute for a personal health insurance policy. All ISLE students are required to have a personal health insurance policy that provides international coverage. Students must check with their health insurance provider to ensure that their insurance provides such coverage.

The ISLE Program does not provide travel insurance. Students may wish to purchase travel insurance for trip or flight cancellation or interruption. Please see Appendix IV: Health, Insurance, and Illegal Substance Policy (p.35) for details on the ISLE Program’s insurance policy.

**ACE Advantage/ Executive Assistance Program**

The ACE Executive Assistance Program is an emergency assistance service designed to assist you with extraordinary needs. *This program is not an insurance policy and does not provide medical payments*; rather it is designed to work in tandem with your existing insurance and provide assurance of benefit availability.

**Listed below are examples of services you may require for which you should call the Executive Assistance Service:**

* You require referral to a hospital or doctor.
* You are hospitalized.
* You may need to be evacuated or repatriated.
* You need to guarantee payment for medical services.
* You need lost document assistance.
* You require embassy or consular assistance.
* You require emergency medication, not otherwise available.
* You require emergency travel arrangements.
* You require legal services.

**Call these numbers in the event of an emergency:**

1-800-766-8206 (within the US and Canada)  
or collect: 202-659-7777  
Plan # 01 SP 585 (24 Hr. Emergency Assistance)  
*All ISLE students are provided with wallet cards and passport stickers with these numbers, as well as the ISLE policy number.*
Nikan Innawa: Just Being in Sri Lanka

Take advantage of your time just being in Sri Lanka. ISLE will open avenues for you to spend your time with many types of Sri Lankans in a variety of cultural contexts. Plan activities with your learning partners. Get involved in the University’s activities, cultural clubs, and other voluntary organizations. Pay attention to the announcements made at the Center. If you are too shy to explore by yourself, discuss your interests with the Program Director and ISLE Staff. Don’t forget to ask local advice from your homestay family; they are a wonderful source of information. They will help you connect with the right people.

If you have free time, take advantage of university professor-guided field trips on most Fridays; they are often the highlight of the courses. The Program Director, program staff, and your host family can advise you about other interesting places to visit in the area. Explore the area with a local friend or homestay sibling; it’s a great way to get to know the people and the area at the same time.

A special note on visiting sacred sites: Always behave respectfully and according to local custom when visiting such sites and follow the advice given during the orientation sessions. Ask advice from ISLE faculty or staff if you are unsure.

Some suggested day trips are: Pinnawala (an elephant orphanage near Kegalle); three historical and very important medieval temples outside of Peradeniya (Embekke, Lankatilaka, and Gadaladeniya); hiking neighborhood hills or tea estates like Hantana, or hiking around Hunas Falls and Bible Rock. Some overnight trips include: Nuwara Eliya (including Hakgala Garden, the Sita temple, and Horton Plains), Nilambe or Sri Pada (after the December Poya day). Always remember, when planning any overnight trip, you must get permission from the Resident Director before you leave Kandy.
Sexual Harassment (applies to both sexes)

Unfortunately, some Sri Lankan male youth are well known for their catcalling and verbal harassment of passing females in the streets (and even in some sections of the University). In addition, females are sometimes harassed physically on crowded buses or in crowded areas of town. Sri Lankan and western women are both at risk, but there are some issues specific to westerners that need to be understood. First, the image of western females, in contrast to the traditional Sri Lankan norms of behavior, is that western women, especially women from the U.S., lead a different kind of independent lifestyle. That is, they are imagined as being far more sexually active than local women. This image of the western female has been reinforced by TV advertisements and movies, and is confirmed in Sri Lankan eyes by the behavior and dress of some western pleasure-seeking tourists. In fact, due to increasing tourism, even male students need to be cautious of touts and pimps in the streets who are catering to western tourists in increasing numbers.

Your Sinhala instructors and the Resident Director will discuss strategies for dealing with sexual harassment. Please also check Blackboard for online resources about protecting yourself against sexual harassment. Following are some general precautionary tips:

• Avoid well-known tourist haunts either in Kandy or when traveling about the country (these are the places where some of our students have had serious trouble in the past). Minimize interaction with strangers, especially touts (street hustlers), would-be guides, taxi drivers, and others who may try to latch on to you. Women, in particular, should recognize that many forms of dress, body language, and conversations, though innocuous at home, might be read as sexually flirtatious in a public context. For example, holding eye contact with strangers on the street, or smiling when you interact with a stranger can be misinterpreted. On the other hand, it is important not to be too standoffish and insular; sometimes people really are just being friendly. It is advisable to assess situations individually while still being very cautious.

• You will notice that people in the neighborhood will be constantly watching you. You will be read according to local standards. Once you establish yourself as a serious student, the people in the neighborhood will value you, and even protect you if there is harassment from a passerby. Observe how local girls and women conduct themselves in public and try to emulate them. Dressing appropriately helps to some extent. When walking along, students should carry an umbrella for protection and a charged cellphone.

• Students in the past have been harassed by the staff at hotels or by employees in organizations related to students’ independent studies. This harassment can vary from provocative talk to overt physical sexual advances. Wherever the harassment takes place, and in whatever form, students are strongly encouraged to contact the Resident Director or ISLE Staff without delay. You may also report it to your host family to get support at home.

• As a preventive measure, students should avoid spending time alone with members of the opposite sex in isolated places. Avoid working with strangers. Be sensitive to what
you wear, how you hold yourself, and what words you use, so as not to send wrong signals to strangers. Staying with families during Independent Study is infinitely safer than staying in hotels. Being introduced to someone through a respected contact changes the possible nature of relations dramatically. Always make sure to get contacts through reliable sources.

