Associated Colleges of the Midwest

Florence

Arts, Humanities, & Culture

Student Handbook ♦ Fall 2015

Beloit       Carleton       Coe       Colorado       Cornell       Grinnell       Knox
Lake Forest  Lawrence       Luther       Macalester       Monmouth       Ripon       St. Olaf
# Table of Contents

I. **Welcome and Program Overview** ............................................................................................................. 2

II. **Calendar** ................................................................................................................................................ 3

III. **Academics** ........................................................................................................................................... 4

   - Program Courses ..................................................................................................................................... 5
   - Credit and Grades ................................................................................................................................. 10

IV. **Preparing to Go and Arrival** ............................................................................................................. 11

   - Passport and Visa ................................................................................................................................. 11
   - Residence Permit ................................................................................................................................. 11
   - Travel Arrangements .......................................................................................................................... 11
   - Communications ................................................................................................................................. 15
   - Money ................................................................................................................................................... 16
   - Travel and Safety Information ........................................................................................................... 18
   - Packing Considerations ....................................................................................................................... 18
   - Suggested Packing List ......................................................................................................................... 21

V. **Housing Arrangements** ....................................................................................................................... 22

VI. **Host Country Information** ................................................................................................................ 24

VII. **Cultural Norms and Expectations** ................................................................................................... 25

   - Mental and Intellectual Preparation .................................................................................................. 26
   - Culture Shock ...................................................................................................................................... 27

VIII. **Personal Travel** .............................................................................................................................. 29

IX. **Health and Safety** ............................................................................................................................. 30

   - Health ................................................................................................................................................ 30
   - Safety .................................................................................................................................................. 31
   - Student Conduct and Discipline ......................................................................................................... 34

X. **ACM Program Rules and Policies** ...................................................................................................... 36

   - ACM Code of Student Responsibility ............................................................................................... 36
   - ACM Academic Policies ....................................................................................................................... 38
   - ACM Housing Policies ......................................................................................................................... 39
   - ACM Policy on Alcohol and Drugs ...................................................................................................... 39
   - ACM Policy on Sexual Harassment ..................................................................................................... 40
   - ACM Policy on Dual Relationships ..................................................................................................... 40
   - ACM Policy on Sexual Assault ............................................................................................................ 40
   - ACM Policy on Non-Discrimination .................................................................................................... 41
   - ACM Student Conduct Procedures .................................................................................................... 41
   - ACM Tuition, Program Fees, and Refunds ......................................................................................... 45
   - ACM Policy on Health and Safety Notification .................................................................................. 46
   - ACM Evaluations and Surveys ............................................................................................................. 47
   - ACM Opt-Out Form .............................................................................................................................. 48

XI. **Program Contact Information** ......................................................................................................... 49
I. Welcome and Program Overview

The ACM Florence Fall Student Handbook is intended to help prepare you for your semester in Florence and to give you an initial sense of what to expect academically and personally while you are there. It is revised each year based on comments from the previous program participants to include more current information and contains information on various logistical arrangements for your trip. It is a reference tool that provides you with the information you need to prepare for the program. It is important that you read it carefully and raise any questions you may have either in the pre-departure webinar session or with the ACM staff.

ACM ALUMNI ADVICE: Throughout the handbook, look for tips and suggestions offered by previous ACM students in dialogue boxes like this one. Tip #1: Bring this handbook with you to Florence. It’s got important contact and schedule details as well as information about academics and other program arrangements.

Program Overview

The ACM Fall Florence program provides an immersion in Italian arts and culture, of both the present and the past. Taking advantage of the extraordinary legacy in Florence, Renaissance art and culture is the focal point of the academic program, with almost daily site visits integral to classroom teaching. To an extent not possible in the classroom, students view works of art *in situ* (‘on site’ or ‘in place’), and are also challenged to understand them in the context in which these works were created. An elective studio art class allows students to gain an appreciation for the creative process, while Italian language classes, homestays, and interaction with Florentines on a daily basis provide immersion experiences for program participants. The program is designed around three learning goals:

- To develop students’ understanding of the creative processes and the historical and cultural context in which Florentine medieval and Renaissance art, sculpture, and architecture were produced;
- To build language proficiency in Italian sufficient to allow students to communicate with host families and other Italians and live independently in Italy;
- To develop in students a broad understanding of present-day Italian society and culture.

Italian art and culture, both present and past, are at the center of the ACM’s Florence program. In addition to the required Italian language course, students choose from course offerings in Renaissance art history, Italian culture, and studio art. The program begins with an academic orientation comprised of a four-week intensive Italian language course, lectures on aspects of contemporary Italy, and introductory meetings for the elective classes. With the exception of the Italian language course, all courses are taught in English. Florence is the laboratory for the program, and site visits are a valuable part of the courses. The program includes two weekend excursions to Venice and Rome, and select students may participate in an independent trade workshop with a local master or a non-credit internship in a local museum.

When students first arrive on site, they are housed in a local hotel, a short walk from the Santa Maria Novella train station. After a few days, students will be placed with Italian host families with whom they will live for the duration of the program. While some or all members of the host family will likely speak English, the host families provide a wonderful opportunity for students to practice their Italian and to learn about Italian customs and more. Breakfast and dinner will be provided by the families.

ACM in Florence is affiliated with the Linguaviva Scuola d’Italia, and their facilities serve as the program center. Classes will meet there (when not meeting on site), and students may also wish to use it as a place to meet each other. There is also a computer lab, with one student computer and also a wireless connection for students who bring their own laptops. The center also houses a small library of ACM course-related books and other materials.
II. Calendar

The following dates are a necessarily sparse outline of the program calendar. Although you’ll be taking several field trips throughout the semester, dates for those trips have not been finalized and are not listed here. You’ll receive a more comprehensive schedule from the program staff when you arrive in Florence.

A note on **having visitors**: while it’s fun and important to be able to share your new surroundings with friends and family, please keep in mind that the program will require you to manage a workload comparable to what you’d experience on your home campus. Visits will be more enjoyable for both you and your guests if you don’t have class and homework assignments on your mind. We ask, therefore, that parents or friends **avoid visiting while the program is in session**. Parents or guests should not expect to participate in orientation activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrival in Florence</td>
<td>Saturday, August 29 by 5:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Sunday, August 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian language class</td>
<td>Monday, August 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective classes begin</td>
<td>Monday, September 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venice Trip</td>
<td>Friday, October 2 - Sunday, October 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall break</td>
<td>Friday, October 16 – Sunday, October 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome Trip</td>
<td>Thursday, November 5 – Sunday, November 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes end</td>
<td>Friday, December 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departure from Florence</td>
<td>Saturday, December 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Florence Program schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks 1-4</th>
<th>Weeks 5-7</th>
<th>Weeks 9-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italian language (intensive</td>
<td>Courses (3 electives)</td>
<td>Courses (3 electives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for first 4 weeks)</td>
<td>Week 8: Break</td>
<td>Italian language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trips to sites in Florence</td>
<td>Field trips to sites in Florence</td>
<td>Field trips to sites in Florence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and to other Italian cities</td>
<td>and to other Italian cities</td>
<td>and to other Italian cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home stay in an Italian household</td>
<td>Home stay in an Italian household</td>
<td>Home stay in an Italian household</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan to be checked into the hotel in Florence by 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 29th.** (See “Housing Arrangements.”) That evening you’ll meet the program staff and other students and have dinner together. Meeting times and places will be posted in the hotel.
The Florence program will be different from your home campus in terms of academics. Writing and doing research are central to the program, just as they are on campus. Yet without the resources of your college library, unlimited internet access, or your usual study spots, you may find it challenging to do research and write. Although you won’t have all the same resources you may be accustomed to on campus, you’ll have a unique opportunity in Florence to use the city as a source of information: museums, architecture, newspapers, historical sites, and living, breathing Italians will all, in one way or another, contribute to your research.

In order to fit in field trips, site visits, lectures, and other activities, courses in Florence are highly structured and may meet for longer stretches of time than on your home campus. Also, you’ll likely find that the material from one course connects with material presented in your other courses. Philosophical ideas presented in one course, for example, may provide a background for understanding the artworks discussed in another. Some of your classes will be taught almost entirely on site, in essence allowing you to do primary source research on both well- and lesser-known works. Keep in mind that participants in this program generally come from a wide range of academic backgrounds and interests. If you feel that a subject of interest to you is being taught at too basic a level, or with the assumption of greater prior knowledge, talk to your instructors. They are always willing to discuss your questions, suggest supplementary readings, and help you focus or pursue your interests.

You’ll take four classes while you’re in Florence. Italian language is required for all participants, and the three remaining classes are electives. Each of the four courses is worth four credits, for a total of 16 semester credits. With the exception of studio art, in-class sessions meet at the Linguaviva Scuola d’Italiano, an independent language school that teaches Italian to students from all over the world. Italian classes are taught solely in Italian by Linguaviva staff, and the school has made space available to ACM for the elective courses taught in English by ACM faculty. The classrooms serve as a study area when not in use. Since the students live all over the city, Linguaviva is often a central meeting place.

At the beginning of the program, Linguaviva staff will administer a placement test to evaluate your level of proficiency in Italian and assign you to the appropriate class if you already have some background in Italian. The test is only for placement purposes and has no bearing on your eventual grade in the language class. Students with no prior experience with Italian will be placed in the beginning class (likely in two sections). You will be studying Italian at Linguaviva for a total of 120 hours, and you’ll complete about 75% of those hours in September when classes are held from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. During the afternoons in September there will be orientation
sessions, on-site visits and lectures on aspects of contemporary Italy, and some introductory meetings for your electives, in which you will be assigned background reading.

After September, language study continues with three 75-minute sessions per week, in addition to your elective classes that will meet for four hours per week. Field trips are also considered part of your class curriculum and are mandatory when indicated as such by the professors. With the exception of the language courses, all classes are conducted in English.

**Radio receivers for on-site classes**

During orientation, ACM Florence will loan each student a radio-receiver for use during all school field trips. The use of radio-guides has become obligatory for group visits to Italian museums and monuments. ACM requires that at orientation, each student sign a contract for the loan of this device. At the end of the term, if your assigned receiver is not returned in good, working condition, you will be assessed a 70 euro replacement fee. You are responsible for caring for the device and reporting any malfunction during the loan period.

**Program Library**

The Florence program has a small, focused library of about 1,000 books to help you with your research. The catalogue of the books in the program library is now on-line and searchable by title, author, subject, and many other fields. This online catalogue can be found at: [http://www.librarything.com/catalog/ACMFLORENCE/yourlibrary](http://www.librarything.com/catalog/ACMFLORENCE/yourlibrary).

If you wish to see if the library has multiple copies of a particular book, click on the book’s title and then click again on “Details” in the left-hand menu. Please remember that this database is being constantly updated and expanded, so it may not currently reflect all of the library’s holdings.

The program staff, too, will be valuable resources to you. Remember that what you take away from the program at the end of the semester will depend completely on your own curiosity and personal initiative.

**Program Courses**

In addition to the Italian course, you will enroll in three of the elective courses listed below. A course enrollment preference form will be posted to [www.acm.edu/acceptedstudents](http://www.acm.edu/acceptedstudents) and you should fill it out and return it to ACM by the date listed on the checklist. (Students who neglect to return the form will be placed into courses by the ACM.) Please keep in mind you aren't guaranteed your top three choices. This program has a small overall enrollment, and a limited number of course options, each with a cap on enrollment spots. Some courses will naturally appeal to you more than others, but even so, try to keep in mind that all the elective offerings, while different in content, endeavor to give you a deeper understanding of Florence and its history.

Courses offered in the Florence Fall program are expressly designed to take advantage of the wealth of cultural resources in Italy, and thus classes will often meet on site: at the Uffizi or Bargello museums, for example, at the Duomo or Santa Croce church, or in the Boboli Gardens. Your course syllabi will outline the various course-related site visits that are planned. As with the classes held at Linguaviva, you are expected to participate (and be on time for) these site visits. In addition, two weekends are set aside for program-sponsored excursions to Rome and Venice. These two excursions are also part of the academic fabric of the program, and the costs of transportation, hotels, entrance fees, and some meals are included in the program fee.
Students should not make plans that will prevent them from meeting their academic obligations to the program. Make-up classes and exams are arranged only at the discretion of the instructor; unexcused absences could result in lowered grades or failure. Please keep in mind when you make reservations to come home, the program will end at noon on the last Friday of the semester. No arrangements will be made to take exams earlier than scheduled, and all coursework must be completed before the end of the program.

Italian
Instructors: Linguaviva Staff
Required, 4 semester credits
Instruction emphasizes spoken colloquial Italian and is most intensive during the first four weeks so that students may quickly acquire conversational ability. Classes are taught completely in Italian. The Linguaviva instructors are not just language teachers but also rich sources of information about Italian culture. After the first four weeks, students are reassessed and placed in a new course with other ACM students with the same level of Italian proficiency. The final course grade is cumulative for the whole semester.

