Associated Colleges of the Midwest
India Summer Program: Service Learning & Cultural Immersion

Student Handbook • Summer 2012

Beloit Carleton Coe Colorado Cornell Grinnell Knox Lake Forest Lawrence Luther Macalester Monmouth Ripon St. Olaf
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I. Welcome and Program Overview

Congratulations on your acceptance to the ACM India Summer Program: Service Learning and Cultural Immersion. This handbook is designed to help prepare you for the program and to give you an initial sense of what to expect academically and personally while you are there. This is the third year of the program, and the handbook contains information on various arrangements for your stay. It is, in effect, a reference tool that provides you (and your parents, to whom a copy will also be sent) with the information you need as you make plans to participate in the program. It is important that you read it carefully as preparation for the on-line orientation session and raise any questions you may have either in that orientation session, or individually with the ACM Program Associate, Heather Everst, or the Director of International Study Programs, Carol Dickerman. You should also take it with you when you travel to India, as it contains important contact and schedule information, as well as information about various arrangements for the program.

Program Overview

From high-tech industries to thousands of rural villages seemingly unchanged for centuries, India encompasses both the dynamic forces of globalization and the deep-rooted traditions of several ancient cultures, marked by a diversity encompassing a multiplicity of religions, ethnicities, political states, languages, and art forms. Pune, a medium-sized city of over three million, is located in the state of Maharashtra and is home to numerous civic organizations dedicated to improving the situation of Indians living in both urban and rural settings. With areas such as public health, malnutrition, social issues, and environmental concerns all in the forefront of Indian life, students wanting to help make a direct impact have a rich assortment of organizations with which to get involved. With more universities and colleges than any other city in the world, and a dynamic cross-section embracing nearly all of the nation's religious, social and ethnic variety, the "Oxford of the East" is an ideal setting for students committed to positive social change in a vibrant, diverse location.

The ACM India Summer Program: Service Learning & Cultural Immersion is one of two new summer opportunities. This six-week program (with the option of staying for an additional two weeks) takes students to Pune and Melghat, India, where they will be immersed in development work in Maharashtra, India and Indian local culture. A key component of the program is placement in a non-governmental organization (NGO) for a part of the program. Maitri, an Indian NGO headquartered in Pune, will be responsible for the community service learning part of this program, including, identifying service learning projects and placements and providing support services and housing for all aspects of the program after the first days of the program in Pune. The focus will be on providing students a learning opportunity that is in alignment with their specific interests and students will be actively engaged in service learning throughout their time in India.

The program has three overall learning goals:

- Gain first-hand experience with community-based development assistance in India and an understanding of the way that a local community and a local NGO each conceive of and act on their goals;
- Develop a portfolio of regular observations (written and visual) about the volunteer experience and the skills to record and analyze these observations;
- Achieve an informed and analytic view of the possibilities for using a liberal arts education in the international NGO sector.
Upon completing the program, the student should be able to make a presentation describing their service learning experience - how they went about identifying the needs of the community, how they aligned themselves with the community and the organization they worked with, the contribution made by the student, and an assessment of how this involvement has made a difference for the student, the NGO and the community.

When students arrive in Pune, they will have a week-long acclimatization and introductory program arranged by the ACM’s India Program Director, Dr. Sucheta Paranjpe, and Maitri. This will include Hindi language instruction, introductory lectures about history of the voluntary sector in India, developmental challenges that India faces today and thoughts of Gandhi on service, and a brief introduction to Indian culture and history. Students will also spend time with their mentors to finalize the details of their service learning work.

Students will begin their hands-on service learning at the end of their first week. In Melghat or when placed with NGOs, students will share dormitory-like accommodations at a community center, while in Pune, students will be placed in homestays with Indian families.
## II. Calendar

### 2012 Dates

**Six-week program: June 16 - July 28, 2012**  
**Eight-week program: June 16 - August 11, 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June 16</th>
<th>Arrive in Pune</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 17-23</td>
<td>Orientation to Pune and India; introduction to Maitri and its work; identification of service learning projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 24-30</td>
<td>Travel to Melghat; orientation to Melghat and to Maitri staff and projects in Melghat</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1-21</td>
<td>Service learning projects, in Melghat or Pune</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 22-27</td>
<td>Debriefing on the service learning experience, in Pune</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 27</td>
<td>Last day of program (6-week program)</td>
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<td>July 28</td>
<td>Students depart from Pune (6-week program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 28-9</td>
<td>(8-week students only) – Service learning projects Pune</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 10</td>
<td>Last day of program (8-week program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 11</td>
<td>Students depart from Pune (8-week program)</td>
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III. Program Arrangements

The ACM India summer program is designed to integrate service learning with more structured, classroom-based learning (Hindi language classes and lectures about development in India), homestay with an Indian family or residence in an Indian community, and other activities outside the classroom. Through the various arrangements students will gain an understanding of Indian civil society and the role of grassroots organizations, and of their roles as volunteers.

Hindi Language
During the first week of the program, students will receive an introduction to the Hindi language, the primary official language of India. The focus will be on practical aspects of the language—e.g., greetings, interactions with host families, workplace communications—and be as much an introduction to culture as language. The classes will be taught by Dr. (Ms.) Sucheta Paranjpe, Director of the ACM Fall and Summer India programs. She has many years of experience teaching ACM students and helping them to adapt to Indian culture.

Introduction to India
In the first week of the program, a series of lectures, arranged by Maitri, will provide students with a background in the history of the voluntary sector in India, the current developmental scenario and the challenges that the country faces today and thoughts of Gandhi regarding service, that has shaped most developmental work. These will serve as a foundation for discussions about the role and range of NGOs in India.

NGO Placement
Placements with NGOs will be managed by Maitri (“friendship” in Marathi), an organization specializing in working with non-governmental organizations in the state of Maharashtra. Once students have committed to participation in the program, Maitri will write to the students asking for their specific learning goals in this program. In addition, Maitri may suggest some preparatory work for the pre-departure period. During the first week of the program, each student meet with his/her mentor and lay out a plan in conjunction with the mentor. During the second week of the program, students will travel to Melghat, where they will be introduced to NGOs with whom they may work and provided background to the local issues that are central to the NGOs’ work. Students may elect service learning projects in either Melghat or Pune.

While in the field, a Maitri staff member will serve as guide and facilitator, overseeing students’ integration with the community and each evening organizing an informal discussion about what students have done and learned that day. Students are expected to communicate weekly with their mentors. In the final week of the six-week program, Maitri will organize a series of lectures and discussions in Pune in which students reflect on their experience, on what it means to be a volunteer, and on the impact of the experience on the local communities and themselves. Students will also give presentations on their community service work. Students remaining in India for the eight-week program will either resume their service learning projects in Pune, or work on special projects for Maitri in Pune during the final two weeks of the program.