Sexual harassment within the program involving any of the program’s staff, host-families, or faculty is not tolerated. If an incident occurs, it should be reported immediately and directly to the program’s Executive Director, Dr. Sree Padma Holt (spadma@bowdoin.edu or 1-207-725-3874).

**A Note on Friendships with the Members of the Opposite Sex and on Dating**

In Sri Lanka, especially as a foreigner, it is best to form your closest relationships with members of the same sex. In Sri Lankan society, dating is acceptable only if it is understood to be leading to marriage.

If you happen to become close with someone of the opposite sex, it is essential to be very clear that you are seeking just friendship. In the past, a number of our male and female students have been proposed to by Sri Lankans. Perhaps unwittingly, some of our students in the past have created unrealistic expectations, taken advantage of Sri Lankans, and left them in difficult circumstances after their departures. Please be aware of these cultural differences when interacting with Sri Lankans so as to avoid misunderstandings, hurt feelings, and other difficulties. Bear in mind that pre-marital sex is frowned upon.

**Toilet Facilities**

Public toilets are very rare in Sri Lanka. Rest houses, restaurants, and hotels offer some toilet facilities for travelers, but you cannot count on them to provide toilet paper. So, carry your own in small packs. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the traditional squat toilet and water-washing etiquette, as you might well find yourself in circumstances where no western toilet facilities are available when needed.

**Traffic Safety Issues**

Traffic is not very systematic in Sri Lanka, at least according to American norms. Roads are often very congested, with 3-wheelers, bicycles, trucks, vans, buses, and cars overtaking each other and even an occasional ox-cart or elephant. Local vehicle drivers often do not yield to pedestrians. As in most Asian countries, road accidents are very common in Sri Lanka. Take extra caution when you are in traffic as a pedestrian. Make eye contact with vehicle drivers on both sides of the road, and make sure that they have stopped completely before you cross the road (in the unlikely event that they yield). Leave plenty of space
between vehicular traffic and yourself when you walk along busy roads. Walk on the side of the road facing the traffic. Be aware that vehicle drivers may not see you when you are on the road in the dark, so keep your flashlight on. It is not uncommon to see vehicles on the road without headlights at night.

**General Safety Tips**
In general, students should avoid the tendency to find isolation and quiet in places such as beaches, parks, etc. Always let someone (such as your host family and ISLE Center staff) know where you are going, try to travel/rest where there is a fair amount of public activity, and pay attention to your surroundings. Avoid political gatherings, and when in crowded, touristy spots, be sure to keep your valuable items in hard-to-get places. Keep small bits of cash in a more accessible place, and do occasional safety checks on your wallet. Have a way to secure your camera and other valuables on the tours. It is a good idea always to carry water, toilet paper, an umbrella, and a flashlight when traveling. You will find more information on appropriate behavior and dress that will help ensure your safety in the “Homestay” section of this handbook.

**Health Safety Tips**
See Appendix IV of this Handbook for information on Health Insurance and Policies, and be sure to read the Health Information, included in your first information packet and posted on the Black Board, very carefully. See also the Centers for Disease Control's information sheet for travelers to Sri Lanka:


- If you need to see a physician for any regular illness, you can either use the **Peradeniya University Health Center** or the **Suwasevana Private Hospital** close to the ISLE Center. Suwasevana is located at 532 Peradeniya Road, Kandy, on upper Peradeniya Road across from the ARPICO supermarket. For any emergencies you can call the Government General Hospitals of Peradeniya and Kandy. For numbers for these health facilities, please refer to the **telephone directory** on page 34 of this Handbook. Adequate mental health/counseling services are not readily available in Sri Lanka. The ISLE Program cannot provide mental health services on par to your home campuses and communities.

Here are a few general tips from the Bowdoin College Health Center on maintaining basic health:

- Avoid raw or partially cooked fish and shellfish. Drink only bottled water, tea, coffee or bottled drinks. Avoid ice cubes, as there is no guarantee that bottled water was used to make ice.
• Outside of the homestay family, avoid any raw fruit and vegetables including leafy salads that may have been washed with contaminated water or handled with dirty hands.

• You are advised to avoid most food from street vendors, to eat only fruits you peel yourself, and to eat food that has been cooked and is still hot. The rule is: boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.

• No matter how careful you are, the change in diet may give you some mild diarrhea and/or constipation in the beginning of your stay, which may respond to Pepto-Bismol or Imodium. It is usually best to drink a lot of fluids and let it run its 1-2 day course. Oral rehydration solutions can help to prevent dehydration. Hydration salts called “Jivanee” can be found at any pharmacy in Sri Lanka.

• Use sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat or umbrella to protect yourself from the hot tropical sun. In Sri Lanka, the UV rays are especially strong, and westerners are especially at risk for developing skin cancer. Keep well hydrated to avoid heat exhaustion.

• Shoes or sandals need to be worn at all times outside the homestay. There are many soil-transmitted helminthic infections due to roundworms, hookworms & whipworms.

• Sexual activity during the ISLE program is strongly discouraged, for cultural as well as health reasons. Students should be aware of the necessity of taking precautions against Hepatitis B, HIV, and other sexually transmitted diseases. Aside from abstinence, latex condoms from the U.S., Japan or Europe are the best protection against sexually transmitted diseases. (Bear in mind that condoms from other parts of the world may not be reliable.)

• Some diseases do not manifest immediately. Most travelers who acquire viral, parasitic or bacterial infections abroad become ill within 6 weeks after they have been infected. It is recommended that travelers advise their physician of their travels should any illness develop within one year of returning from abroad.