Studies in Florentine Renaissance Art
Instructor: Josephine Rogers Mariotti, Program Director
Elective, 4 semester credits
A choice of salient episodes of artistic patronage in Florence from the age of Lorenzo il Magnifico to the initial stages of the Medicean Duchy will furnish an ample view of the cultural and artistic milieu in Florence of the period. Our course will begin with a review of the workshop masters of the late Quattrocento and proceed through the subsequent transformations at the turn of the century that mark a period of political and spiritual upheaval that pervade all of contemporary Italy. Interesting to note, the response to this period of crisis on the part of patrons and artists in Florence and beyond is the creation of some of the greatest masterpieces of all time.

Indeed, those who trained with the late 15th century masters in Florence will be the protagonists of that subsequent season of art production known as the High Renaissance. By taking into exam significant moments of patronage and art production, the course intends to explore in a comprehensive manner the connection between the personal philosophy and persona of both patron and artist, the significance each episode holds within the history of contemporary art production and the reciprocal influences and interactions that link the event to contemporary history, culture and philosophy. The Medici and other corporate, religious and private patrons are intrinsic to this history. Their interests and aspirations are reflected in the transformations in style that constitute the history of art during this period.

Our studies will lead us outside Florence to Rome, for example, as with the case of the Sistine Chapel, the history of which spans two generations of Florentine artists under papal patronage.
Undeniably, the Vatican cycles of Michelangelo and Raphael in Rome - paragons of a "golden age" dramatically interrupted by the "Sack of Rome" of 1527- constitute the “maniera moderna”, the paradigm of the next phase of development known as ‘Mannerism’ or "Maniera", a term we will endeavor to circumscribe and explore. The papacy and patronage of Leo X, born Giovanni de’ Medici, son of Lorenzo il Magnifico, will then bring us full circle back to the Medici and Florence. Major works within the city, not surprisingly, are entrusted by the Pope to Buonarroti, his childhood companion and to the so-called ‘early Florentine mannerists’, creators of an aesthetic ideal that will come to characterize the refined artistic culture of the Medicean Duchy.

Our investigation of this “post-classical” or “post-peak” era will include the experimental and expressively charged art of Jacopo Pontormo, Rosso Fiorentino and others who coincide chronologically and for certain stylistic tendencies with the followers of Raphael and Michelangelo in Rome and beyond. The challenge here is to detect and analyze the transformations in style and content at the time of Duke Cosimo I de’ Medici in relation to the art of some of the epoch’s greatest protagonists, Agnolo Bronzino, Benvenuto Cellini and others.

Time, Space, and Cultural Memory in Florence
Instructor: Andrea Kann
Elective, 4 semester credits
This course focuses on the ways in which the public spaces of Florence become activated through the movement and engagement of the people who live there as well as those who visit. More specifically, we will focus on three specific historical phenomena/moments in the city: pilgrimage in the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the Grand Tour, and today’s tourist environments. Throughout the class, we will visit and re-visit the significant spaces of Florence in order to understand how they function differently for each audience at these specific historical moments, as well as how these spaces become more richly layered with meaning over time. By examining the visual elements of each site alongside textual and historical data and information, we can sharpen our understanding of the ways in which the past is made present in Florence today and yesterday. Not only are the public spaces of Florence rich visual sites for observation, but relics from all eras of the city’s past are found everywhere within it, from the miraculous image of the Virgin at Santissima Annunciata to Galileo’s finger in the science museum to the permanent “Traces of Florence” exhibit of the city’s history at the Palazzo Vecchio.

We also will visit sites outside of Florence to understand how similar rituals have been enacted both in the past and present. For example, we might take a pilgrimage to see the relics of St. Catherine in Siena or St. Anthony in Padua. Similarly, seeing St. Mark’s in Venice or St. Peter’s in Rome in light of their multiple pasts also will help us explore the ways in which past and present are richly intertwined. In addition to investigating the ways in which visitors and inhabitants of Florence perceived spaces and objects in the past, students will consider the effects of these layers of meanings today. Over time, these sites have become so richly saturated with meaning for their audiences that movement through them becomes almost performative, both consciously and unconsciously. In observing these spaces today, we will consider what can happen when these spaces become oversaturated with meaning, and visitors perform the past without understanding the significance of the rituals they enact as they follow checklists and guidebooks.
Art, Disaster, and Restoration in Modern Florence  
Instructor: Andrea Kann  
Elective, 4 semester credits
This course focuses on two modern catastrophic events in Florence during the twentieth century, World War II and the 1966 flood, and their effects on both inhabitants and visitors to the city. More specifically, we will center our investigations around the visual culture of Florence both present and past, and the need to create, replace, preserve and restore elements of material culture destroyed or damaged through both human-made and natural disasters. In this course, we will consider art and architecture in terms of human values. What is the meaning of cultural property in life and death situations? What does it mean to save or restore such objects? How do you justify spending monetary and human capital saving objects when so many people are in need? Do art and architecture have value beyond their price tags?

Every week, we will visit sites devastated by the flood and the war, and consider how they have come to be as they are today. We also will consider specific works of art that played roles in the city’s natural and human disasters by viewing these physical objects in their contemporary contexts of museums, churches and other public spaces. The conservation and preservation of works of art will be a major topic of discussion, and we will view works being restored as we learn about the laborious process of trying to save a damaged piece of art. By observing the city today as an amalgam of its multiple pasts, we will begin to understand how art and life intersect more intimately and more meaningfully than we might otherwise assume. By encountering the remains of the historic past in terms of its needs for preservation and restoration, we will consider how such tangible objects can represent intangibles such as love, loss and unity. Fall 2015 is a significant time for this course, as this term falls between the 70th anniversary of Hitler’s bombing of the bridges in Florence (August 2014) and the forthcoming 50th anniversary of the 1966 flood (November 2016.)

Italian Cinema  
Instructor: Stefano Socci  
Elective, 4 semester credits
This course examines the historical, social and cultural roots of Italian Cinema, starting with the silent movies (Cabiria, 1913), and traces its development from Neorealism to the present. The course covers leading directors, such as: Antonioni, Bertolucci, De Santis, De Sica, Fellini, Giordana, Leone, Moretti, Muccino, Pasolini, Placido, Rossellini, Sorrentino, Tornatore, and Visconti. The course also offers an outline of main genres in Italian Cinema: drama, melodrama, comedy, spaghetti western, and peplum (sandal movie). The main purposes of this course are: (1) to introduce students to major Italian movies from Neorealism to the present; (2) to examine some of the basic principles of film criticism; (3) to show how Italian history is described by Italian directors.
The Sight-Size Tradition: Drawing and Portraiture  
Instructors: Cecil Studios Staff  
Elective, 4 semester credits  
This Studio Art course will teach a historic technique for drawing from a live model, from casts of famous statues, and from the city itself. Live models will be used for full figure drawing and casts for portraiture. Classroom instruction will take place in the Charles H. Cecil Studios, the most historic Florentine atelier still in active use. At the end of the semester, there will be an exhibit of the student work and a final critique. The studio art elective meets 3 times a week during the late afternoon. No prerequisites are required for the studio art elective; thus, students who do not consider themselves artists are encouraged to sign-up. After taking the studio art course, students will know how to draw.

A Jeweler’s Workshop in Florence  
Instructor: Josephine Rogers Mariotti with Master Goldsmiths Carlo & Simone Bandini  
Elective course, 4 semester credits  
This course is an opportunity for students to integrate studies of contemporary Florentine artistic workshops, their art and technique, with the study of the history behind the tradition. As is well known, the workshop constituted the basic unit and structure of artistic activity in the Renaissance, a heritage that can be traced back to antiquity. The ‘bottega’ was the training ground for all, the greater and the lesser known masters. Painters, sculptors, carpenters, goldsmiths all collectively constituted the connective tissue of art production, a reality that finds its counterpart in the modern workshop still today at the core of Florence’s artisan tradition. In this course, students will have the opportunity to participate in a traditional apprenticeship with a master goldsmith, and at the same time integrate this first-hand experience with the study of the history of that same tradition, the survival of which is threatened by conditions imposed by modern society.

Workshop practice will entail 6 hours per week of training within the workshop combined with an Independent Study Project. The seminar investigates the history of the art form as practiced during the 15th and 16th centuries. This integration of the experience within the contemporary artisan workshop in Florence with the study of the history of the art form practiced should provide the participants with a wealth of both technical and theoretical knowledge regarding the multi-faceted reality of the ‘bottega’, both past and present. In effect, the city’s museums and their holdings will serve as a paragon in our studies. Our goal is to witness and document how and where the ancient tradition has found its place in present day Florence. Note: this course will take place contingent on full enrollment (6 students). There is an additional fee of $870 for participation in this class ($620 academic fee + $150 liability insurance).

An Introduction to Methods and Techniques of Restoration  
Instructor: Josephine Rogers Mariotti with Art Conservator Rossella Lari  
Elective course, 4 semester credits  
This course is an opportunity for students to integrate studies of contemporary Florentine art conservation, methods and techniques with the history behind the discipline. Since the infamous flood of
Florence in 1966, the city has become a world leader in the field of art conservation and restoration. That tragic event brought to the wounded Renaissance capital experts from all over the world who joined together to save and restore the immense patrimony of art that had been destroyed, threatened and damaged by the catastrophe.

Students will have the opportunity to study with one of the most prominent art conservators of present-day Florence, Rossella Lari, flanking her in her activities and projects during an intensive on-site experience. Workshop practice will take place at the studio and other places of pertinent interest, including museums, churches and workshops of other restorers. Techniques of art production, restoration and diagnosis will be introduced by short film clips. This video support will serve as an introduction to the student’s first approach to the techniques of creation, maintenance and restoration of paintings. Students will be required to keep a Restoration Workbook throughout the semester as a record of these activities. The written component of the Independent Study Project will be defined and discussed under the guidance of J. Rogers Mariotti in concomitance with the lab activities undertaken with Rossella Lari; the focus will be intricately related to the technical and theoretical knowledge acquired during the course of the term regarding the multi-faceted reality of restoration, past and present. In effect, the city’s museums and their holdings provide first hand case studies for every aspect covered in the course material. Note: There is an additional fee of $360 for participation in this class ($210 academic fee + $150 liability insurance).

There are also non-credit internships available at local museums such as the Uffizi.

Credit and Grades

It is your responsibility to consult your college registrar about grading, course credit arrangements, and course registration policies for off-campus studies. Checking with your registrar and advisor is particularly important if you plan to use your courses in Florence to fulfill school or departmental requirements. If you need to be certain how the courses will appear on your college record, it’s your responsibility to learn about your college’s policies ahead of time. You also need to make sure you have fulfilled courses for your major and other requirements at your institution.

At the end of the program, grade recommendation forms will be sent to your college registrar, and the 16 semester credits will be converted into your college’s credit system.

So that your academic progress is not impeded by a semester off campus, be sure to consult your registrar about registration and housing for the spring term following your return.
IV. Preparing to Go and Arrival

Passport & Visa

You need a valid passport and student visa to study in Italy. ACM facilitates the visa process by taking students’ passports and visa applications to the Italian consulate in Chicago; this can be done no earlier than 90 days before travel to Italy. Visa information can be found at www.acm.edu/acceptedstudents. The application must be completed and returned to the ACM by June 1. ACM will then take applications to the consulate, and they in turn will issue the visa and return your passport to you via priority mail. Please be sure to send your visa materials and passport to ACM in a U.S. priority express mail, and note too that the Italian consulate requires a self-addressed prepaid U.S. priority mail envelope for returning your passport to you.

If, for some reason, you are unable to send your passport to ACM by June 1, you will need to apply for your visa in person through whichever Italian consulate has jurisdiction for your home state. ACM will provide you with a letter verifying your acceptance in the program, but it is your responsibility to inform yourself about the other requirements for your visa. (Visa requirements, as well as consulate hours, can vary from one consulate to another.)

Residence Permit

In the week after you arrive in Florence, you will go to the post office to apply for your residence permit. This document, called the permesso di soggiorno, grants official permission to live in Italy. The cost of the permesso di soggiorno is covered by your program fee. In order to successfully obtain your permit, you must present the following items to the Italian authorities:

- A copy of every page in your passport and your actual passport with student visa page
- Original LINGUAVIVA letter (pre-stamped by Italian consulate in USA) and a copy of this letter

Travel Arrangements

You should make your travel arrangements so as to arrive at the hotel in downtown Florence by 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 29th. In making your travel plans, you may wish to make some comparisons before finalizing your arrangements; we suggest that you consult various websites; a travel agent such as STA Travel (800-708-9758) which specializes in discount travel for students; and/or a travel agent in your home town. When you make your flight reservations, be sure to factor in enough time to make connections between planes and/or trains so that you’ll arrive in Florence safely and at a reasonable time.

