

**SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW  
2017 SINGAPORE SUMMER PROGRAM**



**Welcome to Santa Clara Law's 2017 summer program in Singapore!**

As you know by now, from the emails you have received from me, my name is Yvonne Ekern and I will be your on-site Program Director in Singapore. I look forward to getting to know you during our three weeks together. I am arriving on Saturday May 20th and am staying at an apartment near the university. At orientation on May 22, I will give you my local cell phone number, but in the interim you can reach me via email at [yekern@scu.edu](mailto:yekern@scu.edu).

Here is some information you may find helpful as you plan for and arrive in Singapore.

## **GETTING ORIENTED**

### **Arriving in Singapore.**

You will arrive at the beautiful and efficient Changi airport in Singapore. If entering Singapore as a "tourist" or "visitor," US citizens need not obtain a special visa prior to entry. You will simply get a stamp as a "visitor" at the Singapore immigration desk. You are not entering as a student since you are not registered as a student at the university in Singapore: you are a US law student, enrolled in a US law program at a US law school. If you are doing an internship in Singapore, you must get a Temporary Employment Pass (TEP) –I will individually contact each student who falls in this category, so you are well aware of those requirements. But, you will still enter the country as a general tourist. The TEP is processed separately.

[NOTE: if you are continuing on to Vietnam, Cambodia or India for an internship, US citizens must get visas to enter each of these countries. You can *usually* get a Cambodia visitor's visa at the airport for about \$35. Just be sure to have two continuous pages of your passport blank for this.

### **Before you leave the airport**

You may choose to buy a SIM card for your universal phone, or rent a cell phone at Changi airport, although you will likely find cheaper options in town. You can also buy a EZ Link Card which is accepted on the MRT (or as we may say, the subway system) and most buses, but you can get this in town since it is readily available at places such as 7-Eleven. More information on phones and such below is found below.

I also usually find an ATM machine at the airport and use my debit card to withdraw some cash. Do not use a credit card if possible, as interest rates tend to be higher for cash withdrawals and typically the interest on the sum withdrawn starts to accrue immediately. ATM machines are widely available at the airport and throughout Singapore.

## Traveling to your accommodations



You will now need to figure out how to get to your accommodation downtown. You can certainly get assistance at the airport, but if you would like to review your options ahead of time, you might find this helpful:

[http://www.metropolasia.com/Getting\\_around\\_Singapore/From-Changi-Airport](http://www.metropolasia.com/Getting_around_Singapore/From-Changi-Airport)

A taxi ride from Changi Airport to your residence should be around 25 minutes. Taxi fares, if you choose to take a taxi this first time, are generally inexpensive – but be aware that at certain times of the night, on Sundays, and for various other reasons surcharges and tolls add to the cost of a taxi ride. You may spend \$15 or twice as much, \$30 for a ride from the airport. Although there are definitely less expensive options available to you, you should weigh in the inconvenience of carrying your luggage around.

(See also “Housing,” below).

## ORIENTATION AND CLASS

Our orientation and most of our classes will be held at the Singapore Management University's law school, which is housed in the School of Accountancy.

<http://www.smu.edu.sg/campus/map/>

### Campus Map



We start at 9:00 am (SHARP) with an orientation on the morning of Monday May 22. So that you can register and pick up your materials, plan to be at the University no later than 8:45 am. We will gather by the security office – right in front of the University. The orientation, and all our classes, are held in the same Seminar Room. After a morning orientation, we will head over for a welcome lunch, followed by our first class and a walking tour of the important legal sites of Singapore. **MAKE SURE YOU WEAR COMFORTABLE SHOES FOR THE WALKING TOUR.** (See below, my recommendations under “Summer Weather and What to Wear.”) You will not have time to go home to change into comfortable clothes/shoes, so either wear them or carry them with

you when you arrive for Orientation. I will send you the class schedule, but you can also find the schedule and program updates at <http://law.scu.edu/international/asean.cfm>

Again, please make sure you arrive for orientation by 8:45 am. It is easy to run late as you try to figure out the best way to get to campus – make sure you give yourself extra time on the first 2-3 days. Even if you have done a “dry-run” over the weekend, remember that weekdays always are a bit more hectic, bus schedules may have changed, etc.

### **THINGS TO DO AND SEE**

Singapore is a safe, modern, vibrant, multi-cultural, convenient, sophisticated, efficient, and courteous city-state-country. You will find any number of things to do in and around Singapore. From fabulous and inexpensive food to vibrant neighborhoods -- aromatic Little India, tumbledown backstreets of Chinatown, or the Arab Quarter whose cluttered stores sell beautiful fabrics and silks, you will certainly find plenty to keep you busy in Singapore.

Students very often leave Singapore over the weekends – a boat or plane ride to Indonesia, or a short flight into Malaysia, Thailand or Vietnam. If you are planning on leaving the country, you must email me to let me know generally where you are going, and of course must return in time for class on Monday. This is not so I can be creepy and stalk you – this is so, if anything might happen, and your family calls SCU trying to find you, I can at least know where you are generally.

**FOOD:** The food is FANTASTIC. Plan to eat as much as possible.





## **OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION**

### **Money Matters**

Banks and ATM machines are widely available throughout Singapore. The currency in Singapore is the “Singapore dollar,” abbreviated as SGD or S\$. You might add a currency converter app to your phone. It might come in handy.