The overall program coordinator in India is Vaishali Kanaskar. For any issues during the program, the students should be in touch with her. Each student will also be assigned a mentor to help individual learning goals. Students are expected to be in touch with their mentors before arrival in India and to work closely with the mentor throughout the time in India. This should occur at least once every week.
while working in the community. In addition, in the field, students are expected to work closely with the on-site guide/facilitator on a day-to-day basis.

If your home college grants credits for internships and service learning experiences, we suggest that you speak in advance with an advisor or staff member in the appropriate office about requirements for obtaining credit.
IV. Preparing to Go and Arrival

Travel Arrangements

You should make your travel arrangements as soon as possible after you accept the offer to participate in the program: keep in mind that earlier reservations are likely cheaper. You will need to arrange to fly from your home to Mumbai to **arrive at the Pune airport by 7am on Saturday, June 16.** You will be met at the airport by ACM India Program Director, Dr. Sucheta Paranjpe, and then taken to the Raviraj Hotel in Pune.

In making your travel reservations, there are a number of options available to you; you may wish to use your own local travel agent, work through STA Travel, or book through one of the many internet sites. Once you have made your arrangements, please email your itinerary to the ACM; this will allow us to inform ACM Pune staff when you will arrive and allow them to meet you at the airport (provided, of course, that you arrive within the window of time above). (You may also wish to be in contact with other program participants, either via e-mail to arrange to travel together to Pune.)

Passport and Visa

You will need to have a passport for travel to India, one which is valid for at least six months beyond the end of the program. If you do not now have a passport and are an American citizen, please review the information on the U.S. Department of State website (travel.state.gov) and apply for one immediately. If you are a citizen of another country and need to renew your passport, please contact the nearest consulate or embassy.

You will need a visa for your travel to India, and as a first step in the process, ACM will obtain for you a letter from the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) affirming that you will be in India as a student enrolled in a summer service learning program in India. In order for ACM to do so, you will need to fill out the Student CV Visa form. Please complete this form and return it to Heather Herriges at the ACM by April 15. ACM in turn will forward the applications to AIIS in New Delhi and they will then draw up and fax the required certifying letter to the consulate for you. (The cost of AIIS providing this letter is included in your program fee.) Once the letter has been sent to the consulate, ACM will notify you by e-mail that you may apply for your student visa. Instructions for applying for your visa are be posted at www.acm.edu/acceptedstudents. Once a visa application is started it is only valid for seven days, so you should not start applying for the visa until you have been informed to do so by ACM. Once you have your visa it is crucial that you make sure the visa is correct and will be valid for the right amount of time.

Communication

Computers and internet

While you may wish to bring a laptop with you, it is not required that you do so. There is electricity in Chilati in Melghat, although an internet connection may be slow. At the same time, a laptop may help students to record daily observations and experiences. In Pune, with host families, there is likely to be internet access, although you will likely find that internet connections are more reliable at internet cafes. If you bring your laptop, please keep in mind that you need to take adequate precautions to keep it from being stolen, as indeed you would at home. If you do decide to bring a laptop (or any other piece of equipment or personal property), you will also want to make sure that it is insured, likely through your
(American) family’s property insurance policy, as ACM does not provide insurance coverage for personal property.

**Phones**

You may bring your US cell phone with you to India if you have the ability to unlock the SIM card and if your plan allows for international use. (If you do so, you should be aware that this may be very expensive, and thus you may wish to limit your use of it to occasional calls.) Students considering working in Melghat should keep in mind too that there is little or no cell phone reception in this area of Maharashtra. There is one phone in Melghat for emergency use.

While it is important that your parents or other emergency contacts know how to reach you at the program office in India, these phone numbers are for use in the event of an emergency only.

**Money**

Students can rely on debit and ATM cards almost exclusively to obtain rupees for daily expenses. (For information on what expenses you can expect to have, please see the Program Cost Sheet for the India Summer program on the ACM website.) ATM machines are readily available throughout Pune, and you should have no problem withdrawing funds in rupees from your U.S. bank account. Before you leave for the program, however, you should notify your bank that you will be abroad. (If you neglect to do so, you may find that your bank, fearing that your card has been stolen, will freeze your account after several withdrawals.) You will also want to check on the transaction charges your bank may levy. While the exchange rate is typically good when using an ATM or debit card, you may find that transaction fees such as to discourage multiple withdrawals of small amounts.

While ATM and debit cards work well, this should not be your only means of getting money—ATM and debit cards can get lost, stolen, or eaten by cash withdrawal machines. You should also bring along some hard currency in dollars—perhaps $100 to $200—and a credit card. These can be useful in emergencies or if you travel outside of Pune. Visa is more widely used than other credit cards, but you should not plan to use it with the frequency that you likely do in the U.S., as most small businesses in India, and especially outside of Pune, will not accept it.

**Mental and Intellectual Preparation**

When you first arrive in India, you will undoubtedly be struck by the many new and different sights, sounds, and smells around you. And while you can never really prepare yourself for the full experience of studying abroad, you can arrive with some knowledge of India today, its diversity, and its challenges. You'll undoubtedly find your Indian friends and host family more knowledgeable about the U.S. than you are about India. The more you can learn in advance about India and prepare yourself for the program, the more you can learn and benefit from discussions with Indian instructors, ACM and Maitri staff, and new Indian friends. Your overall experience will be richer for it.

There are several readings that we strongly suggest you read before the beginning of the program. They are:

- Shashi Tharoor, *India: From Midnight to the Millennium and Beyond* (2012)
Possibly the most valuable resource you have for self-preparation is other people who have been to this area of the world before. Talking with people about their experiences can reveal a great deal about what to expect. You may want to start with your Off-Campus Studies Director, other students who have studied in India, Asian Studies departments, or professors of Indian or international subjects. You will find it well worth your effort, and you may be surprised how excited people will be to share their experiences with you.
**Suggested Packing List**

**Essential Items**
- Passport with visa page
- Certified copy of your birth certificate (in case of lost passport)
- ATM card, credit card, cash

**Clothing**
- T-shirts
- Lightweight pants
- Knee length shorts. For females, they should be capris, Bermudas, boy length. Short shorts will draw unwanted attention and are not recommended, especially in Melghat
- Comfortable walking/hiking shoes
- Pair of sturdy shoes you won’t mind getting wet such as Chaco, Teva, Merrell, or Crocs
- Pair of shoes for bathing and walking, such as flip flops
- Rain gear, including a raincoat and an umbrella
- Hat
- Underwear and socks