We encourage you to find another program participant to travel with by coordinating through Facebook. An added advantage of traveling with other participants is that you’ll have someone to help keep an eye on your things when you go to the bathroom or get a snack.
If you fly into Florence:
Generally, flying all the way to Florence is the simplest and most convenient of all these options, but it may also be a more expensive option. Your itinerary will involve catching at least one connecting flight somewhere in Europe, from Amsterdam or Paris, for example. You’ll then take a connection to Florence, to Peretola Airport (formerly Amerigo Vespucci Airport), located about three miles outside Florence. The local bus companies Sita+Ataf offer a bus service called VolaInBus airport shuttle bus service. You will find the VolaInBus located outside the terminal towards the right past the line of taxis; it will take you from the arrival terminal in the airport to the Firenze Santa Maria Novella (SMN) station square, a short walk from the ACM office and Linguaviva building. The VolaInBus runs about every 30 minutes. The €6 ticket to ride the VolaInBus can be purchased on board.

VolaInBus costs less than a taxi, but you’ll probably be a bit jetlagged and also will have all your luggage with you and, if you have a lot of luggage, it’s definitely worth taking a taxi from the airport to the centro and the hotel. The taxi ride takes about 20 minutes and costs about €25. (You’ll be charged extra for your bags, and this additional cost will be added on to the fare shown on the meter.)

If you fly into Rome:
Arriving in Rome is usually a few hundred dollars cheaper than flying into Florence, and the train ride from Rome to Florence will treat you to some breathtaking views of the Italian countryside. When you arrive at Fiumicino Airport, follow signs to the airport train station. At the biglietteria, or ticket window, buy TWO tickets: a ticket for €14 to Stazione Roma Termini, the central train station in Rome, and a ticket for €29-43 from Roma Termini to Firenze SMN on one of the new high speed trains which will get you to Florence in under two hours. When you ask for your ticket to Firenze, ask for the first high speed leaving Termini after your train from the airport arrives. You may consider purchasing these tickets on-line before your departure from the USA at the website www.trenitalia.com (for English, click on the UK flag in upper righthand corner of the page).

The train from the airport does not have assigned seating, so after you validate your ticket at the end of the track, just get on any car that has space. You’ll arrive on the far side of Termini station, and should walk in toward the main part of the station until you’re at the head of the tracks. If the platform, or binario, is not printed on your ticket, look for your connecting train information or visit the information window. The track numbers and departing information for each train are posted on the partenze (departures) illuminated boards and on the illuminated signs at the end of each platform. Seats are assigned on the Eurostar train, and your ticket will be printed with a carrozza (car) number and a seat number. The carrozza number is displayed on the side of each train car.

When you return to the U.S., you may need to stay at a hotel or hostel in Rome the night before your flight leaves, since it can be difficult to get from Florence to Rome before noon. The first train from Termini to Fiumicino airport leaves at 5:52 am (reserve the hotel and buy your train ticket in advance!).

If you fly into Pisa:
When you land, you can easily take a train from Pisa Galileo Airport. Buy a ticket at the information booth to the right of the exit from customs. Then, without going outdoors, walk from customs to the opposite end of the airport passenger terminal and down a corridor to the railroad platform. Signs mark the way: FIRENZE Santa Maria Novella (SMN). Trains leave almost every hour from the airport, and more frequent service is available from Pisa’s central train station. You can check the schedule from Pisa to Florence at www.trenitalia.com. The trip from the Pisa airport to Florence takes a little over an hour.
Also, two private bus companies offer shuttle service to/from Pisa airport to the Firenze SMN train station: Terravision [www.terravision.eu](http://www.terravision.eu) and Autostradale [www.autostradale.it](http://www.autostradale.it) Visit their websites for timetable and pricing information.

**If you fly into Milan:**

Flying into Milan and taking the train to Florence should be a last resort because it involves one of the most complicated plane-to-train connections. On your return trip to the U.S., plan to spend a night in Milan, as it’s impossible to get a train to Milan for any flight that leaves before 2 p.m. If you’re transiting through Milan by catching a connecting flight into Florence you’ll have less of a problem, although you need to be sure that your arriving and connecting flights leave from the same airport. Otherwise, you may wind up changing airports to catch a connecting flight to Florence. Milan has three airports: Malpensa for intercontinental flights, Forlanini-Linate for Italian and some European flights, and Bergamo Orio al Serio for some budget airlines including RyanAir.

- From Malpensa International Airport in Milan, an Airpullman bus meets international flights from circa 5:00 a.m. to midnight. It costs approximately €10 and takes 60 minutes. Get off at the Milano Centrale train station, not Garibaldi. The Malpensa Treno Express train also serves as a connection from the Malpensa International Airport to the Stazione Centrale of Milan [http://www.malpensaexpress.it/en/](http://www.malpensaexpress.it/en/)
- From Forlanini-Linate Airport, ATM operates a coach service to Milano Stazione Centrale every 30 minutes. The ride will be about 45 minutes and costs 5 euro (on-board ticketing).
- From Orio al Serio Airport, you can take the Autostradale bus [www.autostradale.it](http://www.autostradale.it) or Terravision bus [www.terravision.eu](http://www.terravision.eu) to Milano Centrale station for about €5. Buses leave every 30-45 minutes; travel time is about an hour.

The trip from Milano Centrale station to Firenze SMN takes an hour and 45 minutes and costs around €49.

**Walking directions from Firenze Santa Maria Novella (SMN) train station to Via Fiume, 17**

It is a short (circa 5 minute) walk from the Firenze SMN train station to Via Fiume, 17. Follow the red lines marked on the map. If getting off a train, go to the end of the track and turn left towards the center of the station. Proceed to the left exit of the station (a pharmacy is located at this exit of the train station). Continue out of the station, straight across the cross-walks to the sidewalk of Via Valfonda. Turn left to proceed down the block until you reach Burger King (corner of Via Valfonda and Piazza Adua). Turn right at the corner of Burger King and right again at the end of this short block, onto Via Fiume. Linguaviva and ACM are in the same building and accessible from the first entrance on the right entering from Piazza Adua, at number 17 via Fiume.

**Passport Control & Customs**

When you first arrive at an Italian airport, you will be directed to the *Im migrazione e Controllo dei Passaporti* (Italian immigration officials) for a passport and visa check. There are sometimes different
lines for foreigners entering Italy and citizens of the EU, so check the signs to make sure you’re in the right one. You should have your stamped Linguaviva enrollment letter handy in case immigration officials ask to see this (you are to keep this letter with you, though it is not something you turn over upon arrival at the airport). Once you’re waved through passport control, you’ll proceed to the baggage claim area and then to Customs, where you may or may not be asked to stop. When cleared by the Italian officials, head to the lobby area of the airport, near the bus and taxi loading area. Airport officials will speak English, so if you need help, don’t be afraid to ask someone.

**Trains**

Train tickets can be purchased at the *Biglietteria* (main ticket office). Check out the official site of Italian Railways at Trenitalia.com for train schedules, stations, special offers, etc. Italian train tickets are good for two months after you purchase them, but you need to **validate your ticket** just before you get on the train. This is called *convalidare* in Italian. Look for a yellow or gold colored box about 15” x 20” in size. You stick one end of the ticket into a slot at the top of the box and the date and time are printed on the ticket. If you fail to validate your ticket before getting on the train, you can be fined about $30.

![Train](image)

There are several types of trains. With a few exceptions, trains that travel within one region—like Tuscany—charge only the base ticket price called a *biglietto*. **IC (Intercity)**, **EC (EuropeanCity)**, and **EN (EuroNight)** trains charge a supplement or *supplemento*. Even faster and fancier trains called **ES (Eurostar)** and the new high velocity **Freccia rossa** and **Freccia argento** cost even more. Some **EX (Expresso)** and **IR (InterRegional)** trains now need a *supplemento*. Remember to ask for *secondo classe* because it is not worth paying more for a first class ticket. Check the schedule before you buy your ticket and specify which train you are taking, so they give you the proper ticket.

For overnight trains, you can reserve a sleeping shelf called a *cucchette* which costs about €15 in addition to the *biglietto* and *supplemento*. The trip from Rome to Florence takes about one and a half hours on the Eurostar; the trip from Milan takes over three hours. Non-Eurostar trains can take up to twice as long as Eurostar trains, so the faster trains are generally worth the extra money. Be sure to consult the schedule to see the frequency of train departures. Trains are less frequent early in the morning and late at night.

**Keep an eye on your valuables and suitcases at all times when you are traveling.** Beware of organized efforts to pick your pockets, particularly in train stations, churches and other places frequented by tourists. You may see women and children working together in groups to distract tourists or travelers. To get rid of them, it is best to ignore and move away from them. Only exceptional cases may require some aggressiveness or physical action on your part. Above all, do not keep your money or your passport in exterior pockets and hold other belongings tightly. Pickpockets on buses are also very common.
Communications

E-Mail and Computers
We strongly recommend bringing a laptop if you have one. Please keep in mind that you need to take adequate precautions to keep it from being stolen, as indeed you would at home. You will want to make sure that it is insured, likely through your parents’ property insurance policy. ACM does not provide insurance coverage for personal property. Linguaviva has a wireless internet connection, so you can use email and the internet at school from your laptop. With an outlet adapter, you can plug your computer in at school or in your room at home. Host families will provide access to internet. Once you have settled into your homes, you are to ask your host parents for permission and instructions about how to use their connection to internet. Before you go, be sure to check the battery life and other functions on the computer, and take care of any repairs because computer repair is slow and very expensive in Italy.

There is currently one computer at Linguaviva for ACM students to use. There is also a good, sturdy printer. Bring at least one USB flash drive to transfer files from your laptop to the program computer for printing papers, etc. Be aware that Linguaviva closes at 5:30 p.m. on week days and is closed on Saturday and Sunday and Italian holidays. There is also the Oblate Library that you will be introduced to and the New International Student center adjacent the church of Santa Maria Maggiore (that you will be taken to during orientation) where wireless internet is available until midnight at no cost after registration.

Mail
While you are in Florence, you should not receive mail at your host family’s residence. Instead, please ask your family and friends to send mail care of Linguaviva (see address at the back of the handbook). Linguaviva staff will be there to accept the mail during business hours, and you can pick up your mail everyday on your way to class. The mailboxes are in alphabetical order.

Receiving Packages
ACM does not recommend that you receive any packages. Customs charges a flat fee on all incoming packages containing books, used items, or things for which no value is declared in the shipping documents. If a value is declared on the package, however, you (the receiver) will be charged 20% of the declared value for customs fees, plus an additional 20% for value-added tax. One recent participant received a box of books from home with a declared value of $200 and was forced to pay €40 ($50) to get the package out of customs. It is a huge hassle to get items out of customs and for those reasons we ask that packages not be sent. If you must receive packages, ask family and friends not to send anything expensive or valuable (e.g., electronics, computer equipment, cameras) and to declare the package’s contents worth nothing. Also, be sure your family does not send you anything that will arrive after you've left Florence. Airmail packages sent from the U.S. take about two weeks to arrive plus additional time if they get held up in customs. Finally, be sure to bring all the prescription medication you'll need for the entire semester, because it is almost impossible to send medicine through customs.

Telephones and Cell Phones
ACM students have purchased a cell phone upon arrival with the WIND company. The cost for a very basic phone is approximately €20, including a SIM card with €5 traffic included in the price. In addition to purchasing the phone, you also opt for a calling plan which provides a monthly package of pre-paid minutes and text messages (plan costs vary from €7 to 12 a month). Also, provided you follow the company’s instructions, at the end of the term, the phone company repurchases the phones for a circa €5 rebate. For a four-month stay, the base cost of buying a phone and using one of the offered calling plans comes to €20 + (€28 to 48) – €5 rebate = €43 to €63 total cost for the four months. Calls and messaging
outside of the calling plan would increase the cost. On these calling plans, you do not pay for incoming calls and messages while in Italy. You would be charged “roaming fees” if you use the phone outside Italy.

The advantages of having a cell phone with regard to security and logistics and the fact that students can be reached by their families at no additional cost to the student make this a highly recommended solution. It has proven to be of exceptional utility in various circumstances: field trips, daily on-site visits, travel, health issues, etc.

Alternatively, you can bring your U.S. cell phone, provided that it is a GSM and can be unlocked for use in Italy/Europe. You can then purchase an Italian SIM card (circa €10) in Florence for use on your existing phone and purchase a monthly package of minutes and text messages. The ACM staff has compared prices between the three principal servers in Italy: Tim, Wind, and Vodafone. As stated above, the WIND company is offering the best deal at present.