### **Summer Weather and What to Wear**

Expect it to be hot, humid and rainy during the summer in Singapore. Bring an umbrella and/or rain jacket, and comfortable shoes. Consider a pair of Crocs (they come in all styles now and can pass off reasonably well with more formal clothes as well). Be sure to water proof your shoes.

Consider wearing Crocs when walking in the rain, then slip them into a bag for a dressier pair as you enter a building. They are extremely light, comfortable, and practical for rainy weather. You will find them in Singapore as well, so they are apparently quite well accepted.

You can dress comfortably for classes, but always err on the side of more formal clothing. For example, shorts, sleeveless t-shirts, low-cut blouses, tank tops or very short shorts will be frowned upon in the classroom. You will be expected to dress conservatively and in professional attire on our field trips. If you are staying on for an internship, a business suit is mandatory unless your employer specifically indicates otherwise. Half-sleeved shirts are appropriate for men.

### **Communication**

- You must be available by email.
- You can get your local US number activated to travel abroad. I always do this. But, it is expensive. This may only be necessary if you just must have people able to call your US number.
- Consider getting a SIM Card for your current phone. You can put a local SIM card into an existing iPhone and have a local Singapore number. Small piece of advice – make sure your phone is unlocked to permit this.
- Putting your phone account on hold: just an idea: some American carriers will allow you to put your US cell account on hold for \$20 / month, allowing you to avoid paying the full amount while you are gone. Only minor bummer is that, upon arrival home, you might not have access to your phone immediately because the account has not been reactivated. Sprint says one can reactive a day or two in advance online.
- WhatsApp. It costs \$0.99. It basically allows you to send texts for free to other WhatsApp users via the Interwebs. It is incredibly popular in Europe and Africa.
- Facebook. Most people have it, of course. You can message each other when connected to the Interwebs. The messaging may be a bit dodgy . . . but hey. It is rather free.
- Imessaging – for all of us in the Apple Cult, we can send texts via the interwebs to other iphone users. No idea about Samsung or others.

- <http://www.angryangmo.com/2010/04/07/25-best-free-iphone-ipad-apps-singapore/> has a list of apparently cool apps. I have not used any, and have no idea whether they work.
- Starwalk. It is \$2.99, and kind of cool. You take a photo of the night sky and it shows you what stars and constellation you see. I am not sure it will be the best thing in Singapore with all the light pollution, but I hope you make it out somewhere in the countryside during your stay.

### **SMU facilities:**

- You have access to the libraries, Internet, and other general SMU facilities. In addition, we have secured access for you to the university gym and pool! You will not likely be able to access the facilities until after our first class and not after the classroom portion ends (sorry Singapore interns – the university is just a bit persnickety about their rules and passes).

### **Business Cards**

Students are encouraged to bring along some business cards with your contact information. It is quite customary to exchange business cards in Singapore.

### **Gifts**

Gifts and small tokens of appreciation are frequently exchanged, and it is a good idea to bring along some small items for your key contacts in Singapore. Employers and administrative staff would appreciate receiving a small token from you.

### **Important Documents**

As always, when traveling overseas make sure you keep a copy of your travel documents (including passport) in a safe place, and separate from the actual documents. A student, several years ago, told me that he emailed a copy of his important documents to himself – that way he could always go back and find it. Great idea!

- Readings for the classes
  - If you prefer to get ahead on your readings on your 17 hours of flying, please do. I will send specific links and instructions on the readings later.
- Dress code
  - For the Singapore class, you are welcome to dress casually. But a note: Singapore is a more conservative environment than the United States (and especially for us out here in California). You might consider ditching the short skirts, the ratty tanks, and the ball caps. Up to you of course.
  - Business formal (suits) for our site visits to the Courts. We are foreign attorneys who are privileged to visit these institutions, and it is appropriate to dress respectfully.

- Internships – this is internship specific, of course, and you might want to confirm with your contact the appropriate dress. My guess is business casual, but it is always good to have a suit jacket and tie to throw on.
- Consider dropping stuff off to the cleaners well before your departure date if you plan to bring anything that needs dry cleaning.
- Get your prescriptions refilled. If you have prescriptions that you plan to bring, I recommend you refill early. Just in case there is some snafu in this fill / refill, you want a few days pad. This might be the one item that you cannot get easily in Singapore.
  - Bring the pills in their prescription bottles. If you have a big bag of pills ... you might have the lovely experience one student had in having each one tested by the police to ensure they were indeed medications, and not some new form of crack.
- Non prescription meds: they are not quite the same in Singapore. I recommend that, if you have some very specific med that you like / need, you take it with you.
- A quick word or two on **illegal drugs**: do not even think about it. The laws in Singapore are very clear and the punishment for breaking the law is severe. Do not bring them with you and do not buy them during your stay in Southeast Asia.
- If you are considering traveling around Southeast Asia – check the CDC website to see if you need vaccinations. Also, some countries may require a tourist visa, check this out now so you can avoid disappointment later.
- Don't sweat the small stuff
  - As you pack and prepare, it is easy to get overwhelmed with the seemingly endless list of small details you will need to manage for your summer adventure. Just remember: you are traveling to Singapore, a very highly developed country with nearly everything you could need. When you realize that thing you forgot, you will be able to replace it pretty darn easily.

Travel safe, and I look forward to seeing you in Singapore!

Yvonne