Associated Colleges of the Midwest
London and Florence: Arts in Context

Student Handbook ♦ Spring 2018

Beloit Carleton Coe Colorado Cornell Grinnell Knox Lake Forest
Lawrence Luther Macalester Monmouth Ripon St. Olaf
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Welcome and Program Overview

Welcome to the ACM London & Florence Program! Since the program’s inception in 1972, more than 1600 students have participated in this semester in two of the world’s most enchanting and historic cities. We are pleased to welcome you to this group of aesthetes and explorers.

We hope this handbook will lay a good foundation for what to expect and how to prepare for the coming winter/spring. Its contents are intended to help you plan for your term or semester abroad and to let you know what to expect during your first few days in each city. Once you start to get acquainted with each place and its respective culture you’ll make your own discoveries and connections, but we hope this material will help you begin.

Read this handbook carefully. If you have questions or you need more information, don’t hesitate to contact the ACM office. Like the program itself, the student handbook changes from year to year. This year, the handbook has been re-designed for ease of finding critical information while still maintaining all the details that have proven invaluable to students in the past. All the information in this handbook has been included in response to questions and feedback from past students, parents, and program staff. We welcome comments and ideas on how to improve this book for future participants.

Both London and Florence have intrigued foreign visitors for centuries, not least for their delicate intermingling of new and old, of history and progress. Each city displays the coexistence of the traditional and the contemporary—and the tensions between the two—in its own unique way. Over the course of the semester, you’ll learn to peel away the modern facades of London and Florence and, with an increasingly informed and critical eye, examine the many layers of history underneath.

The epicenter of Renaissance art, architecture, and culture, Florence has lured visitors from abroad for more than 500 years. You will see that the spirit of the Renaissance continues to resonate in the remarkable art and architecture of this city, which is in many ways a time capsule of a seminal period in the history of Western civilization. A stroll through the streets of the historic centro will take you past churches, palaces, piazze, and sculptures that have remained largely the same for centuries. For all its history, however, Florence is also a modern city, and this delicate intermingling of new and old creates its unique texture. Surrounding the famous sights and monuments are dozens of chic and extravagant designer shops, busy trattorie, street-side cafes, and the persistent hum of Vespas and pint-sized cars whizzing through narrow streets. People-watching is an art in Florence, particularly in the centro, which is constantly abuzz with conversation and bustling with the commotion of sidewalk vendors, window-shoppers, tourists, and well-clad Italians out for a stroll. During your time in Florence, you will have a
unique opportunity to immerse yourself in this culture, to learn more about how Italians constructed their lives centuries ago, what makes them tick today, and how modern and ancient intersect.

Where Florence may seem an embodiment of Italian culture and more, today’s London is truly a global city, a vast international hub of commerce and culture. Immigrants and visitors from the world over contribute to the rich and colorful fabric of this vibrant city. London may at first seem more familiar because English is the primary language, but compared to American English you’ll notice significant differences in syntax and intonation. You may sometimes feel as though you’re learning a language within a language, especially with regard to the lexicon of British slang, which routinely mystifies American visitors. But because London is home to so many non-native citizens and a worldwide tourist attraction, you’re almost as likely to hear French, Mandarin, or Hindi on the street as you are to hear British English.

You are going to London to study theatre, art, and architecture—in essence, the art of looking—and the city’s landscape lends itself perfectly to such an undertaking. London’s 32 distinct boroughs are studded with public squares, stately museums, cathedrals, theatres, scrupulously manicured gardens, rambling mansions, wide avenues, and narrow cobblestone alleys. Although sometimes hidden by the grand structures of the modern city, traces of medieval and ancient London remain visible to the careful observer. You’ll see remnants of the Roman wall built around London almost two thousand years ago. The Tower of London and the Palace of Westminster date to the eleventh century, when William the Conqueror took over the city. You’ll see St. Paul’s Cathedral and other buildings designed and erected by Christopher Wren and his contemporaries in the seventeenth century after the Great Fire. Similarly, you’ll see theater productions that range from traditional representations of Shakespeare’s early plays to Broadway-style musicals to conceptual dramatic productions of the most up-to-the-moment scripts. In every interaction with the sleek sophistication of modern London, you’ll encounter a dash of history.

Before you begin the London & Florence program, take some time to prepare both academically and personally. You will be challenged in new ways—by no single person, by no single event—but rather by a new way of living. Most likely you’ll encounter different views on the U.S. and its people. You may come to realize that you hold stereotypes or misconceptions others might dispute. Learn enough in advance so that you arrive with informed expectations, but expect some of your notions to be challenged. Take time to reflect on what you want to get out of your semester and prepare yourself to approach these new places and cultures with an open mind. No one can plan for every contingency, but a clear understanding of your goals will help you respond to the unanticipated and accomplish what you set out to do.

Students in this program encounter a variety of artistic media—architecture, painting, sculpture, literature, and theatre—and reflect on the experience of art to understand its social, political, historical, and religious contexts. The program aims to give students not only a depth of knowledge about urban-based art but also the ability to analyze artistic media across sites, historical eras, and modes of expression by conducting their studies in two different yet complementary sites.

Through immersion in the contemporary life of two great European cities—studying Italian and living with Italian families in Florence and living in apartments in the heart of London—as well as formal classroom study and program-sponsored site visits, students should become more inter-culturally aware and be proficient in reading the “text” of modern cities.