You may receive telephone calls at the hotel or at the home of your host family, but you should plan on making calls to the U.S. only from your cell phone or from a payphone if you have a credit card. This is a courtesy to your host family, because in Italy the phone company frequently makes the mistake of Billing callers for collect calls. Receiving bills for an ACM student’s transatlantic calls has been very distressing to both host families and the proprietors of the hotel.

To call the U.S. from Florence, dial the international calling code (00) + country code (1 for the U.S.) + 3-digit area code + 7-digit number. To call Florence from the U.S., dial the international calling code (011) + country code (39 for Italy) + city code (055 for Florence) + number for landlines; for cell phones dial the international calling code (011) + country code (39 in Italy) + number. Calls within Florence must begin with the city code (055). When making international calls, remember the time difference.

Money

The amount of money you’ll need in Florence depends upon your plans, tastes, and habits. Past participants spent between $2,000 and $4,000 (including food for lunch), but as the exchange rate fluctuates, you might have to adjust your budget. Nearly all students spend more than they think they will. Your major daily expenses will include lunch and personal necessities. (For information on how much you can expect to spend for personal needs such as shampoo, newspapers, or a movie ticket, please see the Cost Information Sheet on the ACM website.) On program-sponsored field trips to Rome and Venice your breakfast and dinner will be provided for you, just as they are in Florence. The program also provides bus passes for all students, even those housed within walking distance of Linguaviva. The pass is used during on-site course sessions and permits all equal access to various sites in and around Florence (Fiesole, Settignano, San Miniato, etc.).

You’ll need more money if you plan to travel on your own before the program, during the program break, or after the program, or if you plan to buy a lot of gifts and other things to take home with you. Be sure to budget for the cost of your travel accommodations and meals during the program break.

Credit and Debit Cards

Using debit and credit cards is the safest and most convenient way to handle your money while you’re abroad, and it is recommended that you bring one of each type. ATMs on the PLUS and CIRRUS networks are available throughout Europe, and can be used to withdraw currency from your American account. ATMs almost always offer better exchange rates than banks and currency exchange offices. It is advised that you withdraw money from the ATM located inside the bank during banking hours, in case of a
problem. Take out large amounts less frequently rather than withdrawing small amounts more frequently in order to minimize ATM fees.

**Before the program starts**, inform your bank and credit card provider that you will be spending a semester in Florence so that they won’t block activity on your card, thinking it was stolen. In the unfortunate event that your card actually is lost or stolen, make sure you know the procedure for blocking its use and obtaining a new one while you are overseas. You should also ask about the fees that you will be assessed for using the card abroad.

While ATM and debit cards are the best means of obtaining currency, for extra caution—ATM and debit cards can get lost, stolen, or eaten by cash machines – you might also bring along a credit card and some dollars in cash —perhaps $100 to $200; please keep this money in a hidden place at your host family’s home. Traveler’s checks are not recommended. They are very difficult to negotiate and entail opening an Italian bank account according to the law in vigor. Be mindful of the current exchange rate as to avoid overwithdrawals when you use an ATM machine. As of March 2015, 1 U.S. Dollar equaled 0.90 Euro.

**Cash**

All airports will have ATMs, and for a fee you can withdraw some cash as soon as you arrive in Europe; this is probably the smartest option in terms of getting a good exchange rate. If you decide to buy euros in the U.S., buy only enough to tide you over for the first few days. Foreign currency can be purchased in the U.S. at any bank with an international banking department and at some airports. **Don’t keep more than €50 in cash in your wallet at a time.**

Please note that for all Euro currency, the front side is uniform but the back side may have different designs based upon where the money was produced.
Travel & Safety Information

*Before you leave for your semester in Florence, you must register online with the U.S. Department of State. Go to https://step.state.gov/step and enroll yourself.

You may also find these websites helpful in preparing for your time abroad:
www.travel.state.gov – Travel information from the U.S. Department of State
www.tsa.gov – Transportation Security Administration site, listing items permitted and prohibited aboard an aircraft
www.cdc.gov – Centers for Disease Control, health information for travelers

Online news sources
www.bbc.co.uk – BBC online
www.corriere.it/english – Corriere Della Sera's Italian Life section (in English)
www.lanazione.it – Florence newspaper La Nazione (in Italian)

Packing Considerations

Bring a suitcase, plus a backpack for field trips and weekend traveling. If you plan to do any travel before or after the program, bear in mind that you'll have to keep your luggage with you.

Check with your airline about the number of bags you are allowed to pack and the limits for weight and dimensions. If you exceed the weight and/or size limits for baggage, you might be charged an additional fee, so check with your airline in advance. When you pack your bags, include your name and the program address inside each bag in case it gets lost. If your bags are damaged or missing when you arrive, file a written report with the airline before leaving the airport.

We strongly recommend that you carry your money, passport, and any valuables in a money belt beneath your clothes while you're traveling. You can get one for about $20 at specialty travel shops or stores like Target or Wal-Mart. It's an unfortunate truth that petty thieves and pickpockets are common in larger European cities, especially on trains and in train stations. Do not presume that you will be immune to this, and do take precautions to prevent it. In the recent past, one student's purse was stolen off her shoulder in the centro of Florence in broad daylight. In her purse she was carrying, among other things, her passport, driver's license, credit cards, and several hundred euros in cash. Protect yourself against theft. Buy a money belt and use it at all times when you're traveling.
Pack in your carry-on luggage anything you'll need immediately upon arrival. Check the Transportation Security Administration website for the latest carry-on luggage restrictions (www.tsa.gov). **Never put prescription drugs or valuables in your checked luggage.** To avoid a delay at customs, carry medications in their original packaging. You might also ask your doctor to write a spare prescription using the drug's generic name, since brand names may vary from country to country. If you wear glasses or contacts, bring an extra pair.

**Clothing**

You'll need warm-weather clothing to get you through the end of summer, cold-weather clothing for the beginning of winter, and clothes for the months in between. In September you can expect hot and humid weather for most of the month. October will most likely be cooler, but pleasant, with the possibility of some rain and cold weather. November usually means a mixture of chilly fall and mild winter weather. It doesn’t get as cold in Florence as it does in the Midwest, but it does get into the 30s (°F) and it is rainy and damp in winter months. Past participants emphasize the need for warm clothes; many have had to buy winter coats in Florence. As it’s unusual for temperatures to be very low until December, most Italian apartment buildings don’t begin heating until November 1. You may be chilly indoors even when it’s not that cold outside. (Many apartments have marble floors, which can be extremely cold, and past students recommend bringing a pair of warm socks or slippers to wear indoors.)

Bring clothes that will layer well and adapt to different seasons and situations. If you know you'll wear something only once or twice during the semester, leave it at home. Wash-and-wear clothing is recommended, since dry cleaning and laundromats are expensive. You might expect to do more washing by hand than you normally do. Some past students have brought along a collapsible plastic hanger or clothesline for drip-drying and a small sewing kit for simple clothing repairs. You save some space in your luggage if you tightly and smoothly roll your clothes instead of folding them (your clothes will arrive in a more wearable condition, too).

Comfortable walking shoes are essential; rubber soled gym shoes are best. Since so many classes in Florence are held on site, you will often be walking outside in rainy weather and should choose shoes accordingly. You also will need a warm coat or jacket for outdoors and sweaters for the cool indoor temperatures. Churches in Italy are not heated and you will be spending hours in these buildings, which can be cool even in the summer. Many churches and other buildings don't allow shorts or tank tops, even in hot weather. Other public buildings, such as galleries, theatres, etc., are also quite cool by American standards. A jacket would be practical. Sweaters are versatile for traveling—they work with jackets on frigid days or without jackets on mild ones. Sweaters also have the advantage of being able to survive stuffed into a corner of a backpack or suitcase. Bring your jeans. You should
have casual clothes for everyday use and one dressy outfit for special occasions. Bring an umbrella and gloves; however, remember that these items are also sold for very good prices at the open air central market near ACM and Linguaviva.

Typical student dress in Florence is casual, but not sloppy. Italian students dress in a more sophisticated style than students on most U.S. campuses. It is a good idea to buy a few items in Florence that you can wear out with Italian friends. Clothes are fairly expensive in Florence, but you can always find less expensive shops off the beaten (tourist) path. Bring what you need, and remember you will buy some things in Europe. And don’t forget that you will want room in your luggage to get your purchases home with you.

**Personal Items**

It isn’t necessary to bring a full semester’s supply of toiletries and/or other personal care items. Participants recommend bringing travel sizes when possible, since smaller products conserve space in your luggage. (Don’t forget the 3-1-1 rule for carry-on luggage: 3.4 oz (100ml) containers of liquids or gels; 1 quart-sized, clear ziplock bag; 1 bag per passenger.) You could plan to bring a two-week supply of the toiletries and personal items you’ll need in Florence (e.g. shampoo & conditioner, soap, moisturizer, toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, tampons/pads, etc.). You can then buy more once you start to get acquainted with the city; and most major American brands are available in Europe. Two things you should buy before you go are sunscreen and deodorant which are very expensive in Italy.

**Electronic Items**

Avoid bringing electrical appliances. If you bring an appliance from home, keep in mind that the voltage in Europe is 220. Some electronics, like computers, come equipped to convert to different voltages, but others like hairdryers, do not necessarily come with a converter. You will also need an adapter plug to change the shape of the plug for your appliance.
Suggested Packing List

In your carry-on:
- your passport with visa
- copy of every page (inc.blanks) of your passport
- stamped copy of Linguaviva letter + copy (you will get this from the consulate when they return your passport with the visa)
- credit/debit cards, cash
- student insurance card
- copy of certified birth certificate (in case of lost passport)
- prescription medication for the entire semester + copy of written prescription
- laptop
- eyeglasses/contacts
- change of clothes in case of lost luggage
- money belt, under your clothes
- camera, memory card, cord
- USB drive
- voltage converter
- electric outlet adapter
- sunglasses

In your checked bag(s):
- comfortable walking shoes
- slippers (or flipflops to use in the house only)
- jacket
- hat, scarf, gloves
- umbrella
- sweaters
- shirts
- jeans
- one nice outfit
- underwear
- socks
- pajamas
- swimsuit (depending on your travel plans)
- bath towel (you can buy this on-site)
- small bag for day/overnight trips
- sewing kit
- toiletries (can be purchased on-site)
- sunscreen (expensive to buy in Florence)
- bug spray
- toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- deodorant (expensive to buy in Florence)
- pictures from home
- all required textbooks (buy on-site after checking ACM library collection)
- travel guide
- English/Italian dictionary
V. Housing Arrangements

When you first arrive in Florence, you will be staying at a local hotel for the first few days while you get acquainted with program staff and the other program participants. Details regarding this hotel and directions to it will be provided closer to the program start date.

Your program fee covers the hotel for the first two to three nights starting from the official start date of the program. The program will make the hotel reservations for those nights. If you plan to arrive in Florence earlier than the official start of the program or to stay on after classes end, you’ll need to arrange and pay for your own meals and accommodations. Often there will be available space in the same hotel for students who arrive early, and this will likely be a modest-priced option for a room in downtown Florence. ACM will provide students with details on making an early reservation closer to the start of the program.

Remember: refer to TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS section of handbook for “Directions to Via Fiume, 17”

Host Families
During the first week of your stay in Florence you will be placed in an Italian home. There are generally two ACM students to a household, and you’ll share a room; singles are available only if there is an odd number of women and/or men. Some or all members of your host family will be able to speak English.

Most Florentine residents do not live in the historic city, and you will probably need to commute from your host residence to the centro for classes at Linguaviva on a daily basis. The commute is generally between 15 and 30 minutes by bus or on foot. ACM students enjoy a great deal of diversity in their living situations. You may be placed in a multigenerational household with everyone from babies to grandparents, or you might live with an older woman or a couple with extra space in their apartment. As you might expect, most large Florentine families don’t have an abundance of space to host students, so the number of families with small children who can accommodate ACM students is limited. Give some thought to the kind of situation that might work best for you, and be ready to express your preferences on the housing questionnaire.

According to the Linguaviva contractual agreement with the families, breakfast and supper will be provided by your host family; lunch is on your own. If you have any special dietary restrictions, be sure to let ACM know in advance so that it can be taken into account in making housing arrangements. Breakfast is usually fairly simple—coffee and bread or a pastry, for example—but the evening meal is another thing entirely. Italians are known for taking time every day to savor meals and enjoy the company of friends and family, and dinner can often linger on for an hour or two, or more.

You will have a small space in the refrigerator where you can keep foods and drink you have purchased. We recommend that you prepare yourselves a box lunch with these supplies if you do not wish to purchase your lunch in downtown Florence. Remember, you do not have use of the kitchen for lunch or any other time of the day without the specific permission of your hosts.
Respect of the privacy and property of the families is of the utmost importance. You may not access their belongings or collections of books, films, CDs—in short, their personal property—without first asking their permission. The same holds true for food and kitchen supplies.

