Associated Colleges of the Midwest

Florence
Arts, Humanities, & Culture

Student Handbook ♦ Fall 2012

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Lake Forest    Lawrence        Luther        Macalester        Monmouth        Ripon        St. Olaf
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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, in effect, a reference tool that provides you (and your parents, to whom a copy will also be sent) with the information you need as you make arrangements to participate in the program. It is important that you read it carefully as preparation for the pre-departure webinar and raise any questions you may have either in that orientation session, or individually with the ACM staff. You need also take it with you when you travel to Florence, as it contains important contact and schedule information, as well as information about academic and other arrangements for the program.

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, 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. At the end of the program, students should have a working command of Italian sufficient to live independently in Italy, an understanding of the creative process that is grounded in one of the most richly productive moments in history, as well as the ability to analyze paintings, buildings, and other works of art, whether in Florence or elsewhere in the world.

Italian art and culture, in both the present and the past, are at the center of the ACM’s Fall Florence program. In addition to the required Italian language course, students choose from among course offerings in Renaissance art history, Italian culture, and studio art. The program begins in late August with an academic orientation comprised of a four-week intensive Italian language course, lectures on aspects of contemporary Italy, and introductory meetings/background readings for the elective classes. With the exception of the Italian language course, all courses are conducted in English. Florence itself is the laboratory for the program, and site visits are a valuable part of the courses. The program also includes two weekend excursions, to Venice and Rome.

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 mores. 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 spare 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrival in Florence</td>
<td>Saturday, September 1, by 5:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Sunday, September 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian language class begin</td>
<td>Monday, September 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective classes begin</td>
<td>Monday, October 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venice Trip</td>
<td>Friday, October 5 – Sunday, October 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall break</td>
<td>Friday, October 19 – Sunday, October 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome Trip</td>
<td>Thursday, November 15 – Sunday, November 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes end</td>
<td>Friday, December 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departure from Florence</td>
<td>Saturday, December 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Florence Program schedule**

- **Weeks 1-4**
  - Italian language (intensive for first 4 weeks)

- **Weeks 5-7**
  - Courses (3 electives)

- **Weeks 9-15**
  - Courses (3 electives)
  - Italian language

- **Field trips** to sites in Florence and to other Italian cities
  - Week 8: Break

- Home stay in an Italian household
III. Academics

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. The Florence program also has a small, focused library of about 1,000 books to help you with your research. The catalog of the books in the program library is now online and searchable by title, author, subject, and many other fields. This online catalogue can be found at: 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.

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 dovetails 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 122 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 1hr. 20 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 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 the intranet, 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 randomly 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. You may find that you’ve been placed in a course you ranked fourth or fifth. 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.

**Michelangelo, His Art and Times**  
**Instructor: Josephine Rogers Mariotti**  
**Elective, 4 semester credits**

The lifetime of Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564) will serve as the chronological boundary of our exploration of the art and culture of Florence and Italy. Between those dates, Michelangelo was a protagonist of every stage of transformation in the language of the visual arts. He not only participated in but also literally shaped their development. His contemporaries recognized the fundamental role he played in this process and the “myth of Michelangelo” that persists into the modern period came into being during his own lifetime.

The course proposes to examine the various phases of his life and career not in isolation but within the context of his contemporary world. Beginning with Michelangelo’s early life and training, we will explore the late 15th century Florentine artistic workshops that were the humus of his formative years: the workshop of Ghirlandaio and the Medici Garden of the San Marco - where the intimacy with the Medici and their cultural entourage profoundly influenced his life-long philosophical, poetic and religious sentiments. We will follow the master through the Savonarolan spiritual crisis of the 1490s and his first travels abroad to Venice, Bologna and Rome; in his activity for the Republic of Florence and the great cycles undertaken for the papacy, from Julius II and the two Medici popes, Leo X and Clement VII to Paul III Farnese. Equally important to our conversation will be the continuing investigation of his artistic contemporaries in an attempt to gain a deeper sense of the intricate weave of personalities and patrons that make up the multi-faceted gestation of the art of his time. In the concluding weeks of the course, we will witness the canonization of the manner of Michelangelo as a paradigm of style in the early decades of the 16th century, observing most closely the art of contemporary Florentines masters, the protagonists of the court art of the Medici dukes.