Program Learning Goals
The London & Florence: Arts in Context program engages you in questions of history, culture, and interpretations of the past through a comparative study of painting, sculpture, architecture, the performing arts, and literature in two world-renowned cities. The program curriculum, excursions, and activities are designed to intersect in the two locations.

Program learning objectives:
- Develop your understanding of the artistic and cultural heritage and present-day complexities of interpretation of two European cities, London and Florence.
- Enhance your critical thinking skills and specifically your ability to explore and reflect on the life of a city through its artistic media.
• Develop your intercultural awareness in both an English-speaking milieu and in a country where English is not the medium of communication.
• When you complete the program, you should be able to compare two major European cities in terms of their broad cultural and social histories, apply skills in the visual analysis of art and architecture and the critical analysis of theatre performances and dramatic texts, and demonstrate a working command of Italian language.
Program Calendar

18-week option (starting in Florence)
January 6 – May 12, 2018
- January 6, 2018: Students arrive in Florence
- January 8, 2018: First day of classes
- March 16, 2018: Last day of classes
- March 17, 2018: Break begins
- March 25, 2018: Students arrive in London
- March 26, 2018: First day of classes
- May 11, 2018: Last day of classes
- May 12, 2018: Students depart

15-week option (starting in Florence)
January 25 – May 12, 2018
- January 25, 2018: Students arrive in Florence
- January 29, 2018: First day of classes
- March 16, 2018: Last day of classes
- March 17, 2018: Break begins
- March 25, 2018: Students arrive in London
- March 26, 2018: First day of classes
- May 11, 2018: Last day of classes
- May 12, 2018: Students depart

You should consult with the director in London or Florence before confirming travel plans for weekends or breaks. Do not assume that the schedule will be the same from week-to-week and understand that there may be one-time program activities outside of typical class meetings times. Make no plans, including departure from either city at the break or end of the program, without first confirming with the professors or directors that you are free to be gone!

Academics

Just as they are on campus, reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing is central to the London & Florence program. You will not have the resources of your college library, unlimited internet access, or your usual study spots, but you will have two fascinating cities as your laboratory. Museums, architecture, newspapers, theatrical productions, historical sites, and living, breathing Britons and Italians will all, in one way or another, serve as your texts while you’re abroad. The program staff, too, will be valuable resources to you, but much of what you reap from this program will depend on your own curiosity and personal initiative.

The courses offered in each city reflect the special interests and expertise of the instructors, and they are designed to make full use of the unique cultural strengths of the local environment. Since the curriculum is integrated across the program and classroom instruction is closely linked to out-of-class activities, students are required to participate in all courses. If you find that a subject of interest to you is being taught at too basic a level, or perhaps with the assumption of greater prior knowledge than you have, it will be your responsibility to take the initiative to talk to your instructors. They will be more than willing to discuss your questions, suggest supplemental readings, and help you pursue your interests in written assignments.

Overall, keep in mind that study abroad requires just that—studying! Travel and exploring will be an integral and unforgettable part of your experience this spring, but your courses need to be your first priority. You should consult with the director in London or Florence before confirming travel plans for weekends or breaks. Do not assume that the schedule will be the same from week-to-week and understand that there may be one-time program activities outside of typical class meetings times. Make no plans,
including departure from either city at the break or end of the program, without first confirming with the professors or directors that you are free to be gone!

**Academics in Florence**

In Florence, orientation will begin on the first night that you arrive and will include an introduction to the program and a walking tour of the city. If you have Italian language experience, you will be given a test to determine the appropriate class level at Linguaviva, the language school where the ACM program is centered. This is only a placement test. If you haven’t had Italian before, you will be placed in the beginning class.

Daily schedules vary from year to year depending on the director’s plans but classes usually meet Monday through Thursday with field trips on Fridays. In Florence, many of your class sessions will be taught around the city in art galleries, architecturally significant buildings, and historical sites most of which are a short walk from Linguaviva. The classrooms at Linguaviva will serve as a study area when not in use, and since the students live all over the city, Linguaviva will often be a central meeting place. There will also be day-long and overnight field trips outside Florence, and they usually fall on weekends. With this hectic field trip schedule and your academic obligations, you should plan to do most of your traveling during the break or before/after the program. There will be at least one long weekend for students to travel independently.

Florentine families generally have their evening meal at about 8:00/8:30 p.m., and it is often a long, leisurely one. It is not always realistic to plan for after-dinner study time. Previous groups have found that meeting their academic obligations while becoming acquainted with their Italian families and friends and participating in some of their activities was a challenge. Students also found the effort of functioning in a foreign language to be tiring at first. In the end, though, they were rewarded with great satisfaction at being able to converse in a new language and with the kind of personal growth they could not have experienced living among Americans.

**Courses in Florence**

**January Language Course**

*Instructor: Linguaviva staff*

Ten-week and 18-week Florence students participate in the intensive Italian language course offered by Linguaviva during January. The course meets five days a week, 3.5 hours a day. Because the cost and credits awarded for the intensive Italian in January may vary from one campus to another, you should review the information on the cost sheet carefully and also check with your home campus before you leave for Florence.