You are each allowed one load of laundry per person per week, but the families do not allow you to use their washing machines yourselves. You have to arrange the washing and drying of your belongings with your family. Since you are almost always in pairs, it is recommended that you do one white wash and one dark wash per week together, specifying that you want your clothes washed at a low temperature (maximum 40° C).

Here are a few tips for living with an Italian family:
• Please be sure to inform your family in advance if you will miss a meal or if you plan to be away for the weekend.
• It’s very common in Italy to wear slippers inside the house, so bring a pair with you. Because many of the apartments have cold marble or ceramic floors, your Italian mother will probably expect you to wear slippers inside the house. You might be considered impolite if you walk around in bare or stocking feet.
• Many more Italians than Americans smoke, and while your Italian family will not smoke in front of you, we cannot guarantee a smoke-free home for everyone.
• Cats are popular pets in Italy, so if you are allergic to cat dander you should let us know.
• As mentioned, use of the landline at your host family should be very limited. If friends and your (American) family call you there occasionally, brief conversations are acceptable; plan on using your cell phone or public phones for calls you make yourself. (The Italian phone system charges for minutes used and does not list individual phone calls on its bills). Your host family will, in all likelihood, prefer you to use their phone only for brief incoming calls.
• Don’t be shy about asking your host family to do things with them during free time (such as going to the grocery store or going out for gelato).
• If you have a question about your room or other spaces in the host home, ask your host family for help. Never change the arrangement of furniture in your room or the host home on your own.
• Please note that during the fall break, your room with the family is paid for throughout the break, but meals will be paid for only for the days you remain in Florence and in residence at the homestay. As soon as you have your plans made for that period, you are asked to advise both your host family and the ACM Florence staff.
VI. Host Country Information

When you arrive in Italy, you may be struck by the extent to which art and aesthetic presentation are part of daily life and not reserved only for museums and palaces. Store window displays, articles for daily living, and food in markets all reflect a highly developed sense of design and the value placed on artistic presentation. This is equally true for the ways in which Italians present themselves to others; putting forth one’s best appearance (fare bella figura) is a manifestation of the importance of style. Nor is this simply a modern phenomenon: during the Renaissance, for example, it was important to dress and behave as befit one’s status. One of the first activities of new rulers who assumed power (conquered, inherited, or usurped) was to order clothing, furniture, works of art, and other trappings of wealth and power commensurate with their new status. The opposite of a good presentation, una bella figura, is appearing sloppy and unkempt, characterized in Italian as brutta. Flip-flops, short shorts, and hoodies are all brutta. One can say much the same for many Italian television shows.

Italians also have an instinctive distrust of and cynicism toward authority and would regard Americans’ tendencies to be law-abiding and trusting as naïve in the extreme. While Italy today is relatively homogeneous linguistically and has a strong central government, local and regional attachments endure. For Florentines, this means pride not only in being Florentine, but also in their identity as Tuscans and northerners. The Northern League, or Lega Nord, attracts votes from those who feel that their taxes are wasted by the central government and that disproportionate amounts of national resources are expended in the southern areas of the country, which it sees as backwards. Some Lega Nord extremists even espouse secession from the rest of the country. At the same time, in southern Italy, there are those still nostalgic for the Bourbon monarchs.

Florence is more than a museum of the Renaissance; it is a modern Italian city with approximately 600,000 residents, with all of the facilities and many of the problems one associates with large metropolitan areas. Your semester in Italy provides an opportunity not only to learn about Italy during the Renaissance but also to observe modern Italian life in all its fullness and complexities and to consider the continuities between these two periods.
VII. Cultural Norms and Expectations

By design, an off-campus program is unlike life on your home campus. In addition to the obvious differences—what and when you eat, for instance, you may also encounter subtler, more elusive cultural contrasts. A big part of living abroad is recognizing and adjusting to your new cultural environment. You may need to adapt to new social protocol as you establish friendships with Italians, and to political viewpoints you may not have heard expressed at home. Americans sometimes find it difficult to adjust to some Italians’ attitudes towards women and minorities, for example. Adapting to new and different cultural practices and belief systems certainly doesn't mean you have to abandon your own, but being aware of and attuned to cultural contrasts can help smooth the transition to life in another country. There will undoubtedly be days when you find it all overwhelming and crave the comforts of home—things you may realize you took completely for granted before.

Communicating in a foreign language can mean that even basic speech requires effort, and you might sometimes start to feel tired and irritated with your environment and people around you. But keep trying! It takes courage and commitment to remain open to so much newness, but the extra effort and greater sensitivity required of you while you're in Florence will be richly rewarded.

Italy is not the U.S. and you may find yourself puzzled, or even annoyed, by various Italian customs and practices. It's obviously impossible for ACM to tell you in advance everything you will experience or feel while in Italy, but there are some differences in behavior you may want to know about in advance. Here is a very incomplete list of some of the cultural contrasts you may encounter:

- Conceptions of personal space are quite different in Italy. You may find that people stand closer to you than at home, especially in public areas and on public transportation.
- Italians value courtesy and politeness. On buses, for example, you will find Italians readily giving up their seats to the elderly and mothers with children. And in waiting for the bus, while you may be taken aback by the lack of a line, you’ll find that people get on in an orderly fashion without pushing or shoving.
- Italians communicate more easily with strangers than Americans do, although in a less casual way.
- Even if you haven't studied Italian before, start immediately to use small courtesies in Italian ("buon giorno" or “buona sera” when entering shops or cafes and “arrivederici” and “grazie” when exiting). You'll find that it’s appreciated. Remember that “ciao” should be used when addressing people your own age or younger.
- The Italian language has two forms of address, the familiar ‘tu’ and the formal ‘Lei’. The latter is used with people one does not know well, with elders, generally in business negotiations, in academic settings especially when addressing instructors and/or professors. This will be explained further upon your arrival and in your Italian classes.
- In shops, merchandise is often kept on shelves behind the counter; even when it is not, let the sales person show you what you ask to see rather than sorting through the stock yourself. Your discretion will be appreciated.
- Smoking is banned by law in all enclosed spaces (including restaurants and theaters) unless they have a separate area with continuous floor-to-ceiling walls and a ventilation system. The smoking ban is one of the toughest in Europe.

ACM ALUMNI ADVICE: Don’t eat on public transportation or in public buildings (except in cafeterias). Italians don’t “eat on the run” and they don’t bring snacks and lunches to meetings.
Mental and Intellectual Preparation

Over the summer your professors may assign you readings or books in preparation for your courses. Meanwhile, start to do some independent reading about Florence, Tuscany, and Italy. Most libraries have collections of travel guides that can answer questions you have about customs and culture in Italy and what to see and do while you're there. You'll make many discoveries on your own, but a good travel guide and map can help you get your bearings in an unfamiliar city and reduce the time it takes to start feeling at home. Many of the host families have hosted students in the past and might have their own library of books left behind by ACM students. Don't load yourselves down with too many books, however, as many of your course required readings are available in Florence.

Spend some time in the art history section of your college or public library looking at books on some of the art and historical sites you will see in person when you get to Europe. Try to read at least one history and one art history book from the reading lists on the next page. Try Italian novels in translation for recreational reading, too.

Make a special effort to keep up with current events in Europe and North America. Past participants have remarked that their European friends were well informed about politics and interested in American current events. You may be asked your opinion on many international current events as well, so it helps to stay apprised of what's going on in the world.

Suggested Readings and Resources

Travel Guide
Blue Guide: Florence (highly recommended)
CultureSmart: Italy

Art and History of Florence and Italy (*multiple copies in the ACM Library)
Eve Borsook, The Companion Guide to Florence*
Peter d’Epiro and Mary Desmond Pinkowish, Sprezzatura: 50 Ways Italian Genius Shaped the World*
Ross King, Brunelleschi’s Dome: How a Renaissance Genius Reinvented Architecture
Ross King, Michelangelo and the Pope’s Ceiling
Giorgio Vasari, Lives of the Artists (abridged edition that includes lives of 16th century masters as well as earlier masters)
Giorgio Vasari, Lives and Ross King’s two volumes* (highly recommended)

Other fiction, plays, poetry, lighter non-fiction
George Eliot, Romola
E.M. Forster, A Room with a View
Barbara Harrison, Italian Days
Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun*  
D.H. Lawrence, *Etruscan Places and Sea and Sardinia*  
Mary McCarthy, *Stones of Florence*  
Tim Parks, *Italian Neighbors, A Season with Verona*  
Luigi Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author; Enrico IV; One, No One, and One Hundred Thousand*  
Beppe Severgnini, *La Bella Figura; A Field Guide to the Italian Mind*  
Alexander Stille, *The Sack of Rome*  
Lawrence Venuti, ed. *Italy: A Traveler's Literary Companion*  

Also look for novels by Italian authors Italo Calvino, Carlo Cassola, Umberto Eco, Natalia Ginzburg, Giuseppe Lampedusa, Carlo Levi, Elsa Morante, Vasco Pratolini, Leonardo Sciascia, and Antonio Tabucchi.

**Films**  

**Online Resources**  
www.acm.edu/florence – ACM Web site and links  
www.linguaviva.it – Linguaviva Scuola d’Italiano, your Italian language school and the ACM program headquarters  
www.cecilstudios.org – site of the studio art course in Florence

**Culture Shock**  
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), 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 studying 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.
While you may wish to use weekends to visit towns in and around Tuscany, we recommend that you plan to travel further afield during the week-long break that comes midway through the semester. Rather than make plans for this before you travel to Italy, it’s often more beneficial and effective to wait until you’re in Italy, have met other program participants, and can plan to travel with others on the program.

If friends and family from home plan to visit you while you’re in Italy, encourage them to come during this week-long break when you will have time to show them around Florence and perhaps travel elsewhere in Italy with them. It is not appropriate to miss classes in order to guide or travel with visitors from home.

Past students recommend that students take advantage of the first four weeks of the program prior to the start of the electives. The homework load will be lighter which allows students to take daytrips on the weekends and go places nearby Florence during the weekday afternoons such as Arezzo, Lucca, Siena, and Fiesole. Small travel like this will speed up your Italian skills by trying to navigate the different cities.
IX. Health and Safety

Health

While you are overseas, you need to be aware of your health and your responsibility for monitoring new or ongoing medical concerns. Once you arrive, program staff in Florence will instruct you on what to do if you need medical attention. The challenges of adjusting to a new culture are an important part of what you will be experiencing in Europe. Adjusting to this new environment can be especially difficult when you are away from friends, family, and college faculty or staff that you know well. You will have days that are exciting and rewarding and also days where everything seems strange and exhausting. Program staff, host families, and new friends can help you recognize and talk through these pressures, and staff can also recommend counselors if you feel they might help.

Health Insurance

ACM will provide health insurance coverage for all students participating in its programs. This coverage is through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI), a company with long experience and excellent service in providing health coverage for students abroad.

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

- Coverage for both medically-necessary 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; and
- No deductible.

The policy will cover students from the official arrival date through the official departure date for 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—e.g., during program vacation periods.

The policy, however, should not replace any coverage you have in the U.S., nor should you discontinue your U.S. 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 provides for up to 30 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 independently purchase supplemental coverage through CISI to extend the days that you will be covered by the ACM policy. (If, for example, you plan to leave early for the program site or do some traveling outside the U.S. after the program, you can purchase health insurance coverage for that additional time.) The cost of this additional coverage is approximately $40/month. CISI will e-mail 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.culturalinsurance.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.)

CISI is a medical insurance plan and will not cover your personal property. Please consult your parents'/guardians' insurance to ensure adequate coverage of anything you take to or purchase in Florence.

**Your Medical History**

Health will be a special concern while you are living in an unfamiliar place without access to your regular physician or health service. In order to be sure that you will receive proper care from a physician who does not know you, you will have to provide an accurate and complete medical history. For allergies, ACM will need to know exactly what you are allergic to, what the reaction is, and the remedy you generally use. Any health information you provide to the ACM office is, of course, confidential. It will be released only to the program director and, if necessary, to the physician who treats you in Florence.

In Florence, you will likely be treated by one of the physicians or clinics affiliated with our health insurance provider. The care providers and facilities with which our insurance works have been pre-approved and have experience treating Americans with a broad range of medical complaints.

**Medications and Other Medical Preparation**

As part of your preparation to go abroad, please read carefully information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) about medical conditions in Western Europe. The website is: www.cdc.gov/travel/destinationItaly.aspx. You should share this information with your doctor or the physician who signs your Medical History form and your parents. You will want to make sure that any recommended vaccinations are up to date.

If you take one or more prescription 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 Italy and to have the generic name. Most drugs are available in Italy, although they may be compounded somewhat differently. You should not plan to have drugs (of any kind) sent to you while abroad. As mentioned, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to get them through customs.

