DISCLAIMER

The Country Orientation Guides are provided as a service for faculty travelling to international destinations for teaching purposes. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in the Country Orientation Guides, neither the Office of Training nor the Fischler School of Education and Human Services at Nova Southeastern University can accept responsibility for any errors that may appear in information, editorial content, maps, text, representation, or illustrations as printed. The publisher does accept any responsibility for content of editorial. Additional copies of this publication may be obtained in the Office of International Affairs at the Fischler School of Education and Human Services in North Miami Beach.
# Table of Contents

**Disclaimer** ................................................................................................................................................. 1

**Welcome** .................................................................................................................................................. 3

- NSU Emergency Contact ..................................................................................................................... 4
- Passport Issues .................................................................................................................................... 5
- Weather Information ............................................................................................................................ 6
- Central Intelligence Agency - *The World Factbook* ........................................................................... 6
- TSA Travel Tips .................................................................................................................................... 7
- Useful Phone Numbers .......................................................................................................................... 8
- Lost & Found .......................................................................................................................................... 8
- US Department of State - Tips for Traveling Abroad .......................................................................... 9
- U.S. Customs Restrictions – What You Cannot Bring Back With You .................................................. 10

**Country Overview** ................................................................................................................................ 11

- Banking ................................................................................................................................................ 11
- Communication ................................................................................................................................... 12
- Documents Needed .............................................................................................................................. 12
- Electricity ............................................................................................................................................... 13
- Emergencies .......................................................................................................................................... 13
- Holidays ................................................................................................................................................. 14
- Safety ................................................................................................................................................... 15
- Time Zone ............................................................................................................................................. 15
- Transportation ...................................................................................................................................... 16
- Water .................................................................................................................................................... 16

**Academic System** ..................................................................................................................................... 16

- Structure of School System .................................................................................................................. 16
- K-12 ..................................................................................................................................................... 17
- Higher Education ................................................................................................................................. 17
- Professor/Student Relationship .......................................................................................................... 17
- Teacher Education ............................................................................................................................... 17

**Etiquette** .................................................................................................................................................... 18

- Cultural Orientation .............................................................................................................................. 18
- Business Practices ................................................................................................................................. 18
- Protocol .................................................................................................................................................. 19
- Tipping ................................................................................................................................................... 19

**References** ............................................................................................................................................... 20
Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you very much for accepting to teach in Singapore!

The Office of International Affairs (OIA) at the Fischler School of Education and Human Services has prepared this country guide to provide you with basic and general information on the country you are about to visit.

This guide is intended to help you prepare for your trip. As you travel in the country, please let us know if you find that there are details that need to be added or changed so that we can keep our guides updated. Although we have tried to make it as comprehensive as possible, all of us know that our world moves very rapidly and changes happen everyday; however, we have tried our best to include all of the details you need to make sure you are comfortable in your new environment.

This information has been compiled with the help of the Office of Strategic Initiatives and Global Enterprises for Academic Development (SIGEAD), and the contribution from the OIA team members and our Field Associates and Regional Liaisons around the world. To all of them, and to you, thank you very much for helping these programs become as successful as they are today, and as a result, for making a difference in our students' lives, wherever they are located.

Have a wonderful experience and please be sure to meet with us upon your return so we can discuss your experience and solicit your input for future cohorts. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be any assistance to your prior to your departure, or while you are teaching.

Bon voyage!

Anthony DeNapoli, Dean of International Affairs
Alejandra Parra, Associate Dean of International Affairs
### NSU Emergency Contact

#### Contact at the Office of International Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office Phone</th>
<th>Cell Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Travel Office Numbers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Travel Office 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.</th>
<th>Office Phone</th>
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<tr>
<td>Office-954-262-8888</td>
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Travel Office (ONLY after contacting airline or hotel directly)- 1-800-809-8858

There is a charge of $20 if you contact this number.
Passport Issues
A passport is an internationally recognized travel document that verifies the identity and nationality of the bearer. A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and leave most foreign countries. Only the U.S. Department of State has the authority to grant, issue, or verify United States passports.