**Italian Language**

*Instructor: Linguaviva staff*

Required course, 2 semester credits (for 15-week semester students) or 5 semester credits (for 10-week quarter/trimester and 18-week Florence-first semester students)

Instruction emphasizes spoken colloquial Italian so that students may quickly acquire conversational ability. Classes are taught in Italian at Linguaviva, an Italian language institute in Florence. Linguaviva has been honored with multiple Star Awards from Language Travel Magazine and has received the Excellence Award in numerous years from LanguageCourse S.L. Students who have previously studied Italian will be placed in language classes appropriate to their levels of proficiency. The Linguaviva instructors are not just language teachers but also rich sources of information about Italian culture, and they help students solve the daily problems which Italians and foreigners share.

*Students choose two elective classes from the list below:*
The Medici as Patrons of the Arts  
_Instructor: Dr. Josephine Rogers Mariotti, 3 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 family, 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; our studies will also include other Florentine families and patrons who share a common culture with the leading family.

On-site experience of the art they promoted will allow us to explore: how each patron relates to the artists employed; how the patron's choice of artist reflects personal philosophy and persona; how patronage relates and contributes to 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 to visit during the course of the term. Thus, this course will focus on the major personalities of the early branch of the Medici, concluding with the initial stages of the Cinquecento (the 1500's) and the early life of Michelangelo, one of the Medici’s most beloved artists.

Florence Stories  
_Instructor: Susan Jaret McKinstry (Carleton College), Visiting Faculty Director in Spring 2018  
Elective course (Spring 2018)_

This interdisciplinary course will teach students how to look like a writer: how to examine Florence – its art, history, architecture, language, geography, and people – and write about it. An off-campus program is an exceptional opportunity to see the world freshly, reconsider whatever frameworks of understanding we have in place, and incorporate new materials and methods to shape and display knowledge – in short, to be both located and displaced at once. The city of Florence, with its history and art visible in every step, provides a perfect setting for this study. Intersecting with and building upon the students’ Italian courses, as well as their study of Art History, their courses, and excursions, and their daily experiences in the city, this course foregrounds the skills of reflecting on those encounters by creating new skills for learning and conveying information in a variety of forms and formats.

An Introduction to Methods and Techniques of Restoration  
_Instructor: Rossella Lari, Art Conservator  
Elective course, 4 semester credits_

Since the flood of 1966, Florence has become a world leader in the field of art conservation and restoration. The tragic event brought experts from around the world who joined together to save and restore the immense patrimony of art that had been destroyed, threatened, and damaged by the catastrophe.

This course gives students the opportunity to study with one of the most prominent art conservators of present-day Florence, Rossella Lari, during an intensive studio and on-site experience. The course entails 42 hours of class time, which includes laboratory work along with visits to the workshops of other restorers, intended to provide students with a panorama of the potential extension of the field. These include restoration workshops of musical instruments, frescoes, metal, gold, and wooden artifacts, as well as the Martelli gilding workshop where students try out that very ancient art form.
During lab sessions, following the criteria and principles of contemporary art restoration, students will learn and use the methods and techniques adopted in diagnosis and restoration as they work on actual paintings within the workshop of the instructor; this hands-on experience not only affords practical knowledge of the maintenance and restoration of paintings but also insight into the creative process of various art forms, past and present. The restorer Zeljka Gaspar will assist Rossella Lari during workshop sessions.

**Seat of the Muses: From the Origins of Art Collecting to Modern Museology in Florence**  
*Instructor: Dott.ssa Alessandra Nardi*  
*Elective course, 4 semester credits*

This course uses the city of Florence as a case study to explore the history of museums and collecting practices from Renaissance curiosity cabinets and early public galleries created by artists, collectors, art dealers, and philanthropists to the present day. The course consists of in-class sessions and on-site visits to various Florentine museums. Our conversation starts with the collection of the Early Medici, specifically Cosimo the Elder and his descendants, and the treasures of Palazzo Medici in the fifteenth century. We then move to the period of the Grand Duke Cosimo I and his son, Francesco I, who—together with the court artist and art historian, Giorgio Vasari—created the first nucleus of what we call today the Uffizi Gallery. This artistic heritage drew and fascinated foreigners who visited the city during the nineteenth century, the epoch of the Grand Tour from which a large community of Anglo-Saxon/American collectors and art dealers developed. Among them were Herbert Horne, Friederick Stibbert, and Charles Loeser, and their still-flourishing collections provide us with our third set of examples before we end the course with reflections on contemporary museums, social change and tourism.  
Note: The offering of this course is contingent on a minimum course enrollment.

**The Sight-Size Tradition: Drawing and Portraiture**  
*Instructor: Staff of the Charles H. Cecil Studios*  
*Elective course, 3 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 at 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. This course will be offered during the first half of the program. Students participating in the Florence-first semester or winter quarter/trimester will be able to take this course.  
Note: The offering of this course is contingent on a minimum course enrollment.  
Due to the unique nature of the workshop environment, this course has a maximum capacity of 12 students. Early enrollment is recommended; preference for placement in the course will be based on date of enrollment and particular credit needs of students.