**Special Diets**

If you are a vegetarian or follow other dietary restrictions, please include this information in your housing and medical history forms. You should describe your diet, specifically which foods you avoid, your reasons for following it (has your doctor prescribed it or is your motivation philosophical), and let us know whether you can be flexible about your restrictions. The ACM staff will want to place you where your special needs will cause as little inconvenience as possible for your host family. Information from you in advance will help.

**Safety**

While studying off campus offers many new educational and personal opportunities, it can also present challenges and risks that are different from those on your home campus. Just as you prepare for a new mode of learning on the program, you should also think about living in a new environment that may contain new kinds of risks and will not have the same support systems or forms of assistance that you
have turned to on your home campus or in your hometown. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind as you prepare for the program.

In Florence, you will be commuting between your home and Linguaviva each day by public transportation. Public transportation is widely used and apt to be crowded. You will also be coming home at night from program-sponsored events or socializing with friends. You will need to become aware of different traffic patterns and practices. Your host family and program staff can advise you about how to ensure your safety as you travel around Florence.

You also need to be mindful of your personal safety as you travel independently on weekends or during the break. You are expected to inform the director and your host family of any travel plans and your expected time of return. You will be provided access to ACM’s Independent Travel Form to submit anytime you travel away from Florence without program staff. This form allows ACM to contact you or provide you with resources in case of emergency or change to program itineraries.

Crime and Random Violence
Florence is a relatively safe city and Italy is a hospitable and secure country. Like any place in the world, however, Florence and other parts of Italy have some crime and random violence. We encourage you to travel with a partner or in a small group. Women need to be particularly careful, especially returning home at night. Follow your host family’s advice about coming home at night, and follow more than your usual precautions until you learn to read street signals or cultural signs that might be warnings. In your home country, you know what the potential danger signs are; you should take special care until you learn the comparable signs in Italy.

Keep an eye on your stuff! The following excerpt from Let’s Go: Italy explains some common scams:

In large cities, thieves and frauds often work in groups and may involve children. Beware of certain classics: sob stories that require money, rolls of bills “found” on the street, mustard spilled (or saliva spit) onto your shoulder to distract you while they snatch your bag. Never let your passport or your bags out of your sight. Hostel workers will sometimes stand at bus and train stations to try to recruit tired and disoriented travelers to their hostel; never believe those who tell you that theirs is the only hostel open. Pickpockets abound in Rome, Naples, and other urban centers, especially on public transportation. Also, be alert in public telephone booths: if you must say your calling card number, do so very quietly; if you punch it in, make sure no one can look over your shoulder. (2007 edition, p. 21)

There are several simple rules that can help you avoid being a victim of a crime:

• Familiarize yourself with the European monetary system and count your change.
• Put your wallet back in your purse or pack and close the purse/pack before leaving a shop.
• Carry purses and other bags across the body and hold on to them firmly; carry them away from the street side of the sidewalk.
• Carry only as much cash as you need.

Gender Relations and Sexual Harassment
In the same way you have learned how to judge your behavior with the opposite sex in the United States, in Europe you will need to negotiate a new set of customs and verbal and nonverbal cues. American
movies have created an impression of free and easy sexual relations between Americans. An open approach to strangers in the street or in a bar or “sexy” clothing can be read as a sign of promiscuity. To an even greater degree than in the U.S., excessive consumption of alcohol and casual flirtation can be misinterpreted as expressing unintended interest. Many students have found it necessary to adapt more conservative dress and behavior than in the U.S.

Even these strategies, however, may not discourage Italian (or some other) men from making comments about your appearance or following you on the street. Italian men have a reputation for being somewhat forward when approaching women, particularly foreigners and especially women with fair coloring. The following passage, written by a British woman and borrowed from www.italyheaven.co.uk/women.html, gives some idea of the cultural forces surrounding gendered behavior in Italy and how to navigate some potentially unfamiliar terrain:

Whole volumes could be written about Italian men, but for [women] travelers the most important fact is that they are usually harmless. . . . Italy is a modern country, but many old-fashioned attitudes remain. . . . [A] woman alone can attract appreciative comments, whistles, hisses or snatches of song. But remember that most Italians live in tightly-knit communities where the domestic sphere is ruled by the mamma. Women are seen as strong and quite capable of saying no if they’re not interested, or conversely of pursuing a man they are keen on.

It is actually rare to get hassled for more than ten seconds. Here any attention you get is likely to be a simple compliment with no agenda, and expected to be received as such. It would be disproportionate and inappropriate to respond with an insult. If you don’t want to accept the compliment, just ignore it. If you want to, you could allow yourself a half-smile or a casual “grazie.” When Italian women are hooted or hissed at, or have compliments yelled at them, they generally just ignore it.

Particularly if you have light coloring or blonde hair you can expect a certain amount of attention, which will increase the further south you travel. You will automatically be seen as unusual and attractive. You should also be aware that foreign tourists have a reputation for drinking too much, and it is true that some act in a manner that is shocking to Italian traditionalists, and others are tempted into a fling by the unaccustomed compliments. If you’re not interested, just make it obvious. The sort of male who picks up tourists won’t waste his time if you ignore him, walk past, say “no, grazie,” or ask to be left alone.

If you’re in doubt about how to act in certain social situations while you’re abroad, look to the locals for clues. Italian women have learned to deflect these comments, and as you gain confidence in the language, you too will learn how to handle these uncomfortable situations. Remember that the first rule is to ignore and only when pressured revert to a “no, grazie” or other verbal exchanges.

A special note for women: There have been isolated incidents of sexual assault perpetrated against young American women in Florence. Local authorities have not always been able to prosecute because the victims have not always been able to identify their assailants. These specific incidents have been complicated by factors such as excessive consumption of alcohol, a lack of fluency in Italian, and uncertainty in decoding cultural signals. While ACM does not intend to mandate students’ conduct during free time, we strongly suggest that students:
1. **Watch out for each other.** Don’t leave a fellow student behind or alone when out socially or in an unfamiliar setting, especially in a bar at the end of the evening. Before the outing begins, discuss plans for getting home safely together or make arrangements to take a taxi home together at the end of the night. Communicate with each other and stay safe together!

2. **Don’t leave your drink unattended at a bar.** The police suspect that drugs have been slipped into drinks left unattended, exacerbating the effects of the alcohol and, in some cases, resulting in students’ inability to remember subsequent events.

3. **Dress defensively.** You will find that if you dress a bit more conservatively than you might at home (and especially on your home campus) that you are less likely to be the focus of unwanted attention and the harassment to which women may be subject when dressed in especially short skirts and revealing tops.

Finally, please remember that Florence is heavily populated most semesters by U.S. students. Just because you see someone displaying a particular behavior, don’t assume that behavior is or isn’t a cultural norm of Italy. You could be observing another U.S. student displaying behavior that is not culturally acceptable and is therefore inappropriate to replicate.

**Student Conduct and Discipline**

Enrollment in an off-campus study program obligates you to conduct yourself as a responsible member of that program. While on an ACM program, any behavior by a student that discredits the student or the program, as determined by the program rules and the program director, may result in disciplinary action. The program director reserves the right to discipline or dismiss a student whose conduct is seen as being in conflict with the best interests of the program and in violation of its rules, either academic or social. The director of the program also has the authority, in consultation with the ACM Chicago office, to remove a student from the program because of a medical or psychological crisis or any other serious situation that might arise. Life-threatening events, serious involvement with the police, unscheduled loss of contact with a student, and incidents having the potential for serious public relations consequences may also warrant dismissal.

You will be expected to conform to the behavioral standards of Italy, which, as mentioned before, are different from ours. You will be registered with the U.S. embassy in Italy. Remember that you are in Europe to experience a different kind of living, and that attitudes, assumptions, and customs are different. Your attitude, cooperation, and flexibility will make the difference in the quality of your experience abroad and will be especially important to the success of your stay with your Italian family.

In a group as small as the ACM group, cooperation from everyone is necessary if the program is to function smoothly. Lack of cooperation from even one student can make the experience less successful for the whole group.

**Alcohol**

One significant area of difference between Italy and the U.S. has to do with consumption of alcohol. While there is not the rigid enforcement of a drinking age in Italy, you will also find that Italians rarely drink to become intoxicated. Rather, alcohol is consumed in moderation on social occasions and with meals. Public drunkenness and rowdy behavior are frowned upon and will likely serve to identify you as an American thus potentially singling you out for further unwanted attention. Moreover, over-consumption of alcohol poses specific difficulties for women: not only are women who are publicly drunk in Italy looked upon as promiscuous, they also put themselves at risk for unwanted attention. Please keep in mind that your judgment is likely to be impaired with alcohol, and that you may lose the ability to
evaluate situations with the same caution and sensitivity you would normally use. Remember that you may not be aware of or able to read the various social signals that are being given.

**Drugs**

Anti-drug laws in Italy are very severe and, contrary to what is generally believed, enforced with considerable rigor. In Italy you are subject to a minimum sentence of three years for use or possession of illegal drugs. You can be arrested for suspected possession, suspected use, knowledge of possession or use not reported to the police, and on these charges you can be held without bail for an indefinite period of time. Any accusation of an ACM student by the narcotics police could have severe repercussions on the program, the staff, and the students. Therefore, the possession or use of any illegal drugs may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

If you are arrested because of suspected involvement with drugs, the ACM program staff and American Consulate or Embassy will be able to do very little to help you. It is particularly important that you realize that ACM cannot function in a foreign country in the same way that your home college may function in dealings with civil authorities. In short, in case of trouble there is little ACM can do to insulate you from the effects of European laws. If you are arrested on a drug charge, you may or may not be allowed consultation with the American Consulate.

**Motor Vehicles**

You may not acquire or operate any kind of motorized vehicle while you are a participant in the ACM program, including motorcycles, motorbikes, or scooters. You will probably find, as do a great many residents of Florence, that public transportation and walking are the most efficient means of getting around.
The Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) is a consortium of 14 residential liberal arts colleges in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Colorado. ACM programs reflect the academic standards and policies of its member colleges, and the standards and policies in the paragraphs which follow are applicable for all ACM off-campus study programs.

The ACM Off-Campus Study Program mission begins:

Our programs’ academic standards and curricula are rooted in the liberal arts. They emphasize the interdisciplinary educational approach, intimacy of small classes, focus on independent research, and discussion-based learning that characterize liberal arts education at ACM colleges. The programs accelerate and deepen students’ scholarly and personal growth through structured interactions between selected topics and distinctive locations. They offer educational experiences unlike those found in conventional classrooms.

You and all ACM students play an essential role in ensuring that the scholarly and personal growth sought as an outcome of this mission is accomplished in a dignified and respectful manner in conjunction with the people and customs of the host culture. As guests in the cities and countries of our various programs, all students are subject to the same laws and regulations as their host citizens and are responsible for knowing both ACM policies and local laws.

The ACM Code of Student Responsibility and its subsidiary policies exist to facilitate the educational process for you and the other students and to ensure a safe, fair, and successful experience for all students, staff, and faculty. While enrolled in an ACM program, your home campus may also choose to hold you accountable to their code of conduct. If enrolled in a host institution during their off-campus study experience, students will also be subject to the policies of that host institution.

**ACM Code of Student Responsibility**

The ACM Code of Student Responsibility reads as follows:

I understand that I am required to comply with all policies and procedures of the ACM including policies outlined here as well as program-specific rules introduced during the on-site orientation. My participation in an ACM program represents my college and the ACM consortium at all times. I know that my behavior must respect the values and norms of the host community while promoting the safety and wellbeing of other students and my program’s faculty and staff. I will strive to ensure that my behavior supports the educational nature of the ACM at all times.

Studying off-campus during your college career can be both very exciting and very challenging. Many students return to their home campus feeling dramatically changed, eager to embark on a new academic or career path, or with a clearer understanding of who they are as an individual. Off-campus study is a privilege; an option within higher education that not all students can select as a part of their collegiate experience. It often creates lifetime memories and presents multiple prospects for personal growth. In order to protect this opportunity for all students, however, ACM has instituted some policies and to ensure it remains accessible to the greatest possible number of students.

Please note that these policies and procedures comprise guidelines that can be changed by ACM at any time in its discretion. It is not and should not be construed as a contract, either express or implied.

**Expectations of Student Conduct**

Any student who engages in inappropriate conduct will be in violation of this Code of Student Responsibility and will be subject to a conduct review and possible sanctions. While it is impossible to outline all forms of inappropriate conduct, what follows is a non-exclusive list of the more common examples:
1. **Violations of any ACM policies or regulations** – policies published in student handbooks, Study Abroad Contract, the website, or other official ACM publications (including but not limited to the Housing Policy, the Policy on Alcohol and Drugs, the Policy on Sexual Harassment, and the Policy on Academics).