**Personal and Miscellaneous Items**
- Toiletry articles, including most U.S. brands, are readily available in Pune
- Tampons (with applicators are not available in India)
- Sleeping bag if planning to stay in Melghat
- Portable toilet paper (Charmin makes travel rolls)
- Hand sanitizer
- Glasses or contact lenses + extra pair and copy of your prescription. Contact lens solution is expensive, so you might want to bring a semester's supply.
- Sunglasses
- Enough prescription medicine to last your stay and copies of prescriptions (with latin names)
- Medicine kit with basic items such as Band-Aids, antibiotic cream, aspirin, antihistamine, antacids, etc.
- Medicine for an upset stomach
- Gas-X dissolvable strips or chewable Pepto-Bismol, especially handy when traveling or eating roadside food.
- A bath towel and a beach towel (do not expect to use your host family's towels)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent containing DEET or mosquito net.
- Camera and appropriate and memory card
- Backpack for routine daily use
- Money belt
- Guidebook
- Water bottle
- Comfort candy or snacks
- Flashlight
- 230 V adapter
Packing Considerations

Host family gift
It is a wonderful gesture to take a gift to your host family in Pune. Choose something representative of your college, town, or culture, but keep it within a moderate price range. Here are some general recommendations:
- Specialty foods (wild rice from Minnesota, bread mix, your favorite cake/muffin mix)
- Fridge magnets
- Handmade sweets from your state or region
- Artwork from your area (small pottery, weaving, watercolors)

Items to help you with community interaction
Depending on where you may be placed, it may be a good idea to bring with you some items that will help you make friends with the community you will be working with. For example, students in the past have bought such items as a football (to play with the boys in Melghat) or nail polish and sewing kits (for girls), or drawing and craft material for school children in general. These should not cost a lot, and can help you break the ice and get started in your service learning work.

Luggage
While packing, keep in mind that you will leave India with more than you brought, and that airline luggage restrictions can be strict. You should also keep in mind that you will transport your luggage several times while in India and that a large suitcase with little wheels is not a good choice for crowded streets. Some students have recommended traveling with one traditional suitcase and a duffle bag or other loose floppy piece of luggage. When you pack your bags, include your name and the program address inside each bag in case it gets lost.

A word to the wise: put your essential documents, all your money, a few health care and toiletry items, prescription medication, corrective lenses and a change of clothes in your carry-on. Most lost luggage is found again, but you do not want to arrive in Pune with no clothing, no toothbrush, no Advil and a stress-induced headache. It is also a good idea to put valuables such as cameras and iPods in your carry-on luggage.

Clothing
Clothing is more complicated when you are in a new and varied culture. You may find that you are more comfortable in India wearing clothing that is more modest than you would typically wear in America. This can be a delicate balance—female students have explained that many women wear sleeveless blouses, but tank tops with spaghetti straps would be inappropriate. In addition, while more “American-style” clothing is often the norm in Pune, especially among college students, in rural Melghat, dress is likely to be a bit more conservative.

Bring cool and comfortable clothes that are easily washed and can take a certain amount of beating. Indian detergents and washing methods are hard on clothes; elastic will stretch and colors will fade, so don’t bring anything that you would hate to see destroyed by vigorous hand washing. Good cotton and permanent press wash up nicely. Cotton clothes are cool and dry quickly. Poly-cotton blends are the best. Some students have recommended linen garments. Past students have asked us to emphasize that jeans are okay! Some students buy and wear Indian clothes once they get to India to make them feel less conspicuous and less like American tourists. Indian clothes are also much more practical in rural settings or while traveling. Past students, however, remark that many Indian college-age students wear western
clothes. While pants and shirts are fine, women should not wear short skirts or skimp top. These clothes are not advisable for the type of work you will be undertaking.

With all of this in mind, DON'T OVERPACK. The old adage about packing everything and then getting rid of half of it is probably good advice.

**Passport Security**
*Do not pack your passport in your checked luggage since you will need to show it several times while in transit.*

Photocopy your passport (the page with the number and the place and date of issue) and carry it separately from your passport. Also bring a certified copy of your birth certificate. In case of a lost passport, these items will be necessary, and having any of these items sent from home can cause a significant delay. You will be responsible for any expenses incurred in case of loss of your passport.

Especially while you are traveling, it would be safest to keep your passport separate from your wallet in a money belt or other concealed carrier. That way, if you should lose your wallet, you won't have lost your passport as well. This is useful advice both for traveling to India and for travel within the country. While India is a safe country, pickpockets are becoming more common with the increase in tourism, and international airports are always popular spots for thieves.

**Arrival in India**

You should plan to arrive at the Pune airport on Saturday, June 16 by 7am. You will be met by a member of the ACM Pune staff at the airport. For security reasons, the staff will not be able to enter the airport proper. You will collect your bags and go through customs, and they will meet you in the reception area outside with signs. The first few nights in Pune will be spent at the Hotel Raviraj. If you do not arrive at the Pune airport during the specified hours, you will need to make arrangements to get to Hotel Raviraj yourself. If, for some reason, you do not or cannot arrive during these times, please notify the ACM office in Chicago or the ACM Pune staff immediately. (Please see the contact information at the back of this handbook.)

Once in Pune you will be staying in the Hotel Raviraj. This allows you to get to know the other students on the program before beginning the service learning component with Maitri. Living in one location at the start of the program also gives you some time to acclimate to the traffic, the rickshaws, and the cultural shifts that will occur upon your arrival in India. Students then transition to a host family until Friday. After the first week, students will begin their placement with an NGO, and depending on where that NGO is based (either Pune or Melghat), they will either continue to stay with their host families or travel to Melghat.

**Registration with the Police**
You should not have to register with the police due to the short nature of your stay in India.

**Registration with the American Consulate**
You should register online with the American Consulate in Mumbai once you arrive in Pune. You can do this at the ACM Pune office.
V. Host Country Information

No country in the world is as diverse as India, and every statement about its geography, people, climate, language, religion, economy, and even political system must be qualified by its opposite. The second most populated country in the world (after China), India's populace is divided along lines of caste, religion and language. There are 18 official languages, including English, and while the national census does not recognize ethnic groups or castes, recent estimates are that there are over 2,000 different ethnicities in India. In terms of religion, virtually every world religion is represented among its population, with Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, Christians, and even a small Jewish community. It boasts modern glass office buildings in its cities; shanty housing of tin, mud, and cardboard in its slums; and some of the most beautiful architecture in the world.