**An Introduction to Methods and Techniques of Gilding**  
*Instructors: Carlo and Stefania Martelli, Gilder/Restorers*  
*Elective course, 4 semester credits*

This course is an opportunity for students to study gilding and related decorative techniques, with an introduction to the restoration of gilded wooden objects following the official standards and techniques of the Italian Superintendence of Fine Arts. The course will augment students’ aesthetic appreciation of beauty and the artistic patrimony of Florence, as well as its conservation, specifically focusing on gilded wooden works of art and artifacts created by the Florentine artists and artisans over the course of centuries. Students will have the opportunity to study with Carlo and Stefania Martelli, cousins and heirs to a multi-generational workshop of restorer/gilders. Laboratory work in their studio will involve a series of interdisciplinary activities in theory, technique, and methodology. Students will examine works of art from a more technical point of view, with an understanding of the difficulties and challenges faced by the creators, through the investigation of the original creative process, as well as the methods and techniques appropriate for an eventual restoration. The course is based on practical experience of ancient techniques and materials. Theoretical emphasis will be largely technical in nature but will include historical contextualization and related
curiosities. This opportunity offers students a full immersion experience into Italian culture and art production, through the lens of the Florentine artisan tradition. Students will be required to keep a Workshop Journal and as a final project will create gilded objects of their own design using the theoretical and technical knowledge acquired during the course of the term. In effect, the city’s museums and their holdings provide first-hand case studies for every aspect covered in the course material.

Note: There is an additional fee of $360 for participation in this class ($210 academic fee + $150 liability insurance).

Note: The offering of this course is contingent on a minimum course enrollment.

Due to the unique nature of the workshop environment, this course has a maximum capacity of eight students. Early enrollment is recommended; preference for placement in the course will be based on the date of enrollment and particular credit needs of students.

Program-Sponsored Excursions
There will be two weekend trips (to Venice and Rome) that are part of the academic program. Attendance is mandatory as it is for classes. The cost of these trips is included in your program fee.

Venice – Friday, February 2nd and Saturday, February 3rd (return in late evening)
Rome – Thursday, March 1st to Saturday, March 3rd (return in the afternoon)

Program Library - Florence
The ACM has a limited resource library available for student use located in the main classroom of the program. Unfortunately, this means that it is sometimes unavailable to students due to class sessions.

Though students in the London & Florence program do not complete a research project, students may still wish to have access to the resources of a campus library while abroad. ACM recommends that students interested in accessing such resources connect with their home campus library so they know the procedures for accessing databases and other resources in their home library from remote locations.

Students can consult the online catalog (https://www.librarything.com/profile/ACMFLORENCE) to see what is available in Florence, including the number of copies of any one text. It also serves the students in Florence as a search machine and the checkout system to guarantee the availability of the texts to all.

Radio receivers for on-site classes
ACM Florence will loan each student a radio-receiver for use during all field trips. The use of radio-guided tours 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.

Academics in London
There will be orientation sessions and activities throughout your first few days in London. During these initial meetings, you will discuss practical things such as rules for the apartment building, getting around London, and the academic schedule. The director will also confirm the theatre bookings for her course. Classes normally meet four or five days per week and when classes meet on-site you will need to factor in travel time to get to the meeting point on time. Most weeks also involve two nights at the theatre. Carrying a full course load and getting to know one of the world’s most diverse and active cities challenges every student. Doing everything (and doing it on time) is possible, but it takes good organization and self-discipline.
Courses in London
London as Visual Text
Instructor: Andrew Kennedy
(4 credits)
This course will examine the art and architecture of London while considering the political, religious, economic, and social forces that shaped their creation and current function. Discussion of historical texts and visits to important buildings, neighborhoods, and museums will trace the development of the English city from its ancient roots to the 20th century. By the end of the course, students will be able to readily distinguish between Medieval Gothic and Gothic Revival buildings, as well as identify Elizabethan, Classical Revival, and Postmodern architectural styles and recognize the role that each played in London’s history. While the main focus of the course will be architecture, other arts such as portrait painting and tomb sculpture will also be addressed.

Theatre Course
Staging the World in London
Instructor: Susan Jarett McKinstry (Carleton College), 4 semester credits
“All the world’s a stage,” claims Shakespeare, and London is the world’s drama capital – its biggest stage. This course will bring students to see and study numerous plays written by playwrights around the world, now and in the past, at a wide array of playhouses and venues throughout London: from the established and lavish to the experimental and unexpected. Using the framework of visual studies to enhance our skills in seeing, interpreting, and creating, we will study plays as representations of “curatorial” choices in which assumptions and wishes about culture, nationality, and individual life are displayed publicly: like museums, these displays are staged in a context of history, culture, representation, politics, economics, aesthetics, commerce, and technical and dramatic innovation. We will meet actors, playwrights, designers, or directors to consider the demands and opportunities of London’s ambitious and competitive theater market, and travel to Stratford-upon-Avon to see plays in Shakespeare’s hometown. We will also explore the city itself as a stage, and students will present their discoveries in varied forms of writing and photography. The course will use students’ interdisciplinary learning, majors, other coursework, and daily experiences in the city to draw connections between the theater they see, the contemporary city they navigate, and the art and architecture they study as forms of staging the world in London.

Collecting the World in London
Instructor: Andrew Kennedy, 4 credits
London has dozens of museums, displaying a range of objects from mummies to fans, toys to tropical plants. This course looks at museums not simply as institutions of enlightenment, but as enactments of power – power over the past; over colonized or subjugated peoples; over life, death and disease; over nature. How have museums attempted to classify the world? In doing so, what is the price paid for taking things or living entities out of their original context? We examine questions of repatriation: should museums return objects and human remains in their collections?
What is the need to display material artifacts in a digital age? Are there other ways of creating ‘authentic’ experiences?