The Passport Services Office provides information and services to American citizens about how to obtain, replace or change a passport.

To obtain a passport for the first time, you need to go in person to one of over 9,000 passport acceptance facilities located throughout the United States with two photographs of yourself, proof of U.S. citizenship, and a valid form of photo identification such as a driver’s license.

Acceptance facilities include many Federal, state and probate courts, post offices, some public libraries and a number of county and municipal offices. There are also 13 regional passport agencies, and 1 Gateway City Agency, which serve customers who are traveling within 2 weeks (14 days), or who need foreign visas for travel. Appointments are required in such cases.

You will need to apply in person if you are applying for a U.S. passport for the first time:

- If your expired U.S. passport is not in your possession;
- If your previous U.S. passport has expired and was issued more than 15 years ago;
- If your previous U.S. passport was issued when you were under age 16;
- Or if your current valid U.S. passport has been lost or stolen.

*To obtain more information on obtaining a passport please visit
http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_832.html

*To renew an existing passport please visit
http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/renew/renew_833.html
Weather Information
For weather information on specific countries please visit:
http://worldweather.wmo.int/

Central Intelligence Agency-The World Factbook

The World Factbook provides valuable geographic and demographic information. For more information on individual countries, please visit:

TSA Travel Tips

Make Your Trip Better Using 3-1-1

3-1-1 for carry-ons =

- 3 ounce bottle or less (by volume);
- 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag;
- 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin.

One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. 3 oz. container size is a security measure.

Consolidate bottles into one bag and X-ray separately to speed screening.

Be prepared. Each time TSA searches a carry-on it slows down the line. Practicing 3-1-1 will ensure a faster and easier checkpoint experience.

3-1-1 is for short trips. If in doubt, put your liquids in checked luggage.

Declare larger liquids. Medications, baby formula and food, breast milk, and juice are allowed in reasonable quantities exceeding three ounces and are not required to be in the zip-top bag. Declare these items for inspection at the checkpoint.

Come early and be patient. Heavy travel volumes and the enhanced security process may mean longer lines at security checkpoints.

TSA working with our partners. TSA works with airlines and airports to anticipate peak traffic and be ready for the traveling public.
Useful Phone Numbers
Sources of information include:

U.S. Dept. of State Travel Advisory: tel. 202-647-5225 (manned 24 hr.)

U.S. Passport Agency: tel. 202-647-0518

U.S. Centers for Disease Control International Traveler's Hotline: tel. 404-332-4559

Lost & Found
Be sure to tell all of your credit card companies the minute you discover your wallet has been lost or stolen, and file a report at the nearest police precinct. Your credit card company or insurer may require a police report number or record of the loss. Most credit card companies have an emergency toll-free number to call if your card is lost or stolen; they may be able to wire you a cash advance immediately or deliver an emergency credit card in a day or two. To report a lost or stolen

**American Express** - To protect your information, you can only report a lost or stolen card by calling American Express Customer Service at 1-800-992-3404. Outside the United States call, collect 336-393-1111.

**Diners Club** - Call Diners Club Customer Service at 1-800-234-6377. Outside the United States call, collect 702-797-5532.


If you need emergency cash over the weekend when all banks and American Express offices are closed, you can have money wired to you via **Western Union**. Call tel. 1-800-325-6000 www.westernunion.com.