The history of the sub-continent goes back to 2,500 BCE, a time when Europeans were still in caves and Egyptians only beginning to build the remarkable monuments along the Nile. Successive waves of migrants and invaders introduced new peoples, languages, religions, and political systems to India, and by the time that the British began to establish their first trading posts in the seventeenth century and, ultimately, their overall authority two hundred years later, India was composed of a series of small princely states. Britain considered India to be the “jewel in the crown” of its empire, and no other colony, for better or for worse, received the level of attention and investment, in all sectors, that India did. Conversely, no other part of its empire has had the influence on modern British society and culture that India has exercised.

Independent since 1947, India today is at a crossroads in its development and faces important issues: While its economy has grown at an enviable pace since 1991, when many economic policies were liberalized, and its rate of population increase has declined, the benefits of this growth have been uneven and largely confined to specific sectors of its urban areas. The service sector comprises roughly half of the Indian economy, with the industrial and agricultural sectors sharing the remainder of the pie. The poor in villages in the rural areas have, by and large, not participated in this prosperity, and while some experts see village life as key to India’s future, for many at the present time it is only through migration to the cities that the cycle of poverty has been broken. The Indian agricultural sector remains outside the ring of growth and success, largely based on peasant labor and smallholder production. What the Indian economy most needs, according to at least one expert, are jobs in industries for semiskilled laborers, and this, unlike in China, is not occurring. India's advantage over China, on the other hand, is the widespread use of English, a factor that has led to the establishment of many offshore call centers.

Pune, where the ACM academic year program has been located since its establishment, demonstrates the contrasts in Indian economy and society today. A city of over three million, it is the home not only of one of India's oldest and most respected universities, the University of Pune, but also of many of its newest industries. It is second only to Bangalore in the number of high-tech firms and has headquarters for many drug and pharmaceutical companies. The Serum Institute, for example, supplies roughly half of the supply for the vaccines the United Nations provides to children all over the world. It also offers plazas, fast food shops, and a host of smaller businesses. Pune is in Maharashtra state, the second largest city after Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay), and with its inland location and somewhat higher altitude, has a much more pleasant climate than Mumbai. The rainy season will begin in June, most likely, and while the monsoon often turns Mumbai into a murky mess, Pune's rains are not as heavy. You can expect rain daily when you arrive, but typically it only pours for a short period before you can go out comfortably.
Melghat, in northern Maharashtra state, is a decidedly rural area, with no electricity, paved roads, or cell phone reception, and thus provides a contrast to the modern economy of Pune. Students will stay in dormitory-style accommodations (likely in community centers), as arranged by Maitri. Maitri’s projects in several villages in the Melghat area focus on watershed management, health, education, and sustainable livelihoods. Local coordinators (as well as students’ mentors) will provide assistance and guidance to ACM students, and can serve as a useful source of information about local customs and practices.
VI. Cultural Norms and Expectations

Although Indian society and individual families are becoming less conservative in mores and manners than they once were, you will find that, in comparison to U.S. society, it remains a very conservative place. This is true of Pune, and even more true in Melghat. While you will not be expected to get everything right and allowances will be made for you as a foreigner, common courtesy will go a long way to compensate for your lack of understanding and to ingratiate yourself with your host family and other Indians with whom you come in contact. For example, Indians generally greet other and say goodbye with their hands held together (as if in prayer), and say, “Namaste.” You should learn to do this as well.

The ACM Pune and Maitri staff are a good source of information about manners and behavior, and they will be discussing these with you in the on-site orientation when you first arrive. Here are some general tips, gathered from past ACM program participants and ACM and Maitri staff, to guide you while in India:

- Be sure to greet people when you enter a room or home. Rather than simply blurt out your request or question, take the time to greet others in the traditional fashion and ask how they are. You’ll find that people respond more favorably to you—and that, as a result, you’re more likely to have your request granted.
- If you live with a host family, they will provide breakfast and dinner for you, and if you plan to be away for a meal, please let your host family know in advance.
- Similarly, if you plan to be away from home overnight, let them know in advance where you’ll be and when you plan to return. Your host family will likely feel very protective of you and unless they know that you will be away, will be very worried if you do not return (or if you’re late). (Please discuss in advance any plans to be away from the program site with the Maitri coordinator, Vaishali Kanaskar.)
- In the past, Indian men and women have tended to be very circumspect publicly about their relations, although this is now changing somewhat and it is not unusual to see younger couples walking hand in hand on the street in Pune. (In Melghat, you will find less evidence of changing mores.) With your host family, you should be careful about touching a member of the opposite sex. Moreover, while in some host families it may be acceptable and even expected for a young woman to hug her host mother, in other families this may not be the custom. You will want to observe to learn what is appropriate and/or expected with your host family. And be sure to greet your host family members in the morning at breakfast and when you return home after the day’s classes or work.
- Despite the gradually changing mores in Indian society today, social restrictions on relations between the sexes in India are stricter than you are undoubtedly accustomed to in the United States. When living with the host family, we ask that you abide by their standards which may preclude even being alone with a member of the opposite sex. Don’t offend your family or place yourself in an inappropriate situation. Although you may think you are being discreet, remember that your high profile in Pune (and even more in Melghat) ensures that your actions will not remain confidential.

Culture Shock

No matter how much you prepare for your time abroad, however, there will be surprises, both good and bad. As one study abroad student said, “It doesn’t matter what you expect—it won’t be what you expect.” It’s not unnatural to go through a period soon after you arrive when you’re desperately homesick and everything Indian looks more foreign than you can bear. Often labeled as “culture shock,” these periods pass; for some, they come and go quickly, while for others, they may last longer.
In the first weeks when you arrive on site it is not uncommon to experience culture shock, surprise, dismay, and even anxiety at the cultural differences in a new location and the unfamiliar situations in which you find yourself. The on-site orientation program is intended to help ease this adjustment, and you will in all likelihood find yourself adapting to the new culture and situations in a surprisingly short time. You'll also likely discover that being able to settle in and "learn the ropes" can give you an enormous sense of self-confidence.

Research has shown that many students go through a three-step adjustment process in acclimating to their host country. In the first stage (once they have gotten over jet lag, if traveling internationally), they are likely to be excited and entranced by the novelty of being in a new location and delighted with most things around them. In the second stage once the initial euphoria has worn off, they may focus on the ways in which everything is different or "foreign." The tendency is to highlight the differences and compare them unfavorably to things at home—the food is bad, the computer facilities are inferior, services are badly organized, etc. During the third stage, their view of home and their program location is more nuanced—they are likely to take a more analytic approach to both locations and to find good and bad things in each.