**Program-Sponsored Excursion**
Each London group will visit Stratford-on-Avon. This trip is part of the academic program and attendance is mandatory, as it is for classes in London. The cost of the excursion is included in your program fee.

**Classroom Expectations - London**
London classrooms are located in a building operated by Anglo Educational Services (AES). AES policies do not allow consumption of food or drink in the classrooms, and no smoking is allowed in the building or on adjacent sidewalks. Smokers are asked to cross the street into Russell Square.

**Educational Differences**
In your studies in Europe, you will be a participant in an educational system that differs markedly from that to which you are accustomed at your home college. You may find that the classroom culture, the approach of your professor, academic expectations, and even the way the course is organized often call for a very different style of learning. In immersing yourself in a culture abroad, you want to discover and experience new things but also to learn how to learn in new ways. Your willingness to approach classes in a fresh way will enhance your experience abroad. It will also provide you an opportunity for intellectual growth and understanding that will be of value long after your undergraduate education has come to a conclusion.

**Suggestions for academic success:**
- Faculty members expect a level of respect that often differs from informal U.S. classroom environments. Faculty is likely to maintain a greater distance from students than what you are accustomed to at your home campus. Unless your instructor suggests differently, address him or her as “Doctor” or “Professor.”
- Be more formal in the classroom than at your home campus, especially toward the professor. Choose to sit with a posture that shows respect and attention. You should not eat or drink during class. If you bring a laptop, use it only to take notes, not to check email or surf the web. Do not text in class.
- Instructors typically do not hold traditional office hours. If you have questions about the material or readings, the best strategy is to speak with your instructor immediately after class.
- Establish informal discussion groups with several of your fellow students in which to discuss your understanding of the material covered in class and in readings. Meet regularly.

**Credits**
ACM recommends a total of 12, 17, or 20 semester credits, as shown in the course descriptions, for your academic work in Florence only, London & Florence 15-week program, or London & Florence 18-week program respectively. **Before you leave your home campus you should contact and discuss with your campus Registrar exactly how many credits you will earn and what graduation requirements they will meet.** Different colleges have different policies about credit, and it is your responsibility to find out about pass/fail options and how your London & Florence credits will appear on your transcript.
Preparing to Go and Arrival

Passport & Visas
You need a valid passport to travel outside the U.S. and into the UK and Italy. If you don’t already have a valid
passport, or if your current passport expires before November 2018, you need to apply/renew immediately.
Your passport should be valid for 6 months after your return date to the U.S. Go to
http://travel.state.gov/passport/ for more information.

As a precaution, we suggest that while you are traveling, keep your passport separate from your wallet in
a safe and concealed carrier at all times. This way, even if you lose your purse or wallet, your passport will
remain safe. Make several copies of your passport and carry the pages separately from your passport. If, for
whatever reason, you lose your passport, contact the program staff and the nearest United States Consulate or
Embassy as soon as possible.

Requirements for visas vary from country to country  and are changing all of the time. U.S. citizens are
permitted to enter Italy for up to 90 days without a visa. Since the Italy portion of the program is less than 90
days, you do not need to obtain a visa for the program. If you plan to extend the semester in Italy (or
elsewhere), it is your responsibility to research the immigration rules.

Non-U.S. citizens may need to obtain an UK or Italian visa, and they should contact the nearest
Consulate or Embassy as soon as possible for more information on visa requirements.

Once students arrive in Florence, the program coordinator will assist them in obtaining the requisite
dichiarazione di presenza, required of all students who spend less than 90 days in Italy. (There is no additional
charge for this process.) Students who enter Italy from a non-Schengen country (Chicago-London-Florence) or
on a direct flight from the U.S. do not need to complete the dichiarazione di presenza.

Students will need an official student visitor letter in order to enter the UK. ACM will work with your college to
generate the letter and it is your responsibility to pick up the letter from your Off-Campus Study Director prior to
departing your campus.

Passport-size Photographs
You will need to bring two passport-sized photos to Italy, one for your Linguaviva ID and one for the bus pass
in Florence. These photos can be printed on a home printer but must be on photo paper. Photos should be in
color, approximately 2” x 2”. They should show your full face against a white background. You may
need official passport photos if you plan to visit countries that require a visa for entry; determining those
requirements is your responsibility. You can get passport-size photos taken at most Walgreens and Kinkos
stores. Photo booths are scattered throughout both London and Florence, so you can have more pictures
taken there if you need.

Communication
Email and Computers
If you have a laptop, bring it along. The Linguaviva building in Florence has a wireless connection. With an
adapter, you can plug your laptop in and use it at school or in your room at home. Please note that host
families may have wireless or dial-up internet. Before you go, be sure to check the battery life and other
functions on the computer, and have any repairs taken care of in advance, because computer repair is slow
and very expensive in Italy. There are two computers and two printers for students to use to write and print
school papers. Be aware that Linguaviva closes at 5 p.m., which means that from that time onward you won’t
have access to the program computer or wireless internet. Students can access Wi-Fi at other places in
Florence including the Biblioteca Oblate. Another option is to access the internet at one of the several internet
cafes within walking distance of Linguaviva. With your Linguaviva student ID you’re eligible for discounted
rates. Students will need to register for the service and are responsible for paying an hourly rate for the time
they spend online.
In London students have access to the internet at their apartments. Some students opt to leave the premises and can access the Wi-Fi at various internet cafes and coffee shops around London or Florence. There are also computer stations in the program’s classroom building for student use.