Identity theft and fraud are potential complications of losing your wallet, especially if you have lost your driver's license along with your cash and credit cards. Notify the major credit-reporting bureaus immediately; placing a fraud alert on your records may protect you against liability for criminal activity. The three major U.S. credit-reporting agencies are **Equifax** (tel. 800-766-0008; www.equifax.com), **Experian** (tel. 888-397-3742; www.experian.com), and **TransUnion** (tel. 800-680-7289; www.transunion.com). Finally, if you have lost all forms of photo ID, call your airline and explain the situation; they might allow you to board the plane if you have a copy of your passport or birth certificate and a copy of the police report you have filed.
Here are some quick tips to make your travel easier and safer:

- **Register so the State Department can better assist you in an emergency**: Register your travel plans with the State Department through a free online service at [https://travelregistration.state.gov](https://travelregistration.state.gov). This will help us contact you if there is a family emergency in the U.S., or if there is a crisis where you are traveling. In accordance with the Privacy Act, information on your welfare and whereabouts will not be released to others without your express authorization.

- **Sign passport, and fill in the emergency information**: Make sure you have a signed, valid passport, and a visa, if required, and fill in the emergency information page of your passport.

- **Leave copies of itinerary and passport data page**: Leave copies of your itinerary, passport data page and visas with family or friends, so you can be contacted in case of an emergency.

- **Check your overseas medical insurance coverage**: Ask your medical insurance company if your policy applies overseas, and if it covers emergency expenses such as medical evacuation. If it does not, consider supplemental insurance.

- **Familiarize yourself with local conditions and laws**: While in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws. The State Department web site at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html) has useful safety and other information about the countries you will visit.

- **Take precautions to avoid being a target of crime**: To avoid being a target of crime, do not wear conspicuous clothing or jewelry and do not carry excessive amounts of money. Also, do not leave unattended luggage in public areas and do not accept packages from strangers.

- **Contact us in an emergency**: Consular personnel at U.S. Embassies and Consulates abroad and in the U.S. are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide emergency assistance to U.S. citizens. Contact information for U.S. Embassies and Consulates appears on the Bureau of Consular Affairs website at [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov). Also, note that the Office of Overseas Citizen Services in the State Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs may be reached for assistance with emergencies at 1-888-407-4747, if calling from the U.S. or Canada, or 202-501-4444, if calling from overseas.
U.S. Customs Restrictions – What You Cannot Bring Back With You

Some items may not be brought into the U.S., or may only be brought in under certain restrictions. For information on U.S. customs regulations and procedures, see the Customs and Border Protection booklet “Know Before You Go,” available at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg.

Customs and Border Patrol Top 10 Travelers Tips

1. Have all required travel documents for the countries you are visiting, as well as identification for re-entry to the U.S.
2. Declare everything you are bringing in from abroad, even if you bought it in a duty-free shop. This merchandise is also subject to U.S. duty fees and other restrictions.
3. Be cautious when buying something from a street vendor. Keep in mind that the merchandise may be counterfeit and/or unsafe and you might have to surrender it to U.S. Customs and Border Protection when you get home.
4. Know that the things bought abroad for personal use or as gifts are eligible for duty exemptions. If you are bringing them back for resale, they are not.
5. Know the difference between prohibited merchandise (such as ivory, tortoise shell products, absinthe, and counterfeit items) and restricted merchandise.
6. Be aware that many foreign-made medications are not FDA-approved, and you cannot bring them into the U.S. Also, when traveling abroad, bring only the amount of medication you will need during the trip.
7. Do not bring any Cuban-made products into the U.S., not matter where you purchased them.
8. Do not bring any food into the U.S. without first checking to see if it is permitted. Also, any and all live birds and bird products, whether for personal or commercial use, may be restricted and/or quarantined.
9. Understand that CBP officers can inspect you and your belongings without a warrant. This may include your luggage, vehicle, and personal searches, and is meant to enforce our laws as well as protect legitimate travelers.
10. Read our helpful brochure, “Know Before You Go,” before traveling. Print copies may be requested online, or view the web version at www.cbp.gov under the Travel section.
**Singapore**

**Country Overview**

Singapore is a small, stable, highly developed country with an elected parliamentary system of government. Tourist facilities are modern and widely available. Singapore's resident population of over 4.6 million inhabitants (including permanent residents and foreign workers) comprises 75% Chinese, 14% Malay, 9% Indian and 2% others. English is widely spoken. Criminal penalties are strict and law enforcement rigorous. Singapore is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. The annual growth rate for 2007 was 4.3%, including resident foreigners. Singapore has a varied linguistic, cultural, and religious heritage. Malay is the national language, but Chinese, English, and Tamil also are official languages. English is the language of administration and also is widely used in the professions, businesses, and schools.