As a student abroad, you will undoubtedly feel uncomfortable at times, especially in the beginning, and likely hear your fellow students expressing similar responses. This is not unusual, and we anticipate that after a time these feelings of discomfort and insecurity will dissipate. We encourage you to speak with the program director and other on-site staff about your concerns and to raise any questions about the host country and the new culture to which you are learning to adapt.
VII. Health and Safety

During your time in Pune, you will be living in a larger city than that of your home college for the first week and in a more rural area during your service learning placement, if you choose to stay in Melghat. In both settings you’ll find clear contrasts to what you have become comfortable with at home. In Pune, some of the differences, particularly with regard to safety, are due to the fact that you’re in an urban setting with risks like those of other large urban areas. In the rural areas such as Melghat, where traffic is not as daunting as in Pune, the hazards will be largely related to health-related risks that are endemic to tropical areas of the world, including India, and are, by and large, preventable.

For information about health and safety in India as a whole, two very useful websites are those of the U.S. Department of State and the Centers for Disease Control. These can be found at:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1139.html (The Consular Information Sheet contains information about visa requirements, safety and crime, and road conditions, among other things, while the Background Notes are more like an almanac entry, providing a summary of Indian politics, history, the economy, and basic statistics.)

Health

In addition to the pre-departure preparations for managing your health while in India, you need to take precautions to maintain your health in India. Probably the biggest risk to your health in India is from badly prepared food (e.g., undercooked) and untreated water, leading to stomach and intestinal upsets. As part of your preparation to go abroad, please read carefully information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) about medical conditions in India and the recommended precautions for Americans traveling to South Asia. The CDC pages on travel in India recommend not only monitoring what you drink and eat, but also using hand sanitizer.

Other health risks in India include malaria and AIDS. Malaria is present outside of Pune, for example, and particularly in the rainy season. When traveling in an area where it is present, you should take your malaria prophylaxis regularly, wear long sleeves, and use insect repellent. Be aware too that AIDS is a risk, and spread most often through unprotected heterosexual intercourse. It is incurable, but preventable, and safe sex is a must.

Pune has very good medical facilities, and if you need to see a doctor while you are on the program, ACM and/or Maitri staff will be able to give you the names of doctors and clinics where students have been treated in the past and who work with the HTH insurance. You should be aware that, in case of illness or injury involving hospitalization or a series of visits to a doctor’s office, ACM reserves the right to inform the person you designated as an emergency contact.

If you take one or more prescriptions drugs regularly, you will want to be sure you can continue this medication while abroad. Speak with your physician about the possibility of obtaining a supply to take with you. (And please make sure to keep it in its original container, and in your carry-on luggage.) If you cannot get a supply to take with you, you will want to see if this medication can be obtained in India and to have the generic name. You should not plan to have drugs (of any kind) sent to you while abroad.
Insurance
ACM will provide health insurance coverage for all students participating in its programs. This coverage is through HTH Worldwide, a company with long experience and excellent service in providing health coverage for students abroad.

The policy with HTH provides a broad range of coverage for students’ medical treatment while abroad. Here are several key features of the coverage:

- Coverage for both routine office visits and hospitalization;
- No exclusion for mental disorders or alcohol-related accidents or illnesses;
- Coverage for prescription drugs (excluding preventative medications such as Malaria prophylaxis);
- No exclusion for pre-existing conditions (except in the case of pregnancies beginning before the start of the program);
- Medical evacuation coverage (but not taxi fares); and
- No deductible.

The policy will cover students from the day before the start of the program through the day after the program ends, and thus be in effect for the time students travel to and from their programs. It covers you not only while you are in the host country, but also during any time you may travel away from the program site.

The policy, however, should **not** replace any coverage you have in the U.S., nor should you discontinue your American health insurance coverage—it provides only limited amounts of coverage for follow-up treatment of illnesses or injuries which begin while you are abroad and only for up to 60 days.

The cost of this coverage is included in your program fee, and ACM will handle your registration for the insurance. It is also possible for you to purchase independently additional coverage to extend the days that you will be covered by the ACM policy. The cost of this additional coverage is approximately $10/week. HTH will email students a welcome letter and an ID card a few weeks prior to departure; the welcome letter will describe how to log on to www.hthstudents.com to view the tools available to policyholders and to purchase any additional coverage. (You will need the ID number provided in the card and also a credit card to which the cost of the additional coverage can be billed. It is also possible to purchase the additional coverage by phone.)

Safety

Pune is a modern and safe city, and India a hospitable and secure country. Like any place else in the world, however, there is some crime and random violence, but most of it is preventable or avoidable with appropriate caution. You should be especially careful when you first arrive in Pune and everything is unfamiliar. You’ll find traffic to be more congested and also faster than on the streets of, say, Northfield or Galesburg. The biggest difference you’re likely to notice, and immediately, is that traffic is on the left rather than the right side of the road, and all your instincts as a pedestrian will need to be adjusted. You’ll want to consciously train yourself to expect traffic to be coming from the opposite direction. ACM and Maitri staff, as well as your host family, are helpful sources of information about safety, and you’ll find it useful to consult with them. In Melghat, while there will be less traffic on the unpaved roads, you will still need to train yourself for traffic on the left rather than the right.
While participating in the India Summer program, you will be a foreign guest in India and will be expected to conform to the standards of Indian society. Keep in mind that you are subject to all Indian laws and that your visa can be revoked for infractions deemed serious by the Indian government. As a member of the ACM-sponsored group, you are very visible in Pune (and even more so in Melghat). Your actions will reflect on the program and could jeopardize the position and legal status of the program. ACM has been in Pune for forty years and has carefully cultivated good relations with people in India; illegal or inappropriate actions can imperil both yourself and the program. The following issues have been identified by program staff as potentially problematic.

- **Theft:** Some ACM students have been the victims of theft. Be careful, especially while traveling on trains and buses, as foreigners are an easy target. Carry your passport and money under your clothes and take the same precautions you would in an American city. If anything of value is lost or stolen, report it to the nearest police station, as well as to ACM staff. (Sometimes parents’ homeowners’ insurance policies can cover lost property, so it is essential that you get a police report for the insurance company.) As a precaution, keep a xerox copy of your passport and visa, police registration papers; also, make a list of credit card numbers and serial numbers from any electronic equipment.

- **Political Involvement:** Politics in India can be extremely volatile and sometimes violent. Any participation in political organizations, rallies, etc. will be in violation of your visa and could lead to deportation as well as endangering the program’s educational status. In addition, you may be placing yourself in physical danger.

- **Money Changing:** Black market money changing is illegal and can lead to deportation.

