

CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES

Don't assume Indian international students share the same language, religion, or cultural background! India is home to over 400 languages, all the world's major religions, and hundreds of unique cultures.

The two official national languages of India are Hindi and English, but that doesn't mean that everyone from India speaks Hindi or English. Twenty-two official languages are spoken across India's twenty-nine states. Many people from the east and south of India may not speak Hindi at all.

Religious practices, even among members of the same faith, can differ depending on where in India they are from. What is an important religious holiday for Bengali Hindus may not be as important to Hindu Malayalis or Gujaratis. Other common faiths in India include Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Sikhism, and many more.

While many people in India are vegetarian, not everyone is. If you are planning an event in your department, try and ensure that there is an eggless vegetarian option available, and that dishes and their ingredients are clearly labeled.

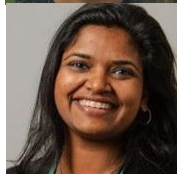
India is famous for the sari, an attire worn by women, but that doesn't mean everyone wears one. Many people tend toward jeans or slacks, shirts, and sneakers or flats in their daily wear. Some people wear traditional clothing every day, while others only wear traditional clothes for special occasions—weddings, holidays, or religious events.

FOR UCONN, BY UCONN

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International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)

supports the greater internationalization of the University of Connecticut through the development and delivery of services and programs that help our international students, scholars, faculty and staff accomplish their academic and professional goals at UConn.



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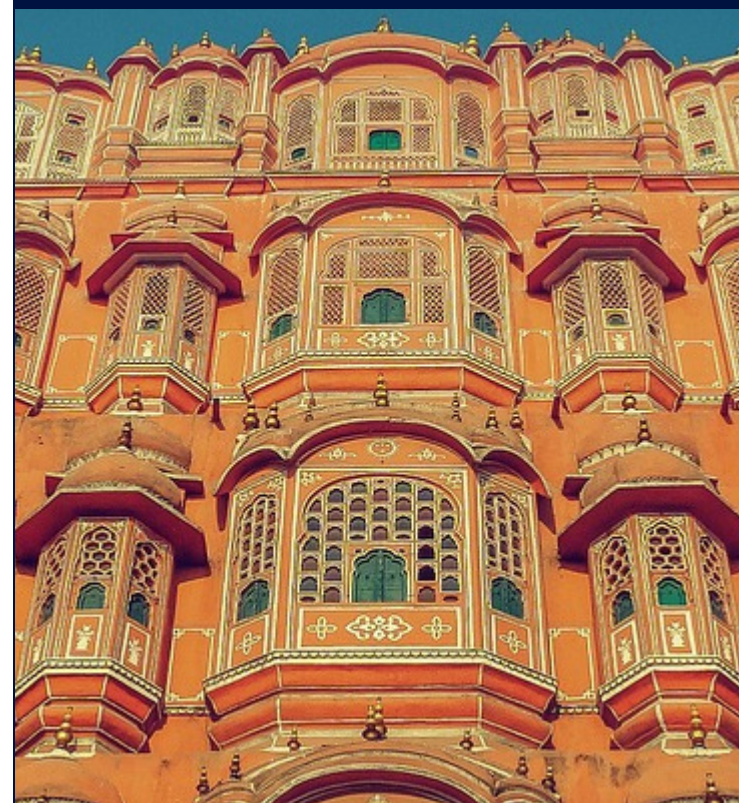
UConn

GLOBAL

India Culture & Education

A Student's Perspective

International Student & Scholar Services



ABOUT THIS BROCHURE

UConn is fortunate to have many international students from India. India is the world's largest democracy, home to over a billion people and dozens of languages, religions, and cultures. Aside from Indian food and Bollywood films, the vast majority of Americans know very little about India. ISSS worked with UConn students to compile the information found in this guide. We hope you will find this helpful!

EDUCATION IN INDIA

- The education system in India is divided into primary school (Grades 1-5), middle school (Grades 6-8), general secondary school (Grades 9 and 10), and upper secondary school (Grades 11 and 12)
- The language of instruction can be either English or the state's native language.
- Secondary education in India is exam oriented: students take classes to prepare for centrally-administered examinations.
- Private schools are a very popular option in India, particularly for the middle classes. Many private schools within India are modelled after the British private education system. English tends to be the medium of instruction, and the curriculum tends to be more comprehensive. These schools also offer students the opportunity to participate in extracurriculars.
- Universities in India typically require students to pass college-administered admissions tests in addition to passing a final secondary school examination.



SOCIAL CULTURE

Student clubs in India are an important part of student college life. Compared to the US, there may be less of a variety of student organizations, but the ones in place on Indian campuses tend to be quite large and can have considerable power on campus.

Popular sports in India include cricket, basketball, kabaddi, and tennis. Field hockey is the national sport.

Many students living on their own for the first time in undergraduate or graduate school struggle with the same things as their American counterparts: cooking, cleaning, laundry, and self-management.

Students in Indian colleges and universities face an additional layer of social and institutional scrutiny compared to their American peers. Oversight of student behavior from hostels or rentals exceeds what is typical of American dorms or student rentals. Universities may contact the student's parents for any number of major or minor infractions, compared to the stricter student privacy expectations in the US.

COLLEGE IN INDIA

Indian colleges are quite diverse. Students in Indian universities will meet their peers from all over India, surrounding countries, and an increasing number of students from African countries.

Compared to colleges in the United States, students in Indian universities have less flexibility in choosing their classes, with many programs having a set curriculum for students. Students choose their majors before they begin their undergraduate education, and may have less flexibility in choosing their electives.

Students in India choose between college organized hostels, rented rooms (called paying guest or PG), or living at home during their time in university. Women's hostels in particular are known for their strict and early curfews for students.

Why study in the U.S.? Students are drawn by the opportunity to take classes and work with renowned professors in various fields. Students and families are willing to invest in a foreign degree for the potential return on investment. Many students want to have a global experience working with people from different backgrounds in a different educational system, or by the opportunity to gain work experience in the United States after completing their degree. And finally, top ranked institutions in India like the IITs have highly competitive standardized entrance examinations; U.S. institutions present another compelling option for completing the degree.