• Sri Lanka is effectively free of malaria. You will not need antimalarial medication for your trip.

• There is no vaccination for Dengue Fever, which is caused by mosquitos. Please be diligent about wearing bug spray when leaving home. Dengue is most prevalent in urban areas. Please visit the Center for Disease Control’s website for more information about Dengue Fever.
Culture Shock: Adjustment Process

There is a great deal of literature on the topic of culture shock. As you struggle to adjust to and come to terms with the Sri Lankan culture, you will find yourself going through different phases. Some experts have identified four phases, others as many as five or six. Nonetheless, all have agreed that the degree of culture shock varies from individual to individual, depending on one’s willingness to learn and understand a new culture before and during one’s encounter with it. It also depends on one’s physical condition and the kind of drugs one is using.

Immediately after your arrival, and in the days following, you will be a little bit confused due to travel fatigue, time difference, and new smells and foods. But this is what you expected and you will be excited to be in a land that appears strange. It will be amusing to you even when you make mistakes. You will probably be a little proud of yourself too in this initial stage about how positive and upbeat you are.

After spending some time in Sri Lanka you will slowly make your way beyond the surface level of the culture. The amount of adjusting you have to do might overwhelm you. Back at home you grew up in a different culture with different value systems and different expectations. This new culture makes you question many of the things you have taken for granted or have assumed to be universal truths. Remember that it is going to be difficult to leave your cultural comfort zone and learn everything all over again.

Whether you are Irish-American or African-American, you may at times feel you are being observed differently, or that attitudes may be different towards you than they are to other people who appear to be of South Asian descent. Sri Lanka, like every country, has its own cultural peculiarities and quirks – not always positive – and when you are visiting any country that is not your own homeland, you may sometimes be called upon to be understanding of that fact.

Coming to terms with the many cultural differences can be a challenge. We recommend the following steps to help you through this difficult stage.

1. Talk to the Program Director and homestay families about your concerns and frustrations.
2. Find activities to pursue in Sri Lanka that you aren’t able to do in the U.S. Seek opportunities to assimilate yourself into Sri Lankan society.
3. Avoid spending too much time in the company of other students who recall their lives in the U.S. and who propose the same kinds of activities that they are used to back at home. Minimize your time using the Internet and e-mail; there is no point in making
this journey to Sri Lanka if you simply wish to recreate the environment you had back home.

4. Practice your Sinhala with your host family and local friends. Pay close attention when they speak to you. Have a dialogue with them about various cultural issues that intrigue you, frustrate you, etc. They may not make the same assumptions that you do.

5. Follow Sri Lankan rhythms when you eat and sleep (going to bed early and rising early). It sounds trite, but a well-rested body keeps the mind and soul healthier, too.

6. Finally, get a physician's help if the drugs you are using have a negative effect on you.

Once you begin to come to terms with the local culture, you will truly enjoy what it offers, and you will be able to contribute in return. Remember that you can't change the culture around you to fit your own American-derived perspective. Just be here. When the time comes to leave the country, gloom may set in again. Remind yourself how lucky you are to have experienced this remarkable place. Make the most out of the final tea with host families and fellow students, remembering the wonderful memories you will bring back home. And, don't forget to THANK ALL OF THOSE who made your stay memorable!

Coming Home: “Reverse Culture Shock”

Be prepared for another cultural adjustment when you return home. What was once familiar may seem strange to you, as you view it in a new light. You may find it frustrating that classmates and family members will not fully understand your experiences in Sri Lanka, and some aspects of life there may be difficult to explain to them. While you can't avoid this second cultural adjustment, just knowing that you are likely to experience it will help you to prepare for it. It's also a sign of how much you have learned and grown during your semester away. You can ameliorate the effects of “reverse culture shock” by keeping in touch you're your friends and homestay family in Sri Lanka, and by doing further study on Sri Lanka at your home college. Get to know other students who have studied in or are from South Asia, and promote awareness of international issues and South Asia on your home campus.

You may also be interested in sharing your experiences by serving as an ISLE alumni ambassador on your home campus. This is a chance for you to host ISLE events for prospective students, professors, and administrators who want to hear about your work and experiences on the program. The Communications and Enrollment Manager will contact you at the end of the program to inquire about your interest in serving as an ISLE alumni ambassador.
CHAPTER III: Academics

University of Peradeniya

ISLE is formally affiliated with the University of Peradeniya, one of the leading institutions of higher learning in South Asia. Peradeniya faculty offer a range of required and elective courses tailored to the needs of ISLE students. Most faculty members have taught at ISLE member colleges or other educational institutions in the United States.

Dangolla is contiguous to the sprawling University of Peradeniya campus. The ISLE Center is within a 30-45 minute walk to the University of Peradeniya Faculty of Arts library and athletic facilities (including gymnasium, swimming pool, tennis courts, track, and cricket, rugby, and soccer fields). Most ISLE courses are taught in the Faculty of Arts complex. In addition, there are various student clubs associated with different faculties at the university. The Resident Director and faculty will help you to get to know these clubs and their activities. Find an activity of your liking in order to spend your extra time with university students and learn about local student life.

Credit

The total course load for the ISLE program of 16 semester-hour credits. ISLE member colleges grant academic credit for satisfactory completion of program coursework. Please note that each institution individually determines the total number of credits to be awarded, and the manner in which credits and grades are recorded on student transcripts. Allocation of credits to departments, or to major or minor requirements, must be negotiated by the student with the home college.