- **Drugs and Alcohol:** As in the United States, recreational drugs are illegal in India. The program or the U.S. consulate can do very little for you if you are caught in possession of illegal substances. And keep in mind too that excessive alcohol consumption impairs your judgment and can put you at risk; moreover, it is offensive to your host family and casts an unfavorable light on you and the ACM program.

- **Travel:** Parts of India and the surrounding countries have been plagued by communal violence and terrorism at times, so it is essential to keep yourself informed about the current political situation and any U.S. State Department or Indian travel advisories. You should consult with the program staff about travel plans, and abide by their recommendations about places to avoid. Do not travel alone; accidents can happen, and it is vital to have someone to assist you in case of trouble. *It is absolutely prohibited to operate a motor vehicle while in India.*

**Serious infractions are punishable with expulsion from the program.**
### VIII. Housing Arrangements

The housing arrangements are integral to your stay in India. Whether you are placed with an Indian family or living in a community facility, you will have an important window into the community where you will be working. As much as your service learning placement, the housing arrangement demands a level of commitment and work (not to mention sensitivity) to make the arrangement work. The host families feel responsible for the students placed in their homes (in their “care,” as many of them see it) and in return expect that students will treat them with the respect and courtesy they expect of their own sons and daughters. Similarly, in the community building, you will be living in the heart of the community, and there will be a great deal of curiosity (and notice taken) about you. You will likely find that the level of privacy is very different from what you expect and have at home.

No matter how much you prepare for the difference between college study on your home campus and your experience in India, there will be surprises and adjustments to make. The success of your stay will depend upon your ability to observe and adapt to a lifestyle very different from what you are accustomed to. Past participants have emphasized that this is crucial. The differences you encounter will include food, household routine, amount of privacy and personal space, and protocol. You may also hear political attitudes you’ve never heard at home. Sensitive areas may be some of your family members’ views of feminism, poverty, and Dalit (formerly labeled ‘untouchables’) issues. You may need to remind yourself that you are a guest in India, and that it is your responsibility to make adjustments to a different way of life.

If you are staying in an Indian household, you should keep in mind the courtesy expected of a guest. No matter what country you’re in, it’s polite to let your hosts know when you’re going out and when you’ll be back. Try to establish a schedule which does not disrupt your host family’s routine. Find out when you’re expected to be present for meals and other family events, and find out what your household responsibilities are. Being constantly alert to what is going on around you is tiring at first, especially where using a foreign language means that just speaking requires effort.

In all this, we remind you that your housing arrangements are an important source of experiential learning. The experience may make you recognize preconceived notions about contemporary India. It may sensitize you to cultural differences more subtle than you had anticipated. It will most certainly challenge you to see life from someone else’s point of view and to stretch your own culturally-shaped perceptions. It will not necessarily be a simple task, but you will be richly rewarded if you are open to exploring the possibilities for learning that surround you in India.

If you are encountering difficulties with your host family or other housing arrangements, please speak with the Maitri Program Coordinator, Vaishali Kanaskar, or a local Maitri staff member about your concerns or problems. They may be able to offer provide insight into your concerns and offer suggestions for resolving matters.
IX. ACM Program Rules and Policies

The Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) is a consortium of 14 small liberal arts colleges in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Colorado. ACM’s programs reflect the academic standards and policies of its member colleges, and the standards and rules in the paragraphs which follow are applicable for all of ACM’s off-campus study programs. Please remember that these are academic programs: it is not appropriate to miss classes for because you are traveling or hosting visitors; students are expected to participate in all program activities unless otherwise excused. Nor is it possible to make special arrangements to accommodate students who wish to leave the program before the last day.

Program Fees and Refunds

Program Costs
The total amount students must pay to participate in an off-campus study program varies from college to college, as does the availability of financial aid for off-campus study. These campus policies are often based on the specific curricular goals established at each college. Depending on the policies of a student’s home college, charges for off-campus study may be based upon the program’s tuition, or may be based upon the college’s own tuition. Additionally, some colleges may assess special fees for off-campus study. ACM students should therefore check with the Off-Campus Study and Financial Aid offices to confirm how their college charges students for off-campus study programs, what additional campus fees may apply, and what financial aid may be used toward the cost of their program.

Confirmation Deposit
Once accepted into an ACM Off-Campus Study Program, a $400 deposit is required. This deposit reserves your spot on the program and must be received by ACM within 15 days of your receipt of acceptance materials. It is credited toward the program fee and is non-refundable. Students who do not submit the deposit within the time frame risk losing their spot on the off-campus study program.

For the Chicago and Newberry programs, an additional sum of $200 for the housing deposit is required. This deposit is refundable upon completion of the program provided that no additional cleaning or special repairs are required.

Costs Not Included
For a breakdown of costs covered by the program fee and those costs which are additional, please see the cost worksheet for your program. Typically the program costs (educational costs plus program fee) cover tuition, program-sponsored excursions and site visits, housing, and some group activities. Unless specified, it usually does not include the costs of transportation to and from the program site, meals, passport and visa fees, and personal expenses; these costs are the student’s responsibility.

Financial and Scholarship Aid
You are responsible for making sure that any financial or scholarship aid is appropriately applied to the off-campus study program. Please check with your college’s Financial Aid office to confirm your financial aid package for your term of off-campus study.

Refunds and Withdrawal Policy
ACM makes significant financial commitments on your behalf well before the start of the program. You are required to send a deposit of $400 within 15 days of acceptance and the $400 is non-refundable; it cannot be returned if you cancel. If you cancel after depositing, you will be billed for all
unrecoverable expenses we have incurred on your behalf. Depending on the program and timing of your 
cancellation, these unrecoverable expenses could amount to several thousand dollars. If you are 
considering cancelling your participation, we urge you to contact the ACM Program Associate to inquire 
about the unrecoverable expenses to date for your program. Your cancellation will be effective the date 
that you notify ACM, in writing, of your withdrawal. The following schedule is in effect:

For students who apply in the spring for a fall program: Students are expected to deposit by April 
15. If, having paid the program deposit, you cancel on or before May 15, you will forfeit 
your deposit and be charged for any unrecoverable expenses. If you cancel after May 15, 
ACM will bill your college any unrecoverable expenses and an administrative fee; your 
deposit will not be refunded.

For students who apply in the spring for a spring program: Students are expected to deposit by 
April 15. If you cancel on or before September 1, you will forfeit your deposit and be 
charged for any unrecoverable expenses. If you cancel after September 1, ACM will bill 
your college any unrecoverable expenses and an administrative fee; your deposit will not 
be refunded.

