

August through mid-December), one an archaeological field experience in the ancient cities (Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa) of the North Central province, and the second a tour of the upcountry tea highlands, the southeast multi-religious pilgrimage site of Kataragama, and the southwest old colonial port city of Galle. Due to security concerns, time spent in the capital city of Colombo is kept to a minimum. Administrators of the program, both in the United States and in Sri Lanka, follow the political developments in Sri Lanka on a daily basis. The program did not operate in 1988 and 1990 due to security concerns.

Year in and year out, various challenges await ISLE students. In addition to general adjustments to a new and different culture that inevitably must be made, one of the most persistent problems that students in the program have faced concerns experiences of sexual harassment endured by women students in public contexts. The program continuously grapples with formulating appropriate strategies and disseminating information to help deal with this enduring problem.

ISLE's administrative director is Sree Padma, who supervises all aspects of the program in Sri Lanka and in the U.S. from her office at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. She reports to a faculty board of directors consisting of campus representatives from each of ISLE's consortial schools and maintains a website at <http://academic.bowdoin.edu/isle/>. Currently, Professor Roger Jackson of the Department of Religion at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, is the chair of the ISLE faculty board of directors. The board is charged with the responsibility of formulating policies for the operation of the program.

The New York State Independent College Consortium for Study in India

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The New York State Independent College Consortium for Study in India sends a group of about twenty college students to north India every fall semester for a four-month study program. Founded in 1989, the Consortium currently consists of Bard, Hartwick, Hobart-William Smith, St. Lawrence, and Skidmore Colleges. After being based in Pune in 1990-92, the Consortium shifted the program's major site to Jaipur in 1993.

The rich and rigorous program is designed to provide both breadth (exposure to some of north India's diversity) and depth (a significant time period at each site). The program usually runs from mid-August to mid-December. After an initial week of orientation in Delhi hosted by the Educational Resources Centre Trust, students spend about six weeks studying Hindi at Landour Language School in the Himalayan "hill station" of Mussoorie and visiting

sites such as Yamunotri (a high point of the program), Surkhanda Devi, and Hardwar. After another week in Delhi, students spend about seven weeks in Jaipur, Rajasthan in homestays (another high point of the program), usually celebrating the Hindu festival of Dipawali (Diwali) during their homestays. Hindi study continues in Jaipur less intensively while students concurrently enroll in two courses, taught by Indian faculty: "Culture and History of India before 1947" and "Society, Politics, and Economy of Contemporary India." These courses are managed by Jaipur's Institute for Research in Interdisciplinary Studies. The group also visits nearby sites such as Ajmer and Pushkar. A one-week break occurs during the end of the Jaipur stay, when students can travel within India if they wish, subject to safety restrictions. Stays of ten days to two weeks in Varanasi (Benares) are hosted by the Society for Heritage Planning & Environmental Health, and include visits to sites such as Sarnath and Banwasi Seva Ashram. A final week in Delhi allows time for students to present to their peers the results of the directed field research they conducted throughout the program. The topic for their field studies are developed and approved before students leave their home campuses, and mentors are provided for each student in Jaipur. All credits count as standard credits for each college's campus, and each college's normal financial aid applies for the program.

A faculty director, usually from a member college (though occasionally hired from outside of the Consortium), travels with the group at all times, accompanied by an assistant of the opposite gender. The faculty director coordinates the curriculum and logistics at each site, grades the academic work (which includes an exam, essays, a specially structured journal, and the directed field study), and serves as the academic and personal mentor for students. The director's position rotates among the five colleges. While the basic sites and itinerary now remain essentially the same for every program, each faculty director makes his or her own unique contribution. In 2003, for example, the director developed several new rural sites in the Nagpur area that the program had not visited before. Past faculty directors have represented a diversity of nationalities as well as a diversity in gender.

While the program is designed for students of all majors, some program participants have gone to graduate school in South Asian studies, as well as returning to India on a Fulbright after graduation from college.

St. Lawrence University is currently the Consortium's agency college (a function which rotates among Consortium colleges every five years or so). Nancy Pierce at St. Lawrence is the Consortium administrator and can be reached at npierce@stlawu.edu. Prof. Richard Davis at Bard College is currently the chair of the faculty board, and can be reached at rdavis@bard.edu. The Consortium website is maintained by St. Lawrence at http://www.stlawu.edu/ciis/html/off_campus/india_consortium.