The government has mandated that English be the primary language used at all levels of the school systems, and it aims to provide at least 10 years of education for every child. In 2006, primary and secondary school students totaled about 530,423, or 11.8% of the entire population. In 2006, enrollment at the universities was 62,918 (first degree full-time/part-time) and 67,667 at the polytechnics. The Institute of Technical Education for basic technical and commerce skills has almost 23,636 students. The country's literacy rate is 95.4%.

Singapore generally allows religious freedom, although religious groups are subject to government scrutiny, and some religious sects are restricted or banned. Almost all Malays are Muslim; other Singaporeans are Taoists, Buddhists, Confucianists, Christians, Hindus, or Sikhs.

**Banking**

**Banking hours** – Bank are open from 9.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays, and 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. on Saturdays. Certain banks have branches, which operate beyond the mentioned banking hours while a few are also open on Sundays.

**Currency** - Singapore Dollar (SGD; symbol S$) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of S$10,000, 1,000, 500, 100, 50, 10, 5 and 2. Coins are in denominations of S$1, and 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1 cents. The currency of Brunei is also legal tender; 1 Brunei Dollar = 1 Singapore Dollar. US Dollars, Australian Dollars, Yen and Pounds Sterling are also accepted at many major shopping centers in Singapore.
Communication

Language -- Singapore's four official languages are Malay, Chinese (Mandarin dialect), Tamil, and English. Malay is the national language while English is the language for government operations, law, and major financial transactions. Most Singaporeans are at least bilingual, with many speaking one or more dialects of Chinese, English, and some Malay.

Internet -- Internet cafes are becoming common throughout the city, with usage costs about S$5 (US$3.20/£1.65) per hour (keep in mind, if you use the Internet in your hotel's business center, you will pay a much higher price). Almost every shopping mall has one, especially along Orchard Road, and there are cybercafes in both terminals at Changi Airport. In the Historic District, there are a few in Stamford House, just across from City Hall MRT Station.

Postal Service - Most hotels have mail services at the front counter. Singapore Post has centrally located offices at #04-15 Ngee Ann City/Takashimaya Shopping Centre (tel. 65/6738-6899); Chinatown Point, 133 New Bridge Rd. #02-42/43/44 (tel. 65/6538-7899); Change Alley, 16 Collyer Quay #02-02 Hitachi Tower (tel. 65/6538-6899); and 231 Bain St. #01.03 Bras Basah Complex (tel. 65/6339-8899). In addition, there are five branches at Changi International Airport.

Telephone - The international access code for Singapore is +65. The outgoing code is 001, 002, 008 or 018, depending on the service provider, followed by the relevant country code (e.g. 001 44 for the United Kingdom). City/area codes are not necessary. Public phones are good for local and international calls; they take credit cards or phone cards, which can be bought at newspaper kiosks and Telecom shops. Calls made from hotels are free of any surcharges. Several local mobile phone operators use GSM 900/1800 networks