The semester consists of three distinct sessions, in which students take both required and elective courses, and undertake a final Independent Field Study Project. The full course load for the ISLE Program is 16 semester-hour credits, broken down as follows: Students take 2 required courses Sinhala I (4 semester-hour credits each) and Sri Lankan Studies Seminar/Independent Field Study (4 semester-hour credits), plus two elective courses of the student's choosing, taken during Session II (4 semester-hour credits each). Auditing a third elective course is welcomed as long as the instructor gives permission. Grades for these courses are entered on a transcript issued by the ISLE Executive Director and forwarded to the student's home institution. All ISLE member institutions automatically accept ISLE credits toward graduation, but as noted above, the number of credits granted varies. Consult your campus faculty program representative for details.
ISLE is a 16-week program, and students are expected to stay for the entire duration of the program. Students who decide to withdraw from the program in the middle of the session will not earn credits for their incomplete courses. In order to earn credit for independent field study projects, students not only need to complete a substantial term paper, but must also formally present their papers in the three-day seminar at the very end of the program.

**Grades**

The letter grades students receive for their courses are as follows:
A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, no credit (A+ and C- are not options)

Awarding of grades is contingent upon students completing all required coursework, attending classes, and completing and returning all required program evaluations. A grade reported by the instructor of a course becomes a part of a permanent record maintained by ISLE, and will be sent to the student’s institution. The student’s institution will duplicate the ISLE transcript upon the student’s request.

**Classroom Expectations**

Sri Lankan classroom expectations are not what students are used to in U.S. liberal arts colleges. Most of the classes are lecture-oriented. Students are expected to sit up straight and be attentive throughout the lecture. Putting your feet up on the desk, eating and drinking in the classroom or interrupting the lecture before the professor solicits questions is considered rude, and shows disrespect towards the instructor. Sri Lankan students address their professor as "Sir", "Madam", or "Professor". Even when talking amongst themselves about a particular instructor, students will use the last name as a suffix to the title “Professor”, not the first name. Students are expected to observe Sri Lankan standards of classroom etiquette and modify their behavior accordingly. Although your professors may not tell you when you violate these norms, they will be favorably impressed to see you adapting to them.

You must attend the first class session of every elective course in Session Two. By experiencing each class, meeting each professor, and looking through each syllabus, you will get a sense of the classes you would most like to take. After the first week, you must choose your two elective courses.

Attendance in classes and field trips is very important and is a part of your course grade. The Program Director will keep track of your classroom attendance, and he/she will report it to the professor. If you are sick or must miss class, you need to first consult the Director.
Written assignments are regularly assigned, and most work should be done on the computer, eliminating the need for most printing. Most ISLE professors have e-mail addresses, and in general, written assignments should be sent as attachments to the professor, with a copy sent to the Program Director, so that it is not necessary to print papers. In those exceptional cases in which a professor prefers a paper copy, the Program Director will then print out a copy of the paper and give it to the professor.

The best way of reaping advantages from the Sri Lankan classroom is not to judge it simply by U.S. standards, and not to expect too many inducements for you to finish your readings or other assignments on time. Since you made the choice of coming to Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan professors assume that you take responsibility for your own readings and learning. If you approach them on your own for any help, they will be extremely helpful. If you feel the need to discuss your class readings further outside of class, feel free to make an appointment with your instructor. In addition to helping you understand the readings and lectures or with formulating paper topics, your instructors can also help you to form friendships with students at the university or help with contacts for your independent field study.

Prepare for your academic experience in Sri Lanka by reading the language materials you will receive before departure. Do all the preprogram readings including learning Sinhala script and be sure to complete assignments discuss issues in the “Discussion Board” on the Spring 2016 ISLE Blackboard. These readings will help you to understand your lectures in the first few weeks and will aid in your adjustment to Sri Lankan society and culture.

It is important to maintain an academic pace during the program at all times. If you do this, you will avoid the intense time crunch that can arise at the end of the second session, which is especially busy. In addition to maintaining your courses, you will be drawing up plans for Independent Study. The program is rigorous, and it may be a challenge at first to strike a balance between academic work and real world experiences. Previous students who have negotiated the academic dimension of the program most successfully have worked steadily, allowing for concentrated study time every day.

The Resident Director is in charge of all Independent Field Study work, and will provide you with much information about what is expected. There is also a bank of independent studies available for your perusal in the ISLE library. It’s a good idea to be thinking about your Independent Field Study from the beginning of the program. The most intellectually and personally rewarding studies seem to be the result of a well-chosen venue. That is, where you
conduct your Independent Field Study is probably the most important factor, rather than the issue(s) you decide to focus upon. In general, the program encourages you to engage in a project that is truly independent, unique, and preferably in a rural part of Sri Lanka. In many ways, the program's trajectory is aimed at this experience, giving you the requisite linguistic skills, knowledge, and social skills that enable you to learn something unique to your own experience. This is part of the program that you can customize.

**Please note:** If you engage someone and use their time and knowledge significantly in completing your Independent Field Study project, you should use your Independent Field Study funds to compensate them. Feel free to ask advice of the Resident Director or the instructor who introduced you if you are not sure how to proceed.

**Multiple Perspectives**

As you know, the ISLE Program is located in a predominantly Sinhala Buddhist area, but is also home to other ethnic and religious populations. With the emphasis on immersing participants in local culture, we expect you to learn about the dominant Buddhist culture as well as the cultures of Tamils and Muslims. As far as our resources allow, we make considerable efforts to avail you of all the experiences that the region can offer. If you look closely at the curriculum, you'll see that most of our courses examine issues relevant to both the majority and minority communities.
CHAPTER IV: Homestays: Tips and Expectations

Each student lives as a family member with a middle class host family in Kandy. ISLE students describe the relationship with their families as one of the most important learning experiences of the program. In addition to providing meals, families encourage language learning, and include the students in their religious and social activities. They make it possible for students to become actively involved in many aspects of Sri Lankan daily life. Frequent visits by relatives and friends add further diversity to students’ family-life experiences. Most of the host families are situated either in the hills of Dangolla, the quiet residential neighborhood in which the ISLE Study Center is located, or no further than 20 minutes by 3-wheeler from the Center. Host families can be varied: from young working couples to widows and retired people. Some host fathers are busier than others, and may be seen only on the weekends.

