

Dual Degree Program at Columbia University (SIPA)

Risa Shibata



Personal Introduction

Risa Shibata

- * Entered GraSPP, MPP/IP in September, 2016 and started SIPA in September, 2017.
- * Graduated SIPA in May, 2018 and will be graduating GraSPP in September, 2018.

SIPA

- * Degree: Master of International Affairs
- * Concentration: Economic and Political Development
- * Specialization: United Nations Studies



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Before SIPA

- * 1. Requirements
- * Better to complete core degree requirements at Todai (microeconomics, macroeconomics, statistics)
- * Plan ahead, and try to take concentration requirements at Todai as well, as you will be able to have more flexibility after entering SIPA
- * Specialization requirements are harder to transfer at SIPA

Before SIPA

- * 2. Application Process
- * Plan ahead! I had SIPA dual degree students at Todai help me check my application essay. You can also ask me for advice any time!
- * Recommendation letters- although 2 is the set amount, I asked 3 people (2 professors, 1 intern mentor) to write one for me.
- * TOEFL and GRE scores are also an essential part of your application materials. Make sure to study well so that you are satisfied with your score. Although TOEFL scores should be at least 100 points, I have not heard of a minimum score for GRE

Before SIPA

* 3. Scholarships

- * Living at NYC is very costly, and scholarships are essential. I was lucky to receive scholarships from Tobitate Japan (MEXT) and Ito Foundation USA FUTl.
- * Some seniors in the past have also obtained loans from JASSO.

After SIPA Acceptance

- * Housing
- * I sought for housing through UAH (university housing system) and was allocated to live at the International House (10 minute walk from campus)
- * Generally, 1/3 are allocated to university apartments, 1/3 are allocated to international house and the remaining 1/3 find their own housing.
- * As a dual-degree student, you are prioritized for housing. However, you should not set the minimum price amount too low, as the system will kick you out.

At SIPA

- * 1. Classes
- * The main requirement is to satisfy 30 credits in addition to degree, concentration and specialization requirements.
- * I took a total of sem1 15.5 credits + sem 2 18 credits => 33.5 credits
- * Taking the Capstone class (masters graduation project) is mandatory, but you will gain a lot from the experience. I traveled to Rwanda for my capstone research.



At SIPA

- * 2. Internships
- * Although you can waive the internship credit if you already applied for the credit at Todai, it is also nice to do an internship in NYC.
- * I did an internship at the Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN for six months (twice-thrice a week) and a fellowship at UN Women.



At SIPA

- * 3. Events
- * The number of events that you can participate in as a student at Columbia is amazing. There are events almost everyday, so pick the ones that interest you and you will be able to benefit a lot.



Feel free to contact me anytime!

* Risa Shibata

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