The course will make extensive use of primary sources: Michelangelo’s poetry, the biographies written by two of his contemporaries: Ascanio Condivi and Giorgio Vasari, the poetry of Vittoria Colonna, and other related sources.

**The Medici as Patrons of the Arts**  
**Instructor: Josephine Rogers Mariotti**  
**Elective, 4 semester credits**

The Medici family is arguably the single most important family in Florentine history, generation after generation, all active patrons of the arts during centuries in which the city experienced its greatest cultural and artistic flourishing. This course will trace the family’s history as art patrons during the course of the 15th and early 16th century, examining the relations between specific members of the dynasty and the art produced under their auspices. Beginning with the late 14th century, at the debut of the rise in wealth and power of the Medici, we will explore the history and profiles of various members of the family from Giovanni di Bicci, Cosimo the Elder, Piero the Gouty, Lorenzo il Magnifico, to the Medici popes, Leo X and Clement VII, as well as other related personages known to the history of the arts. On site experience of the art they promoted will allow us to explore: how each patron relates to the artists employed; how the art sponsored reflects personal philosophy and persona; how patronage relates, contributes to, and reflects contemporary culture and philosophy; how the art produced under their auspices fits within the cultural, political and social make-up of the city. We will also see the significant role the Medici played in the complex game of art and politics with regard to other centers in Italy, some of which we will have the opportunity of visiting during the course of the term. Thus, this course will focus on the major personalities of the early branch of the Medici, concluding with a rapid glance at the
initial stages of the age to follow – the Duchy of Tuscany under Medici rule. All sessions will be held on-site according to the schedule that follows with the exception of one in-class session every other week intended to help consolidate knowledge acquired on the field.

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.

Power, Protection, and Commerce: Divine Figures in Early Renaissance Florence
Instructor: Gail Solberg
Elective, 4 semester credits
This course considers the production, placement, and function of images of divine figures in Florentine art of the period 1250-1450. Preliminary discussion treats the contemporary world view in which saints were models and helpmates on earth, where life was, ideally, a prelude to bliss in eternity with the ranks of the elect. The premise was an all-powerful trinitarian God, sometimes benevolent, sometimes wrathful, and always in control of events on earth. This is the context for veneration of the deity and the saints which coalesced before their images, and in the latter case, near their relics. Particularly important was the super-saint, Mary the Virgin, who however, left no relics. We treat numbers of other holy figures whose remains were available, asking how their relics were handled and housed. We categorize saints by their utility to the city, to guilds, to religious orders, and to single families. How did the saints and representations of them rank among themselves, and why were some more important than others? We see how devotion to and images of saints changed over time as Mary emerged to preeminence. Some Marian images in Florence worked miracles and we consider how they were protected and promoted. The founders of religious orders such as Francis and Dominic were relative late comers, but they assumed key roles. Family and personal patron saints introduce problems of micro-history and in some instances gendered patterns of appeal. Economics and competition are themes as we examine the forces at work in the presentation of various holy figures. A main goal is to delineate patterns in saintly lives and in visual records of them. Our test case is Florence—a city in some ways unique, but in others exemplary of religious, social and civic life across Europe in the period. Rome and Venice also come into play. Great artworks in painting and sculpture are the means for dealing with these issues.

Narration and Meaning in the Music and Visual Arts of Florence 1300-1700
Elective, 4 semester credits
What does a work of art – painting, sculpture, fresco – tell the viewer? Overt messages, allegorical representations, thinly veiled political and social commentary, and sensuous enjoyment abound in art and have their aural counterpart in music – songs, motets, Masses, music for the stage and ballets. The Baptistry doors and Giotto’s frescoes in Santa Croce tell a story; so does a motet by Francesco Landini and an opera by Jacopo Peri. The goal of this course is to hear and learn about music of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and early Baroque that complements art of the same periods. Students will come away from
the course with an appreciation of the multi-dimensionality of the arts, artists, and culture of Florence from 1300 to 1650.