ISLE homestay families have long-standing relationships with the ISLE program, and many have had several students stay with them over the years. They will welcome you and treat you as one of their own, but please understand that their first responsibility is to act in the interest of the program and to keep students safe at all times. For this reason, homestay families are asked to be in regular contact with the program to be sure that everyone is informed of students’ whereabouts.

The home-stay experience opens to students a unique opportunity to study, participate in, and understand the subtleties of Sri Lankan language, culture, customs, and traditions from an insider's point of view. To experience this unique opportunity, students should be positive and respectful towards their host family’s traditions and customs, and be willing to conform to the expected behavioral norms. The reward for this is coming to understand a Sri Lankan art of living, an experience you may cherish throughout your life.

Following are some tips for engaging a successful homestay experience:

1. Observe the behavior of your family and learn from it. Basic courtesies are very important, such as saying “good morning,” “good night,” and putting your hands together to say “Ayubowan” when you meet guests. Try to refrain from being a noisy presence in the house. Close doors quietly, try not to rush about, and be respectful of your environment in general.

2. To build a good relationship with your host family, make it a point to interact with all family members regularly; this will greatly enhance your learning experience. Use your time at home to your advantage to inquire, observe, and learn about Sri Lankan culture. South Asian family members generally love to interact with one another. Therefore, spending time alone in one’s room (other than for study) is not seen as positive. Practice your Sinhala with your family on a consistent, regular basis. If some family members need help with English, seek the opportunity to cement your relationship.
3. Sometimes out of politeness Sri Lankans can be reserved or understated in expressing their expectations. Please make an effort to be sensitive to your family’s likes, dislikes and expectations, even when they are not explicit with you.

4. Dress in a reasonably conventional manner so as not to attract unnecessary attention. Not only will you benefit, but you will also please your host family if you seek their advice in this regard. While you may see young Sri Lankans emulating trendy Western fashions, in many places this is considered inappropriate and/or provocative, and it generally doesn’t speak well for foreigners. Always keep modesty in mind. For example, wearing leggings or tight-fitting clothing or thin shirts and skirts may be fashionable on your home campuses, but will earn you negative attention in Sri Lanka. Be especially conscious of how you sit whilst wearing skirts in the classroom, in public, and in your homes.

5. South Asian families are more conservative than their Western counterparts when it comes to relationships between members of the opposite sex. (Please also see “A Note on Friendships with the Opposite Sex and on Dating”, p. 11.) The families are subtle, and may not directly tell you so, but they would be made to feel extremely uncomfortable if you were to spend time alone in your room with a member of the opposite sex; it is a practice you simply should not consider.

6. If your host family leaves you alone for the weekend, do not see this as an opportunity to party with other ISLE students. Such behavior within the host family’s home is highly disrespectful and inappropriate.

7. Do not bring strangers home without prior approval of your host family. If you would like to bring a friend home, ask your host family ahead of time. Strictly avoid inviting any overnight guests. When you form friendships with local people, take advice from your host family. You might hurt their sensitivities by hanging out with the wrong people. Remember, you become a reflection of them.

8. Do not stay out after dark. This isn’t aimed particularly at you as a student, but is a common cultural pattern in Sri Lanka, particularly outside of Colombo. You will notice that the streets of Kandy are virtually deserted by 8:00 p.m. Wandering alone in the dark may attract attention from unwanted characters in the street. It also exposes you to traffic hazards and even to roaming elephants in rural areas.

9. If you are tied up with a program activity or are running late for some other reason, always be sure to call your host family to tell them where you are, and when you will be home. Your host family will worry about you as much as your own parents would, if not more. Keeping them informed of your plans outside of ISLE classes and activities is the most courteous thing you can do.

10. When you are at home, make sure that you leave things as they were before you used them (unless you are told otherwise). Make sure to turn off lights and fans when you are not using them. Keep in mind that electricity is precious (and extremely expensive) on the island.

11. If you have valuables to keep safe or private, always keep them locked in your bag.

12. You will be provided with basic toiletries such as soap, toilet paper, detergents, and mosquito coils. Cleanliness is an expected norm. Make sure you brush your teeth and wash your face before you come to the breakfast table, wash your hands before every meal, and wash your feet before going to bed.

13. Leave your street shoes outside the house or in a specific allotted place, and do not put
your feet up on the furniture or on the walls.

14. Do not use your host family's phone to call your home country unless it's on a collect basis and urgent. If you do need to call on an emergency basis, be sure to make it clear to your family that you are calling collect. Don't tie up your family's phone at any time. Local calls are based on time, and are expensive by local standards. For personal communications, use your own cell phone (provided by the program), a pay phone, or communications kade. The best way to communicate by phone with your parents or friends back in the U.S. is to arrange a time for them to call you on your cell phone. Keep in mind that calls from Sri Lanka to the U.S. are extremely expensive—often several times more expensive than calls from the U.S. to Sri Lanka.

15. Help out with household activities and chores such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, etc., whenever possible. You should offer to do your own laundry and keep your room tidy. Pitch in where you can. For example, even if your host mother insists on doing the wash, make sure to bring your laundry to the washing machine. Although your host family members are eager to make you feel welcome, you should never take advantage of them by expecting them to wait on you, or to do things for you, which you can do yourself.