Documents Needed

A valid passport is required. U.S. citizens do not need a visa if their visit is for business or social purposes and their stay is for 90 days or less. Travelers to the region should note that Singapore and some neighboring countries do not allow Americans to enter under any circumstances with fewer than six months of validity remaining on their passport. Female U.S. citizens who are pregnant when they apply to enter Singapore for a social visit are no longer required to make prior application through the nearest Singapore overseas mission or to provide documentation from a U.S. embassy concerning the nationality the child will acquire at birth. Specific information about entry requirements for Singapore may be obtained from the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore at 3501 International Place NW, Washington, DC 20008, tel. (202) 537-3100. Visit the Embassy of Singapore’s web site at http://www.mfa.gov.sg/washington/ for the most current visa information.
Electricity
Standard electrical current is 220 volts AC (50 cycles). Local electrical outlets are made for plugs with three square prongs. Consult your concierge to see if your hotel has converters and plug adapters in-house for you to use. If you are using sensitive equipment, do not trust cheap voltage transformers. Nowadays, a lot of electrical equipment -- including portable radios and laptop computers -- comes with built-in converters, so you can follow the manufacturer's directions for changing them over. FYI, videocassettes taped on different voltage currents are recorded on machines with different record and playback cycles. Prerecorded videotapes are not interchangeable between currents unless you have special equipment that can play either kind.

Emergencies
Emergencies -- For police dial tel. 999. For medical or fire emergencies call tel. 995.

Embassies & Consulates -- Americans living or traveling in Singapore are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department’s travel registration web site and obtain updated information on travel and security within Singapore. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. The U.S. Embassy is located at 27 Napier Road, Singapore 258508, tel. [65] 6476-9100, fax [65] 6476-9340; web site http://singapore.usembassy.gov/. In case of emergencies after working hours, the duty officer at the Embassy may be contacted by calling tel. [65] 6476-9100.

Hospitals -- Good medical care is widely available in Singapore. Doctors and hospitals expect immediate payment for health services by credit card or cash and generally do not accept U.S. health insurance. Recipients of health care should be aware that Ministry of Health auditors in certain circumstances may be granted access to patient medical records without the consent of the patient, and, in certain circumstances, physicians may be required to provide information relating to the diagnosis or treatment without the patient’s consent.

Despite vigorous mosquito eradication efforts in Singapore, from time to time Singapore experiences a spike in the number of dengue fever cases. Outbreaks tend to be clustered in residential areas, but there have been no reports of clusters in primary tourist areas, such as the Night Safari, the Singapore zoo, or Orchard Road.

In January 2008, a new strain of the viral disease Chikungunya was detected in Singapore. A dozen cases of the disease, which like Dengue Fever is transmitted by the Aedes aegypti mosquito, were documented. There were no deaths. Unlike prior cases in Singapore, these cases were contracted locally and the outbreak centered around guest worker housing on Clive Street.
Information on dengue fever, vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747); fax 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or via the CDC’s web site at http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx. For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization’s (WHO) web site at http://www.who.int/en. Further health information for travelers is available at http://www.who.int/ith.

Police - Given the strict reputation of law enforcement in Singapore, you can bet the officers here do not have the greatest sense of humor. If you find yourself being questioned about anything, big or small, be dead serious and most respectful. For emergencies, call tel. 999. If you need to call the police headquarters, dial tel. 1800-255-0000.

If you are arrested, you have the right to legal counsel, but only when the police decide you can exercise that right. Bottom line: Do not get arrested.

Holidays
Holidays in Singapore reflect the cultural diversity of the nation, blending Christian, Muslim and Hindu traditions. Not all Muslim festivals listed are national holidays, but all will affect Muslim businesses. Muslim festivals are timed according to local sightings of various phases of the moon and the dates given above are approximations. During the lunar month of Ramadan that precedes Hari Raya Puasa (Eid al-Fitr), Muslims fast during the day and feast at night and normal business patterns may be interrupted. Many restaurants are closed during the day and there may be restrictions on smoking and drinking. Some disruption may continue into Hari Raya Puasa itself. Hari Raya Puasa and Hari Raya Haji (Eid al-Adha) may last anything from two to 10 days, depending on the town. Hindu festivals are declared according to local astronomical observations and it is only possible to forecast the month of their occurrence.