In-class lectures on musical styles and listening examples will alternate with on-site explorations of art and architecture in Florence. Beyond comparing stylistic commonalities in music and art of the same periods, the course will examine how musicians are depicted in paintings and drawings in Florentine churches and museums. Paintings of the Nativity, in particular, commonly feature angels playing musical instruments. We will learn about the instruments and their associations (e.g., with chamber music, secular singing and dancing, and sacred music) and listen to examples of period music itself. As part of our study of instrumental music, the class will visit churches to see and hear historic organs and learn about their role in the music of the Church throughout the centuries. Assigned readings will supplement lectures. Written work will consist of several listening exams to identify musical works studied in class and weekly essays comparing visual art and musical works that they discover on their own. A reflection paper on selected expeditions will round out the coursework.

**Patronage, Gender, and Power in Early Modern Florence**
**Elective, 4 semester credits**

Art and music have always been used in the service of religion and politics. The patronage system served musicians, artists, dancers, and poets alike in Florence: the resulting works were created to glorify the city, mythologize its past, and further the political and social goals of powerful families and institutions. Who were the patrons and the audiences for music created in early modern Florence? What role did gender play in the commissioning of art and music, in the subject matter, in the portrayal of women? The ways in which both men and women used the arts in the process of self-fashioning – to create symbolic responses to historical events and assert the legitimacy of an individual ruler – will be a subject of inquiry in the course.

A prime focus of the course will be discussions of life under the Medicis. Examples of self-fashioning began with Cosimo I, the first Medici duke, who appropriated the Sala Grande in the Palazzo della Signoria, filling the rooms with allegorical paintings of himself. A particularly fascinating period in Florence was the regency of Christine of Lorraine and her daughter-in-law, Maria Magdalena of the Hapsburg line, both of whom commissioned works of art and music in which women feature prominently.

Students in this course will develop their analytical skills in order to uncover deeper meaning/s in the art and music being studied. By seeing these works and others in situ, reading libretti, and listening to music either in concert or on recordings, students will explore the methods and mediums by which meaning is conveyed, namely, myth, allegory, technical control (brushwork, color, chiaroscuro, symbolism, and in the case of art; text, structure, line, harmony, and rhythm in music), and function. How do art and music reflect the concerns and the qualities valued by the people who commission it, and by the people who receive it? These are timeless issues that students will continue to wrestle with for the rest of their lives.

**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. During the first week of each course, students will be asked to indicate whether they wish to have letter grades recorded on their transcripts or the pass/fail option. The back of this handbook briefly summarizes the grading rules for each ACM colleges, but 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. **Once the grade choice form has been submitted, you will not be allowed to make changes**, so make sure you are clear on policies for awarding credit at your college. You also need to make sure you have fulfilled courses for your major and other requirements at your institution.

If you are not an ACM student, you should make the necessary arrangements in advance with your own college registrar. You will still fill out the grade choice form to confirm the arrangements you've made and to let the ACM office know which courses you're taking.

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.
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 photocopy of this letter set
- Four official passport-size photographs (you can get 4 photos printed in Florence for 5 euros)

Travel Arrangements

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 Amerigo Vespucci Airport, located about three miles outside Florence. There is a bus service called Volabus run by Sita/Ataf which is 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 Florence Santa Maria Novella (SMN) station square, a short walk from the Hotel Duca D’Aosta. The Volabus runs every 30 minutes. The €4 ticket to ride the Volabus can be purchased on board.

Volabus 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 €20. (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 Stazioni Termini, the central train station in Rome, and a ticket for €36-42 to Firenze SMN on the Eurostar train, or on one of the new high velocity trains (Frecciarossa or Frecciaargent) which will get you to Florence in under two hours. When you ask for your ticket to Florence, ask for the first Eurostar 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.

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: a 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.
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, 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 8:00 a.m. to midnight. It costs approximately €4 and takes 60 minutes. Get off at the Milano Centrale train station, not Garibaldi. Do not take the Nuova Malpensa Treno Express, which goes into the center of Milan and does not stop at the Centrale Station.