16. It's nice to treat your family to your favorite dish. It also helps nurture your relationship with your family if you bring back a gift of fruit or some specialty of the place whenever you return from a trip or a tour.

17. Sri Lankans think that it is a disgrace to waste food. Make sure that you eat whatever you take on to your plate. It's expected that you will eat breakfast and dinner with your host family. They will pack a lunch for you, unless otherwise directed. A lot of early morning work goes into making rice and curries to prepare lunch for you. If you don't like this lunch packet, politely ask your family to get something else for you at the westernized grocery stores so that you can fix your own lunch.

18. Your host family is paid to cover the cost of your room and board. Expenses incurred for special events, such as when you travel with your family, are additional. You should always offer to pay your own way when you travel together.

19. Pets are treated differently in this tropical climate than in the U.S. Usually dogs are not allowed into the house. Never adopt strays or bring them into your host-family household.

20. A student, especially a female student, visiting a pub is frowned upon in this culture. Having a beer before coming home is not something that the host-families expect from a student. In fact, it is considered very disrespectful. Even if they don't tell you so directly, it will damage their respect for you.

21. Be sensitive to your surroundings and to the neighborhood, as some people will watch your every move as a student from the ISLE Program. Note that public kissing and hugging is not the norm in Sri Lankan society. (See also “Note on Friendships with the Opposite Sex and Dating” in this Handbook.)

22. Sinhala language instructors and the program director are happy to give you advice in case you have difficulties adjusting with your family. Feel free to discuss with them any issues that may arise.

23. Whatever your own religious beliefs, please remember that members of your host family are probably devout in their religious faith. Never speak disparagingly of other faiths, or assume or act as if yours is the “right” one. Remember that you are there to learn.
24. Students are required to move out of their host family homes on the last day of the program. If you have plans to stay in the area you must make alternate accommodations.

CHAPTER V: Administration

ISLE is a consortium of member colleges. Presently, Amherst, Bates, Bowdoin, Carleton, Gustavus Adolphus, Holy Cross, and Swarthmore are the member colleges. All ISLE program policies are discussed and decided by the Board at the annual board meeting.

Dr. Sree Padma Holt is ISLE’s Executive Director. She was born and educated in India and has published extensively on the cultural history of South Asia. Her office is located at the program’s agency institution (Bowdoin College, in Brunswick, Maine). With the Program’s Faculty Board of Directors and Resident Director, she is responsible for all aspects of program planning and implementation. She can be reached at 207-725-3874 or 207-522-5670 or spadma@bowdoin.edu.

The Resident Director, Professor Trudy Delong, will supervise the program from arrival to departure. Prior to her role as director, Prof. Delong served as Resident Director of the South India Term Abroad (SITA) Program in Madurai, India for six years. Prof. Delong acts as a conduit between the desires of students and the rules set forth by the ISLE board and administrators. Occasionally, she may apprise you of additional travel restrictions in compliance with Sri Lankan government policy and with the safety recommendations of the U.S. Embassy and State Department. Please bear in mind that your safety and security are the ISLE Program’s top priorities, and that any travel restrictions imposed by the Program are required to ensure your own safety.

Mr. Tilak Jayatilake is the Liaison and Librarian at the ISLE Center in Kandy. Among his many duties, he helps students as needed with library issues, University facilities, faculty meetings, and independent study venues.

Mr. Gamini is the driver of ISLE vehicles. Ms. Maya Perera keeps the center premises clean and in order.

The ISLE Program has long-standing relationships with most of our staff, and we are grateful for the work provided by each of them. Please treat them with kindness and respect.
CHAPTER VI: SECURITY
Staying Safe in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has been a society in a state of unrest during a protracted civil war between the government and a Tamil militant organization that lasted for nearly 27 years. During these tumultuous years, ISLE had kept in place a number of security measures that had helped us to run the program safely. However, the situation has improved since May 2009, when the government forces defeated the Tamil militant organization. Still, students must be cautious when traveling to the North. For these reasons, we ask our students to observe some precautionary measures. Here is a quote from the US State Department’s website: “Landmines and unexploded ordinance are found in parts of northern and eastern Sri Lanka, especially in the areas north of Vavuniya, including the areas of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar and Puthukudiyiruppu (PTK). Travelers in these areas should stay on main, heavily traveled roads, and never walk in forested or agricultural areas or in abandoned properties. Travelers should make themselves aware of, and able to recognize and avoid, any area cordoned off for landmine clearance.” Please see the MAP OF SRI LANKA (p. 30 of this Handbook). In addition to this:

1. Students should seek the Resident Director’s permission in any instance when they wish to travel outside Kandy. The Resident Director, in consultation with the Executive Director, has the option of dismissing any student who violates this rule.

2. For various reasons derived from years of experience, travel to the city of Colombo is also limited, but trips to Colombo for educational reasons may be requested by individual students and will be reviewed by the faculty resident director on a case-by-case basis.

3. In Kandy, the program provides transportation by private van or three-wheeler (scooter rickshaw) for daily commuting. In addition, students are free to use city and inter city buses to get around.

4. Students are encouraged to go outside Kandy for Independent Field Study projects, but only to areas that have proven to be safe and only after receiving permission from the Resident Director. Never attend political rallies and avoid large crowds in general. Also stay away from government or military vehicle convoys and military bases. When you are outside Kandy, you are required to keep ISLE informed of your whereabouts at all times.