Mail in Florence and London
Please ask family and friends to send mail to the addresses listed at the back of this handbook (AES office in London, Linguaviva in Florence). While you are in Florence, **you should not receive mail at your host family’s residence**. Staff at Linguaviva will be there to accept the post during business hours, and you can pick up your mail every day on your way to class.

Receiving Packages
**ACM does not recommend that you receive any packages in either city.** 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. It is a huge hassle to retrieve packages, and for these reasons, we ask that packages not be sent. Ask family and friends sending you packages not to send anything expensive or valuable (e.g., computer equipment, cameras, etc.) 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 the site. 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 of the prescription medication you’ll need for the entire semester; do not plan to have medications (of any kind) sent to you while abroad.

Phones
For logistics and security reasons, it is imperative for all students to have a working cell phone with capabilities for calling and texting during your off-campus study. The phone should always be charged and be able to receive phone calls or messages.

During your first few days in London and Florence, the Linguaviva staff or visiting faculty director will take you to buy a SIM card and/or a phone near your classes and help you set up a pay as you go plan. We suggest the following phone options:

1. Bring an unlocked U.S. phone (works best with smartphones) and purchase an Italian and British SIM card. The phone must be GSM capable and you will need to call your cell phone carrier in the U.S. for an unlock code prior to your departure if it is not already unlocked.
2. Purchase a cheap (non-smart phone) Italian cell phone (can be later used in London) and a SIM card for London & Florence.
3. Use an international plan via your U.S. phone provider (while this is an option, we highly discourage this option as it is more expensive and the coverage is not as reliable in London & Florence).

Each European country requires a different SIM card, so if you want to use a phone during the program you will need to buy a SIM card in London and one in Florence.

You may receive telephone calls at the home of your host family, but you should plan on making calls to the U.S. only from your cell phone or from a 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 distressing to host families in the past.
ACM ALUMNI ADVICE: Every year, students report being surprised at how much more they spend in London than they expected. Food is usually the biggest driver of their surprise, especially if they were in Florence first where some meals are provided in the homestays. Seek ways to share food expenses in London (shared meals, group cooking, etc.) to control expenses.

Students rely heavily on Skype and Whatsapp (texting application) for communicating with their families and friends (www.skype.com).

To call the U.S. from Florence, you must dial the following: international calling code (00) + country code (1 in 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 in Italy) + city code (055 in Florence) + number OR CELL PHONE NUMBER WITHOUT 055. Calls to landlines within Florence must begin with the city code (055).

To call the U.S. from London, you must dial the following: international calling code (00) + country code (1 in the U.S.) + 3-digit area code + 7-digit number. To call London from the U.S., dial the international calling code (011) + country code (44 in the U.K.) + city code (20) + number. Calls within London whose city code is 20 require only that you dial the last eight digits.

When making international calls, remember to account for the time difference.

Money
The amount of money you’ll need in Florence and London depends upon your plans, tastes, and habits. Most members of last year’s group spent between $2,000 and $4,000 (including food for lunch), but if the exchange rate drops in either country, you might have to budget for more. You’ll need to adjust this figure to fit your own lifestyle and budget.

Your major daily expenses in Florence will include lunch, entertainment, and personal necessities. (For information on how much you can expect to spend for personal needs such as shampoo, lunch, or a movie ticket, please see the Cost Information Sheet posted on the Cost Information page. 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 provides bus passes in Florence to all students.

For London, while you’ll receive a tube pass for zones 1 and 2 (known as an “oyster card”), you’ll want to budget for the costs of meals and personal items such as toothpaste plus additional travel outside of zones 1 and 2 in Greater London. On the program-sponsored excursion to Stratford, the cost of transportation and an overnight stay, as well as theatre tickets, is included in the program fee, but you will be responsible for some meal costs.

You’ll need more money if you plan to travel on your own before 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.
In Italy, as in most of the European Union, the currency is the euro. Britain has elected not to adopt the euro and continues to use the pound as its unit of currency. In each country, you will need to have the appropriate unit of currency. (€ is the symbol for the euro, while £ is the symbol for the British pound.)

**Cash**

All airports will have ATMs, and for a fee, you can withdraw some cash as soon as you arrive in Europe; this is the best and easiest option. You will need euros or pounds for the taxi, bus, or train once you exit the airport. If you decide to buy euros or pounds in the U.S., exchange only enough to tide you over for the first few days, students recommend the equivalent of £100 or 100€ or less. Foreign currency can be purchased in the U.S. at any bank with an international banking department and at some airports. During the program, we don’t recommend that you keep more than 50€ or £50 in cash in your wallet at a time.

**Euros for Florence:**

![Image of Euro coins and banknotes]

**Pounds for London:**

![Image of Pound coins and banknotes]
Credit and Debit Cards
Using debit and credit cards is the safest and most convenient way to handle your money while you’re abroad, and it is recommended that you bring one of each type. ATMs on the PLUS and CIRRUS networks are available throughout Europe and can be used to withdraw currency from your American account. ATMs almost always offer better exchange rates than banks and currency exchange offices. It is advised that you withdraw money from the ATM located inside the bank during banking hours, in case of a problem. Take out large amounts less frequently rather than withdrawing small amounts more frequently in order to minimize ATM fees. Before you leave, please also call your banks to make sure they know you will be living out of the country for the next 10, 15, or 18 weeks.