For students who apply in the fall for a spring program: Students are expected to deposit by 
November 15. Because of the short time between application and the start of the program, 
we begin making arrangements as soon as you have deposited. If you cancel after 
November 15, ACM will bill your college any unrecoverable expenses and an administrative 
fee; your deposit will not be refunded.

If you withdraw from a program on or after the day students are expected to arrive on site or are asked to 
leave a program for cause, the program fee cannot be refunded. ACM will work with your home college to 
determine what portion, if any, of the tuition money may be refunded. Please be aware as well that your 
college may apply other financial penalties for such a withdrawal.

Evaluations and Surveys

Over the course of the program, you will be asked to complete questionnaires at several intervals. These 
surveys allow us to better understand the impact that off-campus study has on students and to use 
feedback from you to make improvements in our programs. Rather than simply spring these on you from 
time to time, we’d like to give you a sense of the total, of what you can expect to be asked and how your 
responses will be used. **In all cases, your responses will be anonymous.**

- Prior to the start of the program, you will be asked to complete an on-line survey that is part of a 
broader national research project in which ACM is participating. The purpose of this survey, 
which asks about your background, attitudes, and responses to specific scenarios, is to enable us 
to measure the broad impact of off-campus study on students. Students often say that the 
personal growth that results from off-campus study is the most important part of the experience, 
but our evidence for this is largely anecdotal. Your participation in this survey will provide us 
with data on the impact of off-campus study. Your responses will not be available to program staff 
and will have no impact on your grades. We ask that you answer as honestly and realistically as 
possible—there are no right or wrong answers. At the end of the program, shortly before you 
return home, you’ll be asked to complete a follow-up survey, thus providing a "pre" and “post” 
picture about yourself and your experiences. We anticipate that the survey will require 
approximately 30 minutes of your time.
• After the first month of the program, ACM will ask you to complete a mid-program evaluation, also on-line, which asks for your feedback on such aspects of the program as ACM’s assistance in preparing you to go abroad, pre-departure and on-site orientation, and the extent to which the program to date is meeting your goals for off-campus study. Your responses enable us to assess the effectiveness of our materials and services in the critical first weeks of the program and to make any necessary changes. Summaries of responses (but not individual responses) for each of our program sites will be shared with program staff and faculty, and with faculty advisors at ACM campuses. This survey will require approximately 15 minutes to complete.

• At the mid-point in your program, you will be given a short survey in each of your courses which asks you four short questions about the course. Your feedback allows the instructor to assess his/her effectiveness and provides an opportunity for changes in the course if appropriate. Your responses, which will be collected by one of your fellow program students, are for the instructor alone and will not be shared with ACM program site or Chicago office staff.

• Shortly before the end of the program, you will be asked to complete a final, on-line survey about the program. The program director will set aside time for you to do this, and as with the mid-program evaluation, your responses will enable us to review program arrangements and course offerings and make any necessary changes for future programs. As with course evaluations on your home campuses, a summary of responses are shared with program instructors and staff only after the program is complete and your grades have been submitted. Faculty advisors at ACM campuses will also receive the summary. This survey will require approximately 20 minutes of your time.

• At the conclusion of the program (in some cases before you leave the program), all students will be asked to complete the “post-program” survey that complements the “pre-program” survey about your experience, attitudes, and reactions to specific scenarios you took at the beginning of the program. As with the first survey, it should require approximately 30 minutes of your time. And we’ll be glad to share with you what we learn in this projects as we gather data over several semesters; we think you’ll find it interesting.

Thank you for your help in this. We need your feedback!

ACM Policy on Academics: International Programs

All academic pursuit depends on trust. All of us, teachers and students alike, should be able to trust that we will be treated with honesty and respect—respect for our ideas and for us as persons. Many things can corrode that trust, including incivility and rudeness to fellow students, instructors, and on-site staff. As participants in an ACM program, you will be expected to conduct yourself with the same level of honesty and openness as you do on your home campuses.

The following academic policies apply to all students participating in an ACM international program:

1. **Arrival and departure dates.** Students should make travel reservations to arrive at the program site on the date specified in the program handbook. Similarly, students should plan their itineraries to remain at the program site through the last day of the program. ACM is unable to accommodate students who request to arrive early, later or depart earlier.

2. **Course load.** All students are required to carry the full load of courses and credits as determined for the ACM program in which they are enrolled.

3. **Class attendance and participation.** Students are expected to attend and participate fully in all classroom sessions, site visits, and field trips. Instructors typically take into account attendance and class participation when assigning final grades.
4. **Pass/fail deadlines.** Students may elect to take a class or classes on a pass/fail basis. This decision must be made in the first week of class; the program director will provide each student with a form on which to record the choice. It is not possible to elect pass/fail or to reverse the decision after the first week of class. (In making the choice to take a class pass/fail, students should inform themselves of their home school's policy regarding pass/fail classes taken off-campus.)

5. **Completion of course work.** All class assignments (including final papers, projects, and exams) should be completed and submitted before the end of the program. Any assignments or work not submitted before the final day of the program will receive a “0” and this will be factored into the final grade for the course. ACM does not record/report an “Incomplete” grade for courses.

6. **Academic honesty.** Actions of dishonesty are destructive of the well-being of the academic community, and ACM responds to them vigorously. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic theft will result in a failing grade for that assignment and may result in failure for the course. Extremely serious incidents of cheating or other actions destructive to the classroom community may result in expulsion from the program. Instructors who encounter plagiarism or other forms of cheating in an ACM program will report such episodes to the Program Officer, who will share that information with the home campus. The home campus may, in turn, wish to respond with its own disciplinary procedures.

7. **Final exams and presentations.** ACM cannot make special arrangements for a student or students to take a final exam or make a final presentation at a time different from that set by the instructor for the course.

8. **Graduating seniors.** Students who expect to graduate at the end of the term of the ACM program should discuss graduation requirements with an advisor at their home school prior to the start of the program. If there are special arrangements to be made (e.g., if grades need to be reported by a specific date), students should share this information with the ACM program director at the beginning of the program.

9. **Retention of syllabi, course work, and other course-related materials.** Because home campus advisors may wish to review course work to determine how to assign credit for a particular course or courses taken abroad (and because, occasionally, course grades can be misreported), it is important that students bring back to their home campuses all materials from courses taken abroad. This is particularly important for courses taught by an on-site (i.e., non-ACM) faculty member, where it may be difficult to contact the faculty member after the semester or program has ended.