2008
- August 8 – National Day
- October 1 – Hari Raya Puasa (End of Ramadan)
- October 28 – Deepavali
- December 8 – Hari Ray Haji (Feast of the Sacrifice)
- December 25 – Christmas Day

2009
- January 1 – New Year’s Day
- January 26-28 – Chinese New Year
- April 10 – Good Friday
- May 1 – Labour Day
Safety
In 2001, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), a terrorist organization with links to Al Qaeda, planned attacks in Singapore against government and private targets associated with the United States, Singapore and other countries. These plans were disrupted and the JI organization in Singapore was dismantled. On February 27, 2008 suspected JI leader Mas Selamat Kastari escaped from detention in Singapore. His current whereabouts are unknown. Singapore remains a target of interest for terrorist groups. The Department of State remains concerned because extremist groups in Southeast Asia continue to demonstrate the desire and capability to carry out attacks against locations where Westerners congregate. Terrorist groups do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Americans residing in or traveling to Singapore and neighboring countries should therefore exercise caution, especially in locations where Americans and other Westerners live, work, congregate, shop or visit. U.S. citizens should remain vigilant about their personal security and surroundings.

For the latest security information, Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department’s web site at http://travel.state.gov, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts can be found. Up-to-date information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S., or for callers outside the U.S. and Canada, a regular toll-line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

Major crimes against tourists in Singapore are uncommon. Petty crimes such as pick-pocketing and purse or briefcase snatching occur in tourist areas, hotels and at the airport. Travelers should exercise the same caution that they would in any large city.. Visitors should be aware that credit card fraud is on the rise and should practice standard precautions to avoid falling victim of credit card fraud: do not carry multiple credit cards on your person; do not allow credit cards to be removed from your sight; avoid giving credit card information over the phone and use only secure internet connections for financial transactions.

Time Zone
Singapore Standard Time is + 8 hours GMT, or the equivalent to +13 hours EST. Singapore does not observe Daylight Savings Time.
**Transportation**

Many modes of transportation are used to get around in Singapore, two of the least expensive ways of getting around Singapore are by bus or Mass Rapid Transit (MRT). The public buses require exact change, unless a Singapore Explorer ticket is used which allows unlimited access to buses and trains. The MRT arrives every 3-8 minutes, runs from 6 am to midnight and has 42 stations. For visitors there is a souvenir ticket available or a Transit-Link farecard can be used that is valid for both the MRT and buses.

Since Singapore covers such a small area, in an effort to control downtown traffic congestion, a "restricted zone" is enforced which prevents vehicles from entering that have less than four passengers, unless they have a special permit. Air-conditioned taxis are abundant with over 100,000 available, but there are surcharges for a variety of circumstances.

If using a trishaw, which can be an interesting experience, it is important to negotiate price beforehand.

Another way of getting around, since Singapore is "on" the water, is the bumboat which takes passengers on a thirty minute ride along the waterway in Singapore.

**Water**

Tap water in Singapore passes World Health Organization standards and is potable.

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**Academic System**

**Structure of School System**

**Primary**

Type of school providing this education: Primary School (Grades I-VI)
Length of program in years: 6
Age level from: 6 to 12
Certificate/diploma awarded: Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE)

**Secondary**

Type of school providing this education: Secondary School (Grades VII-X)
Length of program in years: 4
Age level from: 12 to 16
Certificate/diploma awarded: Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Normal Level (GCE N-Level); Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE O-Level)
Pre-university
Type of school providing this education: Junior College/Centralised Institute (Grades XI-XII)
Length of program in years: 3
Age level from: 16 to 19
Certificate/diploma awarded: Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (GCE A-Level)

K-12
Primary education lasts for six years and is compulsory. It consists of a four-year foundation stage (Grades I-IV) and a two-year orientation stage (Grades V and VI). Secondary school pupils are placed in the Special, Express, Normal (Academic) or Normal (Technical) course according to how they performed at the Primary School-leaving Examination (PSLE). The Special and the Express courses are four-year programs (Grades VII-X) leading to the Singapore-Cambridge GCE O-Level examination. The Normal course offers a four-year program leading to the Singapore-Cambridge GCE N-level examination. Students who complete secondary education may proceed to pre-university education at the Junior Colleges/Centralised Institutes or pursue studies at the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) or the Polytechnics. Pre-university education prepares students for the GCE A-Level examination at the end of the two-year Junior College or three-year Centralised Institute course.