5. The program maintains an excellent network of knowledgeable persons, which includes U.S. embassy staff persons and a variety of Sri Lankans in academic, government and business positions. From our own and their observations, we can make a reasonable assessment of the security situation at any given time.

6. If for any unexpected reason the situation in the country, especially in and around Kandy, were to turn dangerous, we would evacuate students immediately, and cancel the program, if necessary.

We recommend that anyone interested in the continuing political situation in Sri Lanka check Internet news resources about the island, such as http://www.theacademic.org. Another good source is the BBC at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/south_asia/. These sites present a far more detailed and balanced view of things than even the best American newspapers. The U.S. State Department’s information sheet on Sri Lanka may be found at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1025.html. The U.S. State Department has rescinded its travel advisory for Sri Lanka.
Travel requests for academic reasons will be reviewed by the Resident Director on a case-by-case basis.
APPENDIX II: SPRING 2016 ISLE COURSE KEY AND PROGRAM CALENDAR

ISLE
2016 Spring Course Key

Total ISLE credit load: 16 semester-hour credits, as described below. 
*Please note that full syllabi and faculty CVs are available to students through the ISLE Blackboard site.*

**Required Courses:**

*Sinhala Language I (4 semester-hour credits total)*
Instructors: Professor W. A. Liyanage, Mr. K. M. Buddhika Nisantha Konara

*Independent Field Study (Includes Sri Lanka Studies Seminar- 4 semester-hour credits)*
Course Coordinator: ISLE Spring 2016 Resident Director Trudy Delong

**Elective Courses:**
*Select 2 of 4 courses (4 semester-hour credits each) to be taken during Session II:*
*(Additional courses may be audited)*

- *Sinhala Language II*, Instructors: Professor W. A. Liyanage, Mr. K. M. Buddhika Nisantha Konara
- *Tamil*, Instructor: Mr. Jayaseelan
- *Images of the Feminine and the Social Experiences of Women*, Instructor: Dr. Carmen Wickramagamage
- *Traditional Medicine*, Instructor: Dr. Abeyaratne Ratnayake

**Session I:**
25 Jan – 19 Feb  
*Sinhala I*: 8:00 -11:15 AM *Plus group meetings*

**Session II:**
22 Feb -13 Apr (M/W)  
*Sinhala II or Tamil*: 8:00AM - 10:30 AM  
*5 hours of one-on-one or small group meetings required*
22 Feb -13 Apr (M/W)  
*Religious Practice and Everyday Life in Sri Lanka*: 11:30 AM –2:00 PM
23 Feb -14 Apr (T/TH)  
*Images of the Feminine and the Social Experiences of Women*: 8:00AM - 10:30 AM
23 Feb -14 Apr (T/TH)  
*Traditional Medicine*: 11:30 AM –2:00 PM

**Session III:**
18 Apr – 9 May  
Independent Study

*All classes are held at the Arts Faculty at the University of Peradeniya unless otherwise notified. Related field trips and seminars are open to all students.*

**Extra-curricular:**
22 Feb: *Dance/Drumming*: At Students’ convenience at the University Cultural Center
### ISLE Program Calendar Spring 2016

#### Session I

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<td>27-Jan</td>
<td>28-Jan</td>
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<td>Arrive in Kandy</td>
<td>ISLE Center visit</td>
<td>Hantana with LPs</td>
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<td>Sinhala 8-11:15' Orientation/harrassment</td>
<td>Univ.visit &amp; Tea 2-4P</td>
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<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>Sinhala Clubs intro with LPs 3P</td>
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<td>31-Jan</td>
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<td>activity w/ host family</td>
<td>Sinhala Women's shelter</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>Mawanella trip</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>To Jaffna via War memo</td>
<td>Jaffna University</td>
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<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>LPs with students</td>
<td>Tamil Class</td>
<td>Language field trip</td>
<td>Jaffna University</td>
<td>tour to Jaffna town</td>
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<td>10-Feb</td>
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<td>Nainativu Lunch at Sarvodaya</td>
<td>Sinhala Seminar review</td>
<td>Poya</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>A Pura</td>
<td>packed via Mihintale to Polonnaruwa</td>
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<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>Poya</td>
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<td>Independence day</td>
<td>visit to ruins</td>
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<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>Sinhala Exam</td>
<td>to Batticaloa-homestay</td>
<td>Batticaloa-homestay</td>
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APPENDIX III:

Spring 2016 Telephone List

Please note: The numbers listed are for dialing from Kandy, Sri Lanka.

If calling from the U.S. you must dial 011-94 first and then the number, UNLESS the number below begins with zero (0), then you must drop the zero (0) and dial the remaining numbers after you dial 011-94. All listed telephone numbers are in area code (081) unless otherwise noted.

**ISLE CENTRE**

75 Dangolla Road, Kandy

Main Office ................................................................. 238-9947
Resident Director (cell) ......................................................... 207-852-2255
ISLE Liason (cell) .................................................................. 077-642-3215

**University of Peradeniya**

Student Health Services (Ms. Arosha Perera) ........................................... 081 2392164

**Emergency Numbers**

Police Station, Kandy ........................................................ 222-2222
.................................................................................. 118 or 119 (emergency number)

American Embassy, Colombo .................................................. (011) 244-8007

Government General Hospitals,

Peradeniya...........238-8001, -8002, -8003, -8004, -8005, -8006,-8007, -8008, -8009

Government General Hospitals,

Kandy................................. 220-3100, -3101, -3102, -3103, 3104, -3105

Lakeside Adventist Hospital .......................................................... 222-3466

Kandy General Hospital ................................................................... 222-2261

Suvasevana Private Hospital, Kandy .............................................. 222 2404, 220 3407, 223 2357