**ACM Policy on Sexual Harassment**

**Policy**

It has been and remains the policy of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) that sexual harassment of students and employees is prohibited. Violation of this policy may result in discipline or dismissal of students or discipline and discharge of employees. However, allegations of sexual harassment are serious and may be extremely prejudicial to the alleged offender. Accordingly, allegations not made in good faith may subject the complainant to disciplinary action.
Sexual Harassment Defined
Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature when (1) submitting or refusing to submit to such conduct is used as a basis for any decision affecting an individual’s academic status or employment, or (2) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Grievance Procedure
Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment has recourse to informal and formal grievance procedures designed for the purpose of investigation and resolution of such allegations. Informal grievance resolution is encouraged although not required prior to initiating the formal grievance procedure.

As a preliminary matter, any student who believes that she or he has been sexually harassed should report the incident promptly to any of the following:

- Director of the program in which the student is enrolled or other appropriate local staff or faculty member
- Director of Office Campus Study
- Director of Chicago Programs
- Vice-President of ACM

Assistance in presenting a grievance may be obtained from another employee or student. However, attorneys or other third persons may not participate in any facet of the grievance procedure unless ACM and all interested parties otherwise agree.

Informal Procedure
An informal procedure is designed to resolve sexual harassment allegations without having to invoke the formal grievance procedure. This can be initiated through contact with any of the staff named above. The goal is to resolve the problem through discussion with the student, the alleged offender, and any other relevant persons. The student and/or staff member grievance officer may elect to terminate the informal procedure if it appears that no progress is being made in resolving the dispute and initiate a formal procedure.

Formal Procedure
1. Students who wish to lodge a formal complaint must sign and submit it in writing to any staff members named above within 120 days of the alleged harassment.
2. Thereafter, the President of ACM (or if the President is the alleged offender, the Chair of the Board of Directors) shall assign a grievance officer to investigate the complaint and report his/her findings to a grievance board comprised of the President, the investigating grievance officer, and one other grievance officer selected by the President. No employee accused of harassment may serve on the grievance board.
3. The investigation shall include interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, who shall be informed of the allegations against him/her, and other relevant persons. The grievance board may supplement the investigating officer's investigation by itself conducting interviews and reviewing relevant evidence.
4. Within 21 days after the investigation concludes, the grievance board shall decide by majority vote whether the complaint allegations are supported by substantial credible evidence. It shall then inform the complainant and alleged offender of its decision.
5. Any disciplinary or other corrective action resulting from a violation of this policy shall be determined in accordance with ACM disciplinary procedures.
Third Party Harassment
Any student who has been sexually harassed by a third party (i.e., vendor, guest speaker, internship setting) should report the incident promptly to any grievance officer who will then investigate and attempt to resolve the problem.

Confidentiality
All complaints and investigations of sexual harassment shall be handled in a confidential manner and shall be disclosed only to persons having a legitimate need to know. Grievances and documents will be maintained separately from other student files.

Non-Retaliation
Complaints made in good faith under this policy shall not result in any adverse action against the complainant, nor shall any person who participates in good faith in an investigation be treated adversely because of such participation.

Nothing in this policy precludes an individual from pursuing any legal remedies available to him/her.

ACM Policy on Personal Abuse

Personal abuse, whether oral, written, or physical, exceeds the bounds of appropriate discourse and civil conduct. Harassment of another because of his/her race, sexual orientation, ethnic background, religion, expression of opinion, or other personal characteristics is prohibited. ACM students who engage in such behavior may be disciplined and/or dismissed from a program.

ACM Policy on Dual Relationships

A dual relationship is one in which the faculty/staff member has both a professional and a romantic or sexual relationship with a student. This includes relationships which appear to be mutually consensual. However, the inherent inequality of power between student and faculty/staff creates an unacceptable conflict of interest in a supervisory, educational or advisory context. For this reason, dual relationships between faculty/staff and students who participate in the same program should be avoided. If a relationship nonetheless develops, the faculty/staff member is expected to remove him/herself from supervisory or advisory responsibility for that student, or face disciplinary action.

ACM Policy on Discrimination

The Associated Colleges of the Midwest does not discriminate in the operation of its educational programs, activities, or employment on the basis of sex, race, creed, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability.
Personal Information “Opt-Out” Form

In accordance with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, a student’s education records are maintained as confidential by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) and, except for a limited number of special circumstances listed in that law, will not be released to a third party without the student’s prior written consent. FERPA regulations do allow the ACM to release limited “directory information” at any time, without obtaining the prior consent of the student. The ACM does not provide directory information to third parties for commercial purposes. Provisions of FERPA allow the institution to define certain classes of information as “directory information,” and the ACM has determined that the following student information is considered directory information:

- Name
- College/university
- E-mail address
- Off-campus study program
- Semester/term of off-campus study
- Awards, honors

Additionally, throughout the duration of ACM off-campus study programs, ACM representatives may take photographs, make video or audio recordings, or write articles about program participants and/or activities that involve program participants. Many student participants and associated faculty and staff may also take photos and videos, write articles, or maintain blogs for their own personal use, which they frequently share with the ACM. The ACM also shares short excerpts of student work, such as titles and overviews of projects and brief research abstracts. These images, recordings, excerpts, and accounts are regularly collected for the primary purpose of highlighting and showcasing the ACM via our website, posters, brochures, and other educational marketing materials. (Note: The ACM will never publish full accounts of student projects or research or use student photographs, video, or audio recordings without specific permission from the student in question.)

If you do not want the ACM to release your directory information, use your likeness in photos or recordings, or share excerpts of your work without your prior consent, you may choose to “opt-out” by making a copy and signing the form below. Requests can only be made via this form, which must be completed and returned to the ACM prior to participation in the program, to be applicable to that semester/term and for subsequent periods of time. Students wishing to reverse this decision may complete and submit the revocation section of the form below.

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I request the withholding of the following personally identifiable information, associated with my participation in an off-campus study program through the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM). I understand that upon submission of this form, the information checked will not be released or used for ACM promotional purposes without my written consent or unless the ACM is required by law or permitted under FERPA to release such information without my prior written consent; and that the checked information will not otherwise be released or used from the time the ACM receives my form until my opt-out request is rescinded. I further understand that if any of the information checked below is released or used prior to the ACM receiving my opt-out request, the ACM may not be able to stop the disclosure of this information.

CHECK ALL BOXES THAT APPLY:

- Name
- College/university
- E-mail address
- Off-campus study program
- Semester/term of off-campus study
- Awards, honors
- Use of likeness in ACM recordings (photos, video, audio, written articles)
- Use of short excerpts of student work (titles, overviews, and abstracts)
- All items listed above

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Name (please print)  Signature   Date

RESCISSION OF OPT-OUT REQUEST

I, the above named student, hereby rescind my request to opt-out from the release of the information indicated above.

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Signature   Date