Higher Education
Post-secondary education is provided by three kinds of institutions: universities, polytechnics, and the ITE. There are three publicly-funded universities: National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University and Singapore Management University. There are five polytechnics: Singapore Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Temasek Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic and Republic Polytechnic.

Professor/Student Relationship
The role of teacher is an honored position in most Asian societies. Instructors are approachable but treated with respect.

Teacher Education
Training of pre-primary and primary/basic school teachers -
The National Institute of Education (an autonomous institute under the Nanyang Technological University) is the only tertiary level institution providing both pre- and in-service teacher education at all levels of teacher education. Pre-service courses include a two-year Diploma in Education or Physical Education or a four-year Bachelor of Arts (Education) or Bachelor of Science (Education) degree for non-graduates. There is also a one-year Postgraduate Diploma in Education (primary and secondary), or a two-year Postgraduate Diploma in Physical Education for graduates. Further training is provided for
practising teachers. A Master's degree in Education and a PhD are also provided for those who are interested in educational research.

**Training of secondary school teachers** - See: Training of pre-primary and primary/basic school teachers

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**Etiquette**

**Cultural Orientation**

Singapore is a conglomeration of Chinese (76%), Malay (15%) and Indian (6%) cultures. In the past, this racial mixture has lead to some conflict. However, today most Singaporeans enjoy racial harmony and national unity. Each group works hard to maintain its cultural traditions while building a modern, cohesive society. Singaporeans of the younger generation think of themselves as Singaporean first, and as Chinese, Malay or Indian second.

**Business Practices**

Westerners are expected to be punctual for social occasions and business meetings. Call if you are delayed. Tardiness is viewed as a sign of disrespect. Business cards are exchanged upon being introduced. Exchange business cards with both hands after you are introduced. The government finances many of the large corporations in Singapore. This bureaucratic system is known for its high efficiency and corruption-free business style. Western-style management is evident in large firms managed by Singaporeans.

Personal contacts are important in business. It takes several years to develop business relationships. Take time to know people before discussing business. Singaporeans tend to get right down to business in meetings. Singaporeans are fast-paced and can make decisions quickly. You are expected to deliver reports, correspondence, packages, etc. when promised. Always talk straight and get right to the point with Singaporeans. You can be direct when dealing with issues of money.

For business, men should wear white shirts, tie and slacks. Jackets are usually not required. Women should wear blouses with sleeves and skirts or pantsuits. Dinner is the most common form of business entertainment, but it is a time to socialize and build relationships rather than discuss business. Do not be surprised if business dinners are scheduled for every night of the week. Most entertainment is done in restaurants.

Food is usually put on the table with all dishes served at once and to be shared by all. Drinks and appetizers are uncommon, though they are available in Western restaurants. Allow the host to order all the dishes. It is impolite to refuse initial offers of food or drink. To refuse seconds, place your hand above your plate and say, "No, thank you." When finished, place your
spoon and fork together on your plate. If they are not placed together, you will be offered more food. After a meal with Indians, expect to stay for approximately one hour of conversation.

**Protocol**
Singapore has strict regulations which carry stiff fines, possible jail sentences or even death. You should never do the following: jaywalk; smoke in public or in air-conditioned buildings (except country clubs); enter the country with drugs; litter, or import, manufacture, sell or use chewing gum. Avoid public displays of affection. Do not show anger or emotions or raise your voice. Remain disciplined and in control. Avoid discussing religion or politics. Avoid jokes until you know someone well. Few jokes will be understood or appreciated.

**Tipping**
Tipping is discouraged at hotels, bars, and in Taxi, so the general rule is not to tip. A gratuity is automatically added into guest checks, and there is no need to slip anyone an extra buck for carrying bags or such. It is not expected.
References