Packing Considerations
You are advised to pack the type/style of clothing you normally wear. If something on the suggested packing list is not something you already own or feel you need, then don’t bring it. The packing suggestions are just that, they are suggestions made by program alums. The only items that are required for you to bring are listed under the heading of Required Materials.

Bring items that you plan to leave behind, such as towels, t-shirts, etc. so that you have room in your luggage for souvenirs. Bring travel-size toiletries when possible. You can buy full-sized products in both London and Florence but they tend to be more expensive than what you will find in the U.S.

Bring a suitcase, plus a backpack for field trips and weekend travel. If you plan to do any travel before/after the program or during your weeklong break (for those doing both London and Florence sections), bear in mind that you’ll have to keep all of your luggage with you as you travel during these periods. ACM does not provide options for students to ship their luggage from one city to the other and does not have facilities or staff to receive and/or store shipped luggage. Students should not expect to be excused from academic sessions so they can be present at their flats in London to receive shipped luggage. Expect and plan to travel with your luggage before and after the program and during the weeklong break.

Double check with your airline about the baggage limits of weight and dimensions for both checked and carry-on luggage. 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.

Pack anything you’ll need immediately upon arrival in your carry-on bag. It is always recommended that you pack at least one day’s worth of clothing in your carry-on in case your checked baggage is delayed. Check both your airline’s and the Transportation Security Administration’s websites for the latest carry-on luggage restrictions (www.tsa.gov). You should never put prescription drugs or valuables in your checked luggage. To avoid a delay in 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. If you wear glasses or contacts, bring an extra pair. If, when you board your flight, the overhead luggage is full and you are asked to check your luggage, take out all prescriptions and valuables!

We strongly recommend that you carry your money, passport, and any valuables in a money belt beneath your clothes while you’re traveling or in a small bag/wristlet. 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 take the precautions to prevent it. A few years ago, one student’s purse was stolen from 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.

Clothing
Bring clothes that will adapt to different seasons and situations and that are sturdy, comfortable, easy-care,
and ones that can layer. Many students use scarves to layer. Avoid a piece of clothing you’ll wear only once or twice during the semester. Laundromats and dry-cleaning are expensive, so hand-wash and drip-dry materials are the most practical.

Comfortable walking shoes are an absolute must and it is a good idea to break them in before the program. Remember that you will be walking in rainy weather; choose your shoes accordingly. You will need a warm coat, jacket, or a raincoat with a zip-in-lining for outdoors, and sweaters for the cool indoor temperatures. Warm pajamas are a necessity for cool winter and early spring nights. Sweaters are versatile traveling garments: they work with jackets on frigid days or without jackets on mild ones. Lightweight thermal underwear may also be a real asset. Keep in mind that it will be warmer by the end of May, so bring lighter shirts, t-shirts, blouses, and perhaps a swimsuit and towel. You should have casual clothes for everyday use, and one dressy outfit for concerts and the theatre.

Your Italian family will expect you to wear slippers in the house, so bring a pair with you. It is considered impolite to walk around in bare or stocking feet. This custom has practical origins: many apartments in Florence have chilly marble or ceramic floors, and slippers provide a barrier against the cold.

Climate and Dress in Florence
If you are spending the first part of the semester in Florence, you'll catch the last part of winter and the first part of spring. January and February temperatures will vary from about 35 to 55 degrees Fahrenheit (2 to 13 °C). March is normally the beginning of spring, and midday temperatures can reach the high 60s (18 to 21 °C). You will need both winter and spring clothing. Students who spend the second part of the semester in Florence will probably find full spring weather, including frequent rains. Past Florence groups, in fact, have found Italy more rainy than sunny. Typical student dress in Florence is casual, but not sloppy.

Climate and Dress in London
The average temperature in London in February is 35 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit (2 to 4 °C). In March the average temperature climbs to 45 (7°C) and to the mid-50s (11 to 14°C) in April. Those of you in the first London group will, therefore, be in for more severe weather than those in the second. These temperatures can be misleading because the weather is damp as well as chilly. However, you will enjoy the early English spring when the country is rich with cherry blossoms and spring flowers. Like in Italy, public buildings, galleries, theaters, etc., in London are often quite chilly by American standards. Rain in the winter and early spring months is also a fact of life but you will enjoy some warm days too (up to 60°F/15°C). You will need warm clothes and would be well advised to have a raincoat and a travel umbrella. Think in terms of layers of clothing (i.e., shirt + sweater + jacket) to accommodate a variety of conditions. Keep in mind that while formal dress is by no means required for most of your theatre outings in London, you might want to have the option of occasionally wearing something dressy—a jacket and tie for men, a dress or skirt for women.
Keep in mind when packing that you will need to carry your luggage with you when traveling before/after the program and during the weeklong break. Pack accordingly.