2. **Violation of safety practices** – action or inaction that might cause or lead to injury or death to oneself or any other person; threat or cause of harm; self-endangerment. Participation in any activity expressly prohibited by ACM or the terms of the CISI insurance policy (international programs only) including mountaineering where ropes or guides are normally used; hang gliding; parachuting; bungee jumping; operating a motor vehicle of any kind (including motorcycle); racing by horse, motor vehicle, or motorcycle; parasailing; participating in any professional sports or competitions; or riding as a pilot, student pilot, operator, or crewmember in or on any type of aircraft.

3. Any **conduc** which threatens ACM’s ability to function or maintain positive relations in host communities including but not limited to culturally inappropriate behavior or defamatory statements regarding host families, organizations, communities, or countries in blogs, social media, or other public media.

4. **Failure to comply** with reasonable directions of ACM staff (or designees) or failure to promptly and properly identify self to ACM staff or law enforcement authorities if asked. Examples might include use of a fake ID, failure to comply with staff requests in an emergency, or not completing assigned sanctions resulting from a previous policy violation.

5. **Theft** – attempted or actual theft or willful possession of items belonging to another. Unauthorized use of property belonging to another.

6. **Unauthorized entry** – inappropriate use of keys or facilities (ex. housing or program site).

7. **Inappropriate use of ACM technology** including but not limited to computers or wireless internet provided by ACM or any of ACM’s partners, and including but not limited to actions such as illegal downloading of copyrighted material, computer piracy, or using technology to threaten or cause harm.

8. **Damage** – causing damage to property belonging to ACM or to the property of any of its partner organizations, any person, or the public domain.

9. Possession or use of any **weapon, fireworks, incendiary device or explosive device**.

10. **Participation in political demonstrations, rallies, or protests** is prohibited in international locations regardless of the peaceful intention or nature of the gathering. For students in domestic off-campus study programs, students should be mindful that participation in such activities, affiliated or not with the program, conforms to the other expectations of student conduct listed in this section.

11. **Disorderly conduct** – obstruction or distraction of the educational process, lewd or indecent behavior, breach of peace, physical abuse or threat, intimidation or coercion, etc. Also includes retaliation against any individual who reports any violations of the Code of Student Responsibility or any individual who participates in any investigation of such reports.

12. **Stalking or Hazing** – Behavior that is disturbing or distressing to others including but not limited to stalking or hazing. Stalking is defined as the willful and unsolicited following or harassing of another individual through any means. Hazing is defined as any act which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of another person for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition of continued membership in a group. Any group of students acting together may be considered a group for the purposes of this section. The express or implied consent of the victim will not be a defense. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of hazing is not a neutral act and is also a violation of this section. Stalking or hazing can include actions in person, via social media, or through other electronic means.

13. **Bias-related behavior or personal abuse** – use of language, images, signs, symbols, threats, or physical behavior that directly or indirectly demonstrates hostility or contempt toward a person or group on the basis of actual or perceived identity. Behavior that 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. Actions that would reasonably tend to cause alarm,
anger, fear, or resentment in others or would endanger the health, safety, and welfare of another member of the ACM community.

14. **Any criminal behavior** or breach of local, state, host country or domestic or international laws.

15. **A willful failure to report** a violation of ACM policies or law or reasonably suspect harassment or abuse.

**Email Communications with Students**

ACM will utilize each student’s college or university email account as the official method of communicating with students. Students are responsible for all ACM information sent to them via their college or university assigned email account, and any official ACM documents and communications will be sent to that email address before, during, and after their off-campus study program.

**ACM Policy on Academics**

All academic pursuit depends on trust. All of us should be able to trust that we will be treated with honesty and respect—respect for our ideas and for us as persons. As a participant in an ACM program, you will be expected to conduct yourself with the same level of honesty and openness as is expected on your home campus.

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

- **Arrival and departure dates.** You should make travel arrangements to arrive at the program site on the date specified in the program handbook. Similarly, you should plan your itinerary to remain at the program site through the last day of the program. ACM staff and instructors are unable to accommodate students who request to arrive later or depart earlier.

- **Course load.** You are required to carry the full load of courses and credits as determined for the ACM program in which you are enrolled.

- **Class attendance and participation.** You 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. Please remember that these are academic programs: it is not appropriate to miss classes because you are traveling or hosting visitors; you are expected to participate in all program activities unless otherwise excused.

- **Grade Choice.** All ACM courses will be graded and reported to home schools on an A-F grading scale. If a student wishes to take a class or classes on a pass/fail basis, the student must contact their home school’s registrar.

- **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 submitted after 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.

- **Academic honesty.** Actions of dishonesty are destructive to the well-being of the academic community, and ACM staff respond 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 Director of Off Campus Study, who will investigate and conduct a review according to the ACM Student Conduct Procedures. Students who are aware of academic dishonesty on the part of other students are expected to report that information to the Director of Off-Campus Study.

- **Final exams and presentations.** ACM instructors 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 (with the exception of a student who has a documented learning disability and with whom ACM staff has made prior arrangements).

**Grading policies related to off-campus study.** You should consult your home campus registrar’s office for off-campus grading policies in effect on your own campus.

**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 you need to make special arrangements (e.g., if grades need to be reported by a specific date), you should share this information with the ACM program director at the beginning of the program.

**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.

**Release of student grades.** ACM staff will only release grades to your home campus once all program, financial, and student conduct obligations are complete.

### ACM Housing Policy

Student housing will vary across the ACM programs and may include homestays, apartments, educational institutions, camping, hostels, and other appropriate housing. Your housing situation while abroad is part of the learning environment that ACM programs provide, and you will want to take advantage of the opportunities that different housing situations provide. You are responsible for your behavior and actions in your housing environment and must respect the policies and practices of each establishment or facility in which you are housed, including respectfully following your homestay family's rules. Any damage to property or environment, disruptive activities, or willful disregard of policies and practices of any housing situation may result in disciplinary action including expulsion from housing and/or dismissal from the program. You should inform your on-site director if problems or concerns arise regarding your housing and efforts will be made to either resolve the issue or find an alternative placement.

*International programs:* Although visitors are strongly discouraged during the program, anyone planning to visit you during the period of enrollment must plan independent accommodations. You are prohibited from bringing any visitor to stay at a homestay or other provided place of housing. You should not ask your host families to accommodate your guests.

*Domestic programs:* Visitors should not interfere with the functioning of the program nor any participant's ability to complete program responsibilities. Any program participants wishing to have a visitor stay overnight in program housing should consult with any roommate(s) for approval and abide by any policies of the vendor providing the housing. All visitors shall abide by all provisions of the unit's roommate agreement, and the host participant may be held responsible for the actions and consequences of his or her guest's behavior.

### ACM Policy on Alcohol and Drugs

Knowing how to engage responsibly with alcohol among peers is a component of living in a new, educational environment. In the same way that positive living environments create positive experiences and learning appropriate choices around alcohol can create notable memories among a community of students. In the context of off-campus study, this can mean deciding if or when it is culturally appropriate to consume alcohol, in what quantities, and amongst what company.
Alcohol may be consumed responsibly by students who are of legal age in their host country. You should be aware of the limits of local law, cultural norms, and safety considerations when choosing to consume alcohol. You are prohibited from providing alcohol to others who are not of legal age in the host country. Inappropriate behavior resulting from alcohol consumption, including but not limited to behavior which is offensive to others; and/or poses unreasonable risk to you or others; and/or results in damage to property; and/or impacts student performance; and/or causes embarrassment or otherwise interferes with the proper functioning of the program or other students, is not permitted and will result in disciplinary action.

Possession, use, or distribution of any substances that are considered by host country law to be illegal drugs or controlled substances is prohibited. You are hereby cautioned that the possession of drugs is often handled harshly by local law enforcement in host countries. The misuse and abuse of prescription medications is also considered a violation of this policy.

**ACM Policy on Sexual Harassment**
It is 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 is unwelcome words or conduct based upon the recipient’s gender. Sex or gender-based harassment does not have to be sexual in nature. However, such harassment can often take the form of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature. Harassment can become unlawful 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. Be advised that ACM reserves the right to interpret these policies and procedure more stringently than applicable legal definitions. Therefore, harassment or discrimination that does not rise to the level of a legal violation may still be found to violate ACM’s standards of conduct.

**ACM Policy on Dual Relationships**
A dual relationship is one in which the faculty/staff member/contracted vendor has both a professional and a romantic or sexual relationship with a student. (A “contracted vendor” could include: drivers, interpreters, guides, host family members, guards, etc.) This includes relationships which appear to be mutually consensual. However, the inherent inequality of power between student and faculty/staff/vendor creates an unacceptable conflict of interest in a supervisory, educational or advisory context. For this reason, dual relationships between faculty/staff/vendors and students who participate in the same program are specifically prohibited. If a relationship nonetheless develops, the faculty/staff member/vendor is expected to remove him/herself from supervisory or advisory responsibility for that student and alert his/her supervisor or face disciplinary action.

**ACM Policy on Sexual Assault**
**Definitions:**
*Consent:* Consent means the mutual understanding of words or actions freely and actively given by two informed people, which a reasonable person would interpret as a willingness to participate in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Consent is not effective if it results from the use of physical force, there is intimidation or coercion, or the recipient party is incapacitated, or if a person is under the influence of drugs or alcohol such that they lack necessary judgment to give consent to sexual activity. Also remember that consent can be withdrawn and that consent to one activity does not necessarily imply consent to another. Finally, silence or non-communication should never be interpreted as effective consent.
Sexual Contact: Sexual contact includes but is not limited to: sexual intercourse, penetration of an orifice (anal, oral or vaginal) with the penis, finger, or other object in a sexual manner, intentional touching of the genitals, buttocks, or breasts, or coercion to force someone else to touch one's genitals, buttocks, or breasts. Sexual contact can occur over clothing.

Sexual Contact With An Incapacitated Person: Incapacitation is the physical and/or mental inability to make informed, rational judgments. To have sexual contact with someone whom you know to be, or should know to be incapable of making a rational, reasonable decision due to his or her consumption of substances, in other words, unable to give effective consent, is a violation of policy.

Sexual Exploitation: Acts committed by a person for sexual gratification, financial gain and/or advancement, entertainment, or for any other reason that abuses or exploits the privacy of another person's sexuality. Examples may include but are not limited to: non-consensual recording of sexual activity or nudity, unauthorized presentation or distribution of said recordings in any form, allowing others to observe a sexual act without the knowledge or consent of the individuals involved, or prostituting another person.

Policy Statement
ACM prohibits sexual assault or sexual violence in any form, including non-stranger rape. The goals of this policy are to create a community free of sexual assault, to provide avenues for those affected by sexual misconduct to obtain assistance, and to provide a clear and fair complaint and investigation procedure.

Sexual assault committed in connection with any ACM program in any location is prohibited. ACM strongly recommends that people who believe they have been victims of sexual assault pursue criminal charges against the person or persons they believe to have committed the sexual assault. Victims are also urged to make a complaint to staff in the ACM Chicago office. A criminal charge and an internal complaint can be pursued at the same time. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process or anyone who pursues legal action—including the complainant, the respondent, or anyone participating in the investigation—is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Definition of Sexual Assault
Sexual assault is intentional sexual contact with another person without that person's consent (see definitions of sexual contact and consent). Consent exists when a person freely and knowingly agrees at the time to participate in a particular sexual act with a particular person. Consent is not effective, for example, when force, threat, or coercion is used. Consent is not effective when sexual contact is with a person who is unable to say no or otherwise resist because of the use of alcohol or drugs or because he or she is asleep or unconscious (see also definition of Sexual Contact with an Incapacitated Person).

The initiator of sexual contact will be found in violation of this policy if it is determined that he or she knew or should have known that the other person could not give effective consent as defined by this policy. Being intoxicated or under the influence of any substance at the time of sexual contact is never an excuse for violation of this policy.

Sexual assault can be committed by a man or a woman against a person of the same or opposite sex. Sexual assault can be committed by current or former lovers, friends, or acquaintances.

ACM Policy on Non-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, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, marital status, or disability.

ACM Student Conduct Procedures
Should an alleged violation of the ACM Code of Student Responsibility occur, ACM faculty and/or staff will investigate the situation and review any responsible student's status with the program. This review will be
conducted by the on-site director or other ACM staff in the model of an educational/administrative process, not a proceeding of a criminal or civil court. These policies and procedures are designed to ensure a productive learning environment for all students.

The following process for an initial conduct review is designed to assure that the student receives appropriate due process:

1. The student will be notified verbally and/or in writing of the incident/alleged violation and the time and place of the review meeting.
2. At the review meeting, the student will have the opportunity to share her/his perspective of the incident and present any witnesses or documentation relevant to the incident/alleged violation.
3. The student may be accompanied at the review by a third party. Since this is not a case before a court of law, however, the third party may not be legal counsel.
4. After discussing the incident/alleged violation and the circumstances, the student will be given an opportunity to admit or deny involvement in the situation.
5. Given the information, the ACM faculty or staff reviewer will make a decision regarding the student's responsibility for violation of the Code of Student Responsibility based on a preponderance of evidence.
6. Within five working days from the date of the review meeting, the student will be notified in writing of the decision and any relevant sanctions and deadlines for completion of those sanctions. This notification will also include the procedure a student can follow to appeal this decision (see below).
7. Repeat or more serious incidents may involve review by staff in the Off-Campus Study unit of the ACM Chicago office and may include notification of the student’s home school.

**Sexual Harassment/Assault Grievance Procedure**

Due to the often complex nature of sexual harassment or assault investigations, ACM has instituted a more elaborate procedures for review and management of these claims. This section outlines that procedure.

Any individual who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment/assault has recourse to informal and formal grievance procedures designed for the purpose of investigation and resolution of such allegations.

As a preliminary matter, any individual who believes that she or he has been sexually harassed/assaulted 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
- Associate Director of Off-Campus Study  
  Kevin Dostal Dauer  
  kdostaldauer@acm.edu or 312.561.5933
- Vice-President and Director of Off-Campus Study  
  Dr. Joan Gillespie

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/assault 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 should contact any of the staff members named above.
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 working days after the investigation concludes, the grievance board shall decide by majority vote whether the complaint allegations are supported by a preponderance of 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/assaulted by a third party (i.e., vendor, member of host family, guest speaker, internship setting) should report the incident promptly to an ACM staff member who will then report to ACM’s Associate Director of Off-Campus Study to initiate an investigation and attempt to resolve the problem.

Confidentiality

Be advised that ACM is obligated to review complaints or investigations of potential abuse, harassment, or assault. All ACM staff members are required to report incidents of sexual harassment or assault. Therefore, ACM cannot generally receive a confidential complaint and promise to do nothing. However, ACM will endeavor to handle all complaints and investigations of sexual harassment/assault in a discreet manner; 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, and ACM encourages all complainants to file police reports to initiate a separate investigation by law enforcement authorities.

Interim suspension

If a student’s behavior constitutes an immediate, severe, or direct threat to self or others or if there is evidence of egregious misconduct and violation of ACM policies, the on-site director, in consultation with the Associate Director of Off-Campus Study, may immediately remove a student from the program and/or housing until a review can occur. During that interim suspension, the student will not be allowed to participate in program activities or utilize program resources. Alternate housing arrangements may be necessary and will be the responsibility of the student. Any additional violations of ACM policies while on interim suspension will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Sanctions

In keeping with the nature of the institutions comprising the ACM Consortium, sanctions are designed to be educational in nature whenever possible. Depending on the severity of the policy infringement, however, the ACM reserves the right to impose a sanction beyond a warning for a first violation if deemed appropriate. Multiple sanctions can be issued as appropriate. Failure to complete any assigned sanctions may delay the release of grades from the ACM program to the home campus.

1. Written warning – A warning is given and provided in written form to the student outlining the violation of the ACM Code of Student Responsibility and that any additional violations may result in more serious action during the time of warning.
2. Restitution – The student may be required to pay for any damages caused or repair or replace any property damaged or stolen.

3. Loss of privileges – The student may have privileges for use of a resource or participation in certain activities withdrawn for a certain period of time.

4. Housing change or termination – The student may be required to leave their housing and either move to alternative housing or obtain independent housing accommodations.

5. Disciplinary probation – A final warning is provided to the student in writing indicating that any further violation within the probationary period may result in dismissal from the program. A student’s home campus will be notified if a student is placed on disciplinary probation.

6. Dismissal – The student is permanently removed from the program. Once dismissed, the student will not be permitted any further association with the program and will forgo any of the benefits that the program provides including insurance coverage and visa sponsorship. The student will leave the program site and discontinue contact with the program. The student will be responsible for making his/her own travel arrangements from the site. A student’s home campus will be notified if a student is dismissed from the program.

Helping Your Peers
As a part of your off-campus study experience, you will be one member of a specific learning community, a group that you will help to define and foster throughout the program. As a part of a community, you will be thrilled to discover the great benefits that come from the contributions of others, but you should also recognize the obligations that come from being part of a group of people studying together off-campus. ACM students are encouraged to look out for each other, advocate appropriately for each other, and work together toward your community’s educational goals.

This commitment to helping others out can sometimes put you in difficult situations. If you feel hesitant to seek physical or mental medical attention for a friend (out of concern that by asking for help, ACM staff might discover that your friend’s behavior or your own behavior has been in violation of the ACM Code of Student Responsibility), please know that the responsibility and care that you demonstrate by taking the appropriate action to ensure the safety and wellbeing of another member of the community will be considered in determining what action, if any, is taken against you when reviewing the matter with ACM staff.

Appeals
Students may request an appeal of a student conduct decision made by the on-site director or other reviewer. The appeal must be received within five (5) working days of the issuance of the decision. The student should direct this appeal request to the Associate Director of Off-Campus Study in the ACM Chicago office.

The appeal request must be received in writing and should include a statement giving relevant facts and the reason for the appeal. In order for any appeal to proceed, the student must demonstrate that at least one of these three reasons for appeal exists:

a. There was a procedural error in the initial review that substantially impacted the rights of the student and had a reasonable possibility of affecting the outcome.

b. New information can be presented that was not previously available, despite reasonable diligence, which has a substantial likelihood of directly impact the review decision.

c. The sanction(s) imposed are perceived as excessive.

The Associate Director of Off-Campus Study will gather all materials, documents, and previous communications related to the student conduct review and forward that information to the Director of Off-Campus Study. The Director of Off-Campus Study will review the materials and determine within five working days of receipt of the materials whether any of the three above grounds for appeal exist in this case.

If the Director of Off-Campus Study determines that no grounds for an appeal exist, the student will be notified and the decision of the initial review will be final. If the Director determines that grounds for an appeal do exist, the Director of Off-Campus Study will convene an ad hoc committee consisting of the Off-Campus Study Director from the student’s home campus, another ACM Off-Campus Study Director, and the Director of Off-Campus Study. This
committee will review and discuss the student’s petition to determine if there are grounds for an adjustment of the student conduct decision.

The Associate Director of Off-Campus Programs will report the decision of this ad hoc committee to the student in writing, ordinarily within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of this committee is final.

Tuition, 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. Please see the cost worksheets for each program at www.acm.edu/pricing for a detailed breakdown of educational costs, the program fee, and out-of-pocket expenses.

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

Confirmation Deposit
In order to secure a spot in the program, students are required to pay a deposit of $400 within two weeks of acceptance. This $400 non-refundable deposit is credited toward the program fee and cannot be returned if a student decides to cancel. Students who do not submit the deposit within the time frame risk losing their spot on the off-campus study program.

For the Chicago Program, Newberry Seminar, and Urban Education program, an additional sum of $200 is required for the housing deposit. This deposit is refundable upon completion of the program, provided that no additional cleaning or special repairs are required to the student’s apartment.

Cancellation Policy
ACM makes significant financial commitments on the behalf of all participants well before the start of their program. If a student is thinking about canceling participation after depositing, the student should contact ACM and inform the ACM Program Associate immediately. All cancellations will only be effective the date that the ACM is notified, in writing, of the student’s decision to cancel. After canceling, the student will be responsible for program expenses incurred on their behalf, according to the schedules below:

Cancellation schedule for fall, winter, and spring programs
ACM typically bills the student’s college for the cost of the program after a deposit is made to confirm participation. The college then determines the total amount the student will be billed and this total amount may be equivalent to the amount billed by ACM or it may be different, according to each college’s particular policies on financial aid and off-campus study. If a student decides to cancel:

- **90 or more days before the start of the program:** The $400 deposit will be forfeited and no other charges will be billed.
- **60-89 days before the start of the program:** ACM will bill the student’s college 5% of the total program cost.
- **30-59 days before the start of the program:** ACM will bill the student’s college 10% of the total program cost.
15-29 days before the start of the program: ACM will bill the student’s college 25% of the total program cost.

1-14 days before the start of the program: ACM will bill the student’s college 50% of the total program cost.

On the day the program begins or later: ACM will bill the student’s college 100% of the total program cost.

Cancellation schedule for summer programs
After the $400 deposit is received, ACM will send the student an invoice for the payment of the full program cost. **Full payment is due 30 days before the start of the program.** If, having paid the program deposit, a student decides to cancel:

- 30 or more days before the start of the program: The $400 deposit will be forfeited and no other charges will be billed.
- Less than 30 days before the start of the program: 100% of the total program cost will be billed to the student.

Students should check with their college about campus-specific cancellation policies, and whether their college may apply additional financial penalties for a cancellation. If unforeseen circumstances force a student to leave a program once it has begun, ACM may work with the student’s college to determine what portion, if any, of the program cost may be refunded. If a student is asked to leave a program for cause, no program costs will be refunded by ACM.

Outstanding Fees and Grade Release
ACM will bill students at the end of the program for outstanding program costs and/or any additional program expenses such as: medical costs, damage to program housing or equipment, loss of keys or equipment, etc. ACM is unable to release grades to students or their college until full payment for such expenses has been received.

ACM Policy on Health and Safety Notification
ACM staff strives to keep all program stakeholders, including your home campuses and parents, informed of critical incidents and concerns that might arise related to any of our programs. We balance this goal with respect for your individual right to privacy as an adult.

Once you have reached the age of 18, you are considered an adult within the U.S. Higher Education system. ACM’s standard procedures will typically involve communicating primarily with you and informing parents on an as-needed basis. ACM staff will seek to work with you, our students, as primary decision-makers whenever possible.

Communication with Parents/Guardians
In situations of medical or program emergency, especially in situations where students are not able to communicate with their parents/guardians or in the case of student hospitalization, ACM staff will endeavor to inform parents of events and developments in as great of detail as possible and as often as possible. These communications will be balanced with ACM’s need to maintain operational management throughout whatever the situation might be.

For international programs, ACM staff sends an initial message to all listed parents/guardians/emergency contacts to notify them that all students have arrived safely at the program site. We do this because students may not always have access to immediate communication tools allowing them to contact individuals at home or may be initially quite consumed with orientation activities, and this initial period of travel to an overseas destination can be a source of worry.

Beyond that initial message for our international programs, ACM staff’s preference is that you are the primary sources of information for parents/guardians. ACM staff will always encourage students to openly and honestly communicate with their parents/guardians and will assist if requested in situations when the student may not have the means to communicate directly.
Communication with Home Campuses
ACM staff strives to maintain high levels of communication with all campuses sending students on any of our programs. Because colleges have different requirements for reporting or documenting incidents, ACM staff will communicate any reportable incident to the Off-Campus Study Director at a student’s home campus.

In situations where an incident impacts multiple students on a program (ex. illnesses not limited to a single individual, major program changes, etc.), ACM staff will notify all home campuses represented on that program of the situation in a way that does not identify specific students. Exceptions to components of this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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. Additionally, these surveys provide students with an opportunity to reflect upon their experiences and better prepare students to articulate the positives and negatives of the program. Below you will find a brief synopsis of the feedback we will be seeking from you throughout the term. **In all cases, your responses will be confidential.**

After the first month of the program, ACM staff 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. Instructors are seeking your candid feedback and will attempt to gather your thoughts to ensure anonymity whenever possible. Your responses 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. 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. 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.
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.

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

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.

Signature  Date
XI. Program Contact Information

ACM Chicago Office
11 E. Adams
Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60603

Phone: (312) 263-5000
Fax: (312) 263-5879

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Lindsey Wolf
Program Associate
lwolf@acm.edu

Kevin Dostal Dauer
Associate Director of Off-Campus Study Programs
kdostaldauer@acm.edu

Joan Gillespie
Vice President and Director of Off-Campus Study Programs
jgillespie@acm.edu

Student mailing address:
Student’s name
Beloit College Florence Program
c/o Linguaviva Scuola d’Italiano
Via Fiume 17
50123 Florence
ITALY

Building Hours: 8:45-5:30pm (M-F)

Josephine Rogers Mariotti
Program Director
jmariotti@acm.edu

Rosita Cirri
Program Coordinator
rcirri@acm.edu

Andrea Kann
Affiliated Scholar, Coe College
akann@coe.edu

Other Useful Contacts

U.S. Consulate General Florence
Lungarno Vespucci, 38
tel: (011 39) 055 266 951
tax: (011 39) 055 284 088
http://florence.usconsulate.gov/

Consulate General of Italy in Chicago
500 N. Michigan Ave, Suite 1850
Chicago, IL 60611
tel: (312) 467-1550
tax: (312) 467-1335
http://www.conschicago.esteri.it/