From Forlanini-Linate Airport, SEAV (orange signs) operates a coach service to Milano Centrale every 20-30 minutes. Purchase tickets from the driver. The ride will be about 45 minutes. The coach will stop at the Garibaldi train station also; you should go to Centrale.

From Orio al Serio you can take the Autostradale bus to Milano Centrale station for about €7. Buses leave every 30-45 minutes; travel time is about an hour.

Passport Control & Customs
When you first arrive at an Italian airport, you will be directed to the Immigrazione 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. 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.

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 (Espresso) 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 gypsy women and children trying to pick your pockets, particularly in train stations, churches and other places frequented by tourists. They travel in groups and 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 [American] family’s property insurance policy, as 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. You will not have access to your host family’s phone line for dialup internet use, however, and they are unlikely to have a wireless connection. 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 5:30pm on week days and is closed on Saturday and Sunday. 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., mp3 players, 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**
Since the Fall semester of 2010, ACM students have purchased a cell phone upon arrival with the WIND company. The cost is approximately 29 euro for the phone and SIM card with 5 euros traffic included in the price. There are special tariffs that permit the students to contact faculty, staff and each other at almost no cost and at the end of the term, the phone company repurchases the phones for 10 euro, bringing the total cost per student per semester to about 15 euro (plus the minimal cost of traffic generated). The advantages with regard to security and logistics and the fact that students can be reached by their families at no 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 US cell phone, provided that it is a GSM, and that you call your cell phone carrier in the US for an unlock code. You can then purchase SIM cards in Florence for use on your existing phone and purchase minutes for traffic. It’s a simpler process than in the U.S.—unlike most cell phone companies at home, you are not required to sign a service contract in Europe, there is no monthly allowance for minutes, and you don’t get a bill. Instead, you buy a SIM card for about 5-10 euros with a certain number of minutes, similar to using a calling card. When those minutes run out, you simply pay for a recharge. The ACM staff has compared prices between the three principal servers in Italy: Tim, Wind, and Vodaphone. As stated above, the WIND company is offering the best deal at present.

You may receive telephone calls at the Hotel Duca D’Aosta or 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 pay phone 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 to account for 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 budget for more. Nearly all students spend more than they think they will. You’ll need to adjust this figure to fit your own lifestyle and budget. 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.).

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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 withdraw small amounts more frequently, in order to minimize on 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 will be assessed for using the card abroad.

While ATM and debit cards work well, this should not be your only means of getting money—ATM and debit cards can get lost, stolen, or eaten by cash withdrawal machines. You should also bring along some dollars—perhaps $100 and $200—and a credit card. We recommend that you bring $150 extra in case you lose your debit and credit cards; please keep this money in a hidden place at your host family's home.

**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. Still, you might want to purchase some local currency before you leave home so you won’t arrive in Europe, possibly tired and a little disoriented, without money for a taxi, bus, or train ride into town. 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.

**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 below. 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)

**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
Travel & safety info
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 under $10 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.

Carry on anything you’ll need immediately upon arrival. Check the Transportation Security Administrations 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 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 do 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 oz. size limit on liquids in carry-on luggage in effect for all air travel.) 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. One thing you should buy before you go, however, is sunscreen, which is very expensive in Italy.

**Miscellaneous 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
- 6 official passport photos (you can get these photos printed in Florence for less than in the US)
- copy of certified birth certificate (in case of lost passport)
- this handbook
- prescription medication for the entire semester + copy of Rx
- laptop
- eyeglasses/contacts
- change of clothes in case of lost luggage
- money belt, under your clothes

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 outfits
- underwear
- socks
- pajamas
- swimsuit
- bath towel (you can buy this on-site)
- small bag for day/overnight trips
- camera, memory card, cord
- USB drive
- voltage converter
- electric outlet adapter
- sunglasses
- sewing kit
- toiletries
- sunscreen
- bug spray
- toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- deodorant (expensive to buy in Florence)
- anti-itch cream
- pictures from home
- all required textbooks (buy on-site after checking ACM library collection)
- travel guide
- English/Italian dictionary
V. 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.
VI. 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 “arrivederci” 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.
- It is optional to tip in restaurants, taxis, at the hairdresser’s, or the barber’s. Tips are considerably lower that in the U.S.A., often less and never more than 10%.
• Do NOT eat on public transportation and in public buildings except in cafeterias and designated areas. Italians do not bring snacks and lunches to meetings.
• Play the anthropologist: observe Italian behavior on the street and in your family and try to adapt. Italians come in all shapes, sizes, and attitudes, like any other group. You will encounter a discourteous, pushy, or aggressive person on occasion. Try not to take it personally.

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, if traveling internationally), 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.

Re-entry

When they return from studying off-campus, students are anxious to share their experiences with family and friends. Their experiences, even for a relatively short program, have been intense and exhilarating. They are often eager to convey the flavor and detail of this experience with those closest to them. For some students, off-campus study has been a transformative experience, both intellectually and personally, and they want those around them to be aware of the importance of their time off-campus. As one returned student recently remarked, “I can’t begin to tell you how different I am from who I was when I left campus.”

Readjustment to home can be a difficult process—as unsettling as adapting to the host culture when they first arrived abroad. Reverse culture shock may be expressed as criticalness of their own culture, a certain distantness from family and friends, or simple “homesickness” for what they have left behind. All of this may continue for a number of months. The single most important contribution you can make to this readjustment process is to listen. Students who experience culture shock in its strongest form report that they find it hard to describe their time abroad to family and friends, who are seldom willing to take the time to listen to what they have to say.
VII. 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.

Insurance

ACM will provide health insurance coverage for all students participating in its programs. This coverage is through HTH Worldwide, a company with long experience and excellent service in providing health coverage for students abroad.

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

- Coverage for both routine 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 (but not taxi fares); and
- No deductible.

The policy will cover students from the day before the start of the program through the day after the program ends, and thus be in effect for the time students will travel to and from 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.

To arrange for HTH payment for medical expenses, you (or the Program Director) should contact HTH in advance of treatment, and HTH in turn will contact the treatment provider. In the event that this is not possible, or if the provider wishes payment in advance of treatment, the student is responsible for these costs and should then file for reimbursement by HTH. ACM will bill the student and/or the student’s family for any medical expenses or related costs (e.g., for transportation to the medical facility). ACM is not able to file medical claims on behalf of program students.

The HTH policy should not replace any coverage you have in the U.S., nor should you discontinue your 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 provides and only for up to 60 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 purchase independently additional coverage to extend the days
that you will be covered by the ACM policy. The cost of this additional coverage is approximately $10/week. HTH will email 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.hthstudents.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.)

**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 HTH International, our health insurance provider. The care providers and facilities with which HTH 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](http://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 prescriptions 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.

**Notifying Your Family**

You should be aware that, in case of illness or injury involving hospitalization or a series of visits to a doctor’s office, ACM reserves the right to inform the person you designated as an emergency contact. This is necessary not only to keep your parents or guardian informed, but also to be able to discuss with them any recommended treatment.

**Special Diets**

If you are a vegetarian or follow other dietary restrictions, please include this information in your housing form. 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 home town. 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 should inform the director and your host family of any travel plans and your expected time of return.

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, con artists 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 and 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 mores. 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 a come-on. 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 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 over 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: In recent months, there have been several incidents of rape among young American women in Florence, and without the victims being able to identify their assailants, the police have been unable to prosecute. Excessive consumption of alcohol, a lack of fluency in Italian, and uncertainty in decoding cultural signals all contribute to students’ putting themselves in dangerous situations. While ACM does not intend to mandate students’ conduct during free time, we strongly suggest that when students are out in the evenings that female students:
1. **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.

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. **Watch out for each other.** Don’t leave a fellow student behind in the bar at the end of the evening. Before the evening begins, make arrangements to take a taxi home together at the end of the night.

### 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 the country you are in, 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.

**You may not acquire or operate any kind of motorized vehicle while you are a participant in the ACM program, nor should you travel by bicycle.** You will probably find, as do a great many residents of Florence, that public transportation and your own two feet are the most efficient means of getting around.

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 seldom drink to become intoxicated. Rather, alcohol is consumed in moderation on social occasions and with meals. Public drunkenness and rowdy behavior are frowned upon. Moreover, over-consumption of alcohol poses specific difficulties for women: not only are women who are publicly drunk in Italy looked upon as “loose,” they also put themselves at risk for sexual assault and other unwanted attentions. 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 and your parents 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.
VIII. Housing Arrangements

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 temperatures (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).
- 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 home stay. As soon as you have your plans made for that period, you are asked to advise both your family and Kate Magovern, Program Coordinator.
IX. Personal Travel

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. And rather than make plans for this before you travel to Italy, it's often more interesting 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 4 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 within 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.
The Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) is a consortium of 14 small liberal arts colleges in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Colorado. ACM’s programs reflect the academic standards and policies of its member colleges, and the standards and rules in the paragraphs which follow are applicable for all of ACM’s off-campus study programs. Please remember that these are academic programs: it is not appropriate to miss classes for because you are traveling or hosting visitors; students are expected to participate in all program activities unless otherwise excused. Nor is it possible to make special arrangements to accommodate students who wish to leave the program before the last day.

**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.

**Confirmation Deposit**
Once accepted into an ACM Off-Campus Study Program, a $400 deposit is required. This deposit reserves your spot on the program and must be received by ACM within 15 days of your receipt of acceptance materials. It is credited toward the program fee and is non-refundable. Students who do not submit the deposit within the time frame risk losing their spot on the off-campus study program.

For the Chicago and Newberry programs, an additional sum of $200 for the housing deposit is required. This deposit is **refundable** upon completion of the program provided that no additional cleaning or special repairs are required.

**Costs Not Included**
For a breakdown of costs covered by the program fee and those costs which are additional, please see the cost worksheet for your program. Typically the program costs (educational costs plus program fee) cover tuition, program-sponsored excursions and site visits, housing, and some group activities. Unless specified, it usually does not include the costs of transportation to and from the program site, meals, passport and visa fees, and personal expenses; these costs are the student’s responsibility.

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

**Refunds and Withdrawal Policy**
ACM makes significant financial commitments on your behalf well before the start of the program. **You are required to send a deposit of $400 within 15 days of acceptance and the $400 is non-refundable; it cannot be returned if you cancel.** If you cancel after depositing, you will be billed for all
unrecoverable expenses we have incurred on your behalf. Depending on the program and timing of your
cancellation, these unrecoverable expenses could amount to several thousand dollars. If you are
considering cancelling your participation, we urge you to contact the ACM Program Associate to inquire
about the unrecoverable expenses to date for your program. Your cancellation will be effective the date
that you notify ACM, in writing, of your withdrawal. The following schedule is in effect:

For students who apply in the spring for a fall program: Students are expected to deposit by April
15. If, having paid the program deposit, you cancel on or before May 15, you will forfeit
your deposit and be charged for any unrecoverable expenses. If you cancel after May 15,
ACM will bill your college any unrecoverable expenses and an administrative fee; your
deposit will not be refunded.

For students who apply in the spring for a spring program: Students are expected to deposit by
April 15. If you cancel on or before September 1, you will forfeit your deposit and be
charged for any unrecoverable expenses. If you cancel after September 1, ACM will bill
your college any unrecoverable expenses and an administrative fee; your deposit will not
be refunded.

For students who apply in the fall for a spring program: Students are expected to deposit by
November 15. Because of the short time between application and the start of the program,
we begin making arrangements as soon as you have deposited. If you cancel after
November 15, ACM will bill your college any unrecoverable expenses and an administrative
fee; your deposit will not be refunded.

If you withdraw from a program on or after the day students are expected to arrive on site or are asked to
leave a program for cause, the program fee cannot be refunded. ACM will work with your home college to
determine what portion, if any, of the tuition money may be refunded. Please be aware as well that your
college may apply other financial penalties for such a withdrawal.

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. Rather than simply spring these on you from
time to time, we'd like to give you a sense of the total, of what you can expect to be asked and how your
responses will be used. **In all cases, your responses will be anonymous.**

- Prior to the start of the program, you will be asked to complete an on-line survey that is part of a
  broader national research project in which ACM is participating. The purpose of this survey,
  which asks about your background, attitudes, and responses to specific scenarios, is to enable us
  to measure the broad impact of off-campus study on students. Students often say that the
  personal growth that results from off-campus study is the most important part of the experience,
  but our evidence for this is largely anecdotal. Your participation in this survey will provide us
  with data on the impact of off-campus study. Your responses will not be available to program staff
  and will have no impact on your grades. We ask that you answer as honestly and realistically as
  possible—there are no right or wrong answers. At the end of the program, shortly before you
  return home, you'll be asked to complete a follow-up survey, thus providing a "pre" and "post"
  picture about yourself and your experiences. We anticipate that the survey will require
  approximately 30 minutes of your time.
After the first month of the program, ACM 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. Your responses, which will be collected by one of your fellow program students, 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. The program director will set aside time for you to do this, and 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. As with course evaluations on your home campuses, 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.

At the conclusion of the program (in some cases before you leave the program), all students will be asked to complete the “post-program” survey that complements the “pre-program” survey about your experience, attitudes, and reactions to specific scenarios you took at the beginning of the program. As with the first survey, it should require approximately 30 minutes of your time. And we’ll be glad to share with you what we learn in this projects as we gather data over several semesters; we think you’ll find it interesting.

Thank you for your help in this. We need your feedback!

**ACM Off-Campus Grading Policies**

_Students from non-ACM institutions should consult the home campus registrar’s office for grading policies in effect on his or her own campus._

**Beloit**  All courses (including internships) must be taken for letter grades. Grades will be recorded on the transcript for all programs, but only domestic programs will be calculated in GPA.

**Carleton**  Letter grades will be included on transcript but not calculated in GPA. No more than one course per semester may be graded on a S/CR/NC basis.

**Coe**  Students are permitted a maximum of one course to be electively graded S/U. Students have until the middle of the term to make the decision. In addition, a student may nullify S/U grading at any time if they desire to have the grade. However, they may not elect to have an S/U recorded after the midterm of the course.

**Colorado**  No restrictions on grading options except that all grades recorded on the Pass track must be verified by the letter grade. Letter "G-track" grades will be calculated into the overall GPA. Grades of any “D” or “NC” will not transfer for credit.
Cornell  Letter grades will be annotated on transcripts but not calculated in GPA. Only grades of “C” or higher will be accepted. Short term courses taught by Cornell faculty are exceptions to both of the preceding statements; these courses are graded in accordance with Cornell’s standard grading policy.

Grinnell  Only off-campus courses for which students earn a grade of “C” or above will transfer to Grinnell as earned credits. Grades below “C” will be posted to the transcript with the grade received and zero earned credits.
No courses may be taken on a pass/fail basis or as “incompletes” on off-campus study regardless of the individual program policy. Courses in which incompletes are taken will not be recorded on the Grinnell Transcript even if completed at a later date. Grades received for off campus programs will not be calculated into the cumulative GPA.

Knox  Credit is granted for only those courses receiving letter grades. Grades received for courses taken off-campus are not factored into GPA.

Lake Forest  Students may choose to receive a grade of CR (credit for C- or better), D (no plus or minus), or F (Fail) in any course they take. Students choosing this option, or changing back to regular letter grades, must give written notification to the Registrar before the end of the first two weeks of the semester. Prior approval of the student’s advisor is required. Internships will be graded Credit/D/F.

Lawrence  Students may elect to take one course on an S/U basis within the first two weeks of the program. All of the regular rules regarding electing the S/U option will apply (not in major or minor; must have earned 54 or more units; maximum of four on academic record at any one time). Please refer to the Lawrence course catalog.

Luther  All courses must be taken for letter grades. Only grades of a “C-” or above or will transfer for credit; grades will not be calculated into overall Luther GPA. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Registrar’s Office.

Macalester  All courses taken on approved study away programs are counted towards the student’s Macalester grade point average, unless taken on the S/D/NC grading option. Students may take one course per semester on the S/D/NC grading option.

Monmouth  All courses must be taken for letter grades.

Ripon  All courses must be taken for letter grades. Students wishing to utilize the S/U option must make those arrangements with the College Registrar prior to the program, or during the first half of the program.

St. Olaf  When students choose the graded option for off-campus study programs, letter grades from off-campus programs are included on the transcript but not calculated in the GPA. St. Olaf has two non-graded options – S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) and P/N (pass/no pass). Some course are graded P/N per the instructor’s decision for anyone taking the course. Internships are offered P/N. Students may take a total of 6 courses as S/U. A student may choose to take any graded course as S/U; however, in order for St. Olaf to apply any general education requirements, the course must be taken graded: only one course taken S/U is allowed in the major.
**ACM Policy on Academics: International Programs**

All academic pursuit depends on trust. All of us, teachers and students alike, should be able to trust that we will be treated with honesty and respect—respect for our ideas and for us as persons. Many things can corrode that trust, including incivility and rudeness to fellow students, instructors, and on-site staff. As participants in an ACM program, you will be expected to conduct yourself with the same level of honesty and openness as you do on your home campuses.

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

1. **Arrival and departure dates.** Students should make travel reservations to arrive at the program site on the date specified in the program handbook. Similarly, students should plan their itineraries to remain at the program site through the last day of the program. ACM is unable to accommodate students who request to arrive later or depart earlier.

2. **Course load.** All students are required to carry the full load of courses and credits as determined for the ACM program in which they are enrolled.

3. **Class attendance and participation.** Students 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.

4. **Pass/fail deadlines.** Students may elect to take a class or classes on a pass/fail basis. This decision must be made in the first week of class; the program director will provide each student with a form on which to record the choice. It is not possible to elect pass/fail or to reverse the decision after the first week of class. (In making the choice to take a class pass/fail, students should inform themselves of their home school’s policy regarding pass/fail classes taken off-campus.)

5. **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 not submitted before 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.

6. **Academic honesty.** Actions of dishonesty are destructive of the well-being of the academic community, and ACM responds 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 on cheating in an ACM program will report such episodes to the Program Officer, who will share that information with the home campus. The home campus may, in turn, wish to respond with its own disciplinary procedures.

7. **Final exams and presentations.** ACM 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.

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

9. **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.

**ACM Policy on Sexual Harassment**

**Policy**
It has been and remains 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 includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature 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.

**Grievance Procedure**
Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment has recourse to informal and formal grievance procedures designed for the purpose of investigation and resolution of such allegations. Informal grievance resolution is encouraged although not required prior to initiating the formal grievance procedure.

As a preliminary matter, any student who believes that she or he has been sexually harassed 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
- Director of International Study Programs at ACM Chicago office, Carol Dickerman
- Director of Chicago Programs, Sally Noble
- Vice-President of ACM, John Ottenhoff

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 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 must sign and submit it in writing to any staff members named above within 120 days of the alleged harassment.
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 days after the investigation concludes, the grievance board shall decide by majority vote whether the complaint allegations are supported by substantial 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 by a third party (i.e., vendor, guest speaker, internship setting) should report the incident promptly to any grievance officer who will then investigate and attempt to resolve the problem.

**Confidentiality**

All complaints and investigations of sexual harassment shall be handled in a confidential manner and shall be disclosed only to persons having a legitimate need to know. 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.

**ACM Policy on Personal Abuse**

Personal abuse, whether oral, written, or physical, 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 is prohibited. ACM students who engage in such behavior may be disciplined and/or dismissed from a program.

**ACM Policy on Dual Relationships**

A dual relationship is one in which the faculty/staff member has both a professional and a romantic or
sexual relationship with a student. This includes relationships which appear to be mutually consensual. However, the inherent inequality of power between student and faculty/staff creates an unacceptable conflict of interest in a supervisory, educational or advisory context. For this reason, dual relationships between faculty/staff and students who participate in the same program should be avoided. If a relationship nonetheless develops, the faculty/staff member is expected to remove him/herself from supervisory or advisory responsibility for that student, or face disciplinary action.

**ACM Policy on 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, race, creed, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability.
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