**Suggested Packing List**

**Required Materials**
- Passport and photo of your passport
- ATM card, credit card, cash
- Copy of your credit cards
- 2 passport-sized photos – See page 11
- Copy of your acceptance email
- UK student visitor letter (Pick up from OCSD on campus)
- CISi insurance card

**Essential Clothing**
- Raincoat with zip-in lining
- Warm coat
- Gloves, hats, scarves
- Sweaters
- T-shirts and long-sleeve shirts
- Pants
- Warm pajamas
- Undergarments and socks
- Slippers/shoes to wear around the house (it is not acceptable to be barefoot)
- Walking shoes (break them in before the program)

**Personal and Miscellaneous Items**
- This student handbook
- Umbrella (for both locations)
- Clothesline (dryers are very expensive)
- Sewing kit
- Toiletry items in travel sizes and larger
- Stick deodorant (can be hard to find on-site)
- Hand sanitizer
- Glasses or contact lenses + extra pair and copy of your prescription (Contact lens solution is expensive, so you might want to bring a semester’s supply)
- Enough prescription medicine to last your stay and copies of prescriptions (with generic names)
- Basic medicine kit (pain medication, band-aids, cold medicine)
- A bath towel and washcloths (not provided in either location; can purchase on-site)
- Bug spray (Florence)
- Travel alarm clock
- Backpack/bag for routine daily use (some students bring larger backpacks for weekend travel)
- Small bag for just a notebook during classes on-site
- Money belt, small bag/wristlet
- School supplies (can be purchased on-site)
- Guidebooks
- Laptop
- USB drive
- Converter plug
- Voltage adapter
- Camera, memory card, and charger
- Pictures of your family, home, and college to show to your host family and friends
- Water bottle
- Lanyard for keys
- Journal for recording personal reflections
- Italian/English dictionary
- Theatre-style glasses/binoculars for shows
Arrival
Please adhere carefully to arrival times. Depending on how and where you are arriving, you should plan for your flight arrival to be at least two hours before the times listed below. Orientation activities will begin promptly as noted.

Florence First 18-week & Florence only students should arrive in Florence to check-in at Hotel Palazzo Vecchio in time for an Orientation meeting on Saturday, January 6th at 5 p.m. This meeting will take place in the ACM classroom on the 4th floor of Via Fiume, 17, which is the building around the corner from the hotel.

Florence First 15-week students should arrive in Florence by 5 p.m. on Thursday, January 25th at Via Fiume, 17 4th Floor to transfer to homestays in the early evening.

After the break, students need to arrive in their next city and be at their initial meeting location by 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 25th. Make sure your flight/train arrival allows you enough time to get from your disembarkation point to the program location by 5 p.m.

Immigration and Customs
When you arrive in Europe, you will be required to clear both immigration and customs. You will fill out an immigration card, which you should get either at check-in or on the plane. Once you land, you will head towards the immigration lines: the wait could be 5 minutes or 2 hours. Present the immigration card with your passport at the immigration desk. You will be asked some questions, such as the purpose of your visit (to study) and perhaps asked to prove that you are able to support yourself financially without working while you are abroad. When entering the UK, you will need to present your official acceptance letter and your UK student visitor letter. The UK may also ask to see that you have sufficient funds, and you should show the immigration officer your credit card; you should also draw his/her attention to the statement on the student visitor letter which notes that you have already paid for your lodging, etc. as part of the program fee. In Italy, you will enter the country as a tourist, as visas are not issued for students studying there for less than 90 days.

You will then collect your luggage and go through customs which can be just a wave of the hand, but it can also be a thorough search of your luggage.

If you are landing in another international country before your final destination country you will likely need to go through immigration twice. Just follow the signs in the airport or ask an airport employee for assistance if you get confused.

Travel Arrangements
You are responsible for arranging your own transportation to and from Europe and between cities during the break (if you are a part of the 15 or 18 week program) and should begin researching airfares and travel options as soon as possible. Most students wait to plan their break travel until they arrive in their first city so they can organize travel with other program participant to travel with. A big advantage of traveling with other participants is that you’ll have people you know around to keep an extra eye on your luggage, as theft and pickpocketing can occur in airports and larger European cities.

Below, you will find very specific directions for arrival in Florence. These are verified directions on how to get to each city, but feel free to consult other sources, including program alumni. You might plan to arrive in your starting city a day or two before the program begins. Keep in mind that all expenses incurred before or after the official program are your responsibility.
Your travel arrangements should allow you to arrive at the hotel in downtown Florence by 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 6th.

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. When you make your flight reservations, be sure to factor in enough time to make connections between planes and/or trains so that you 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 will have company during your voyage and someone to count on for practicalities (reciprocal guardianship of luggage for bathroom stops or other needs).

Generally, flying all the way to Florence is the simplest and most practical option, but it may also be more expensive. Traveling to Florence directly involves at least one connecting flight in Europe, from Zurich, Amsterdam or Paris, for example. You then take a connection to Florence, to Peretola Airport (formerly Amerigo Vespucci Airport), located about three miles outside Florence. The local bus companies Sita+Ataf offer a bus service called VolainBus airport shuttle bus service. You will find the VolainBus located outside the terminal towards the right past the line of taxis; it will take you from the arrival terminal in the airport to the Firenze Santa Maria Novella (SMN) station square, a short walk from the ACM office and Linguaviva building. The VolainBus runs about every 30 minutes. The €6 ticket to ride the VolainBus can be purchased on board.

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

If you find other routes that are more cost effective such as flying from the U.S. to Rome, Milan, Pisa, or from another city in Europe, please review the arrival options pdf on the accepted student webpage.

Keep an eye on your valuables and suitcases at all