University Health Centre .................................................................. 239 2022

**Faculty**

Prof. U.P. Meddagama .................................................................. 238-9679 (home)
Dr. W. Amarakeerthi Liyanage ..................................................... 238-4287 (home)
.................................................................................. 077-442-8198 (mobile)
Mr. Buddhika Konara .............................................................. 071-933-5812 (mobile)

Prof. Pahalawattage D. Premasiri .................................................. 220-2486 (home)
.................................................................................. 239-2520(office)

Prof. Nimal Gunatilake .............................................................. 081 238000 (home)

Prof. Savithri Gunatilake ............................................................ 081 238000 (home)

Dr Madhava Meegaskumbura .................................................... 071 8705809 (mobile)

Dr D.K Jayaratne ........................................................................ 077 6901189 (mobile)

Mrs Chandra Ranaweera (Batik Teacher) ....................................... 077-6393567

**Staff**

Mr. Tilak Jayatilake (ISLE Liaison & Librarian) .................................. 081-238-5542 (home)
.................................................................................. 077-642-3215 (mobile)

Mr. Gamini Weeraratne (Transportation Coordinator) ...................... 081-572-0138 (home)
.................................................................................. (072) 356-5102 (mobile)
Travel-Related Numbers

Bandaranaike International Airport ................................................................. (019) 733-2424
Sri Lankan Airlines- Flights ................................................................. (019) 733-2377

Reconfirmation ................................................................................................. (019) 733-5500
Baggage Services ............................................................................................ (019) 243-9747
Sri Lankan Airlines – New York, NY ...................................................... (011-94) (732) 205-0017

Kandy Railway Station .................................................................................. 222-2271

Nongovernmental Organisations

I.C.E.S. (International Centre for Ethnic Studies), Kandy ................................. 223-4892
......................................................................................................................... 223-2381

I.C.E.S., Colombo ........................................................................................... (011) 269-8048
......................................................................................................................... (011) 268-5085

Other Useful Numbers

AT & T Worldphone (toll free) ........................................................................ (011) 243-0430
MCI Worldphone ............................................................................................... (011) 244-0100
  International telephone booking ................................................................. 141
  Inquiry ............................................................................................................. 1241
  Operatory Assistance .................................................................................. 1200

Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank ....................................................................... 223-2293
......................................................................................................................... 233-5912
......................................................................................................................... 223-6317

Kandy Post Office ......................................................................................... 222-2250
TNT Skypack .................................................................................................... 223-2371
TNT Mailfast ................................................................................................. (011) 268-6686
DHL Worldwide Express Post ......................................................................... 447-9684

Coffeepot Internet Café Kandy ........................................................................ 223-4341
Bake House Restaurant Kandy ....................................................................... 223-4157
APPENDIX IV: Health, Insurance & Illegal Substance Policies

The ISLE Program uses the medical services of Lakeside Hospital in Kandy when the need arises. It is a private hospital operated by the 7th Day Adventists and always has at least one American doctor on staff (though the local doctors are probably more experienced in dealing with tropical illnesses). We have found this facility to be quite responsive and up to the task. On occasion, we have also availed ourselves of the university doctors and medical staff when surgical issues have arisen. Students are given a great deal of helpful advice on how to stay healthy in Sri Lanka, but if the need arises, the medical attention available is reasonably good.

By accepting placement on the ISLE Program, each participant acknowledges, and agrees to abide by, the following Program policies:

Health

1. **Doctor's clearance certificate** – Any ISLE participant who is, or has been, subject to an ongoing or recurrent medical condition that has the potential to restrict or negatively affect normal participation in program activities, whether or not the condition is controlled through regular or incidental medication, must inform the Program Director of the condition and provide certification from a qualified medical practitioner that participation on the program is not expected to adversely affect that condition.

2. **Medical history/allergies** – All ISLE participants should provide the Director with copies of their relevant medical histories – illnesses, major operations, long-term or ongoing treatments, etc. – and a list of any known allergies to drugs, foods and environmental conditions.

Insurance

1. **Provided by ISLE** – In Sri Lanka, ISLE covers the expenses of standard prescription and non-prescription treatments and outpatient office calls required by participants with the exception of those necessitated by pre-existing conditions. Hospitalization or other in-patient charges will be borne by the program only up to the deductible amount of the participant's personal insurance or $150, whichever is less. However, ISLE does provide limited coverage for accidental death and dismemberment while traveling to and from and residing at the program in Sri Lanka, subject to policy exclusion of acts of war.

2. **Not provided by ISLE** – Each ISLE participant must be covered by a personal health insurance policy. As an ISLE student, you are to be treated as a regularly enrolled student on your home campus. In most cases, this means that your own school's group health insurance will cover you even when studying abroad. Check to make sure this is true in your case. ISLE will not accept responsibility for any medical costs of a participant who is not covered by insurance. Students may wish to purchase travel insurance for trip cancellation or interruption.

Illegal Substances

Sri Lanka has a very strict anti-narcotics policy. Any use, trafficking or association with illegal substances is punishable by a heavy fine and imprisonment. Import or export of such substances is also
closely monitored. No special treatment is given to foreigners in Sri Lankan courts in matters pertaining to illegal substances, nor can American Embassy personnel intervene in the courts in such matters.

**ISLE Responsibility**

**A. Dismissal:** Should a student be dismissed for any reason, that student is no longer ISLE’s responsibility. We are certainly available to assist any student in making arrangements to return home, should they need it, but once the student leaves the ISLE Program, we are no longer responsible for their actions or well being.

**B. End of program:** The ISLE Program cannot be responsible for the students’ safety after the official end of the program.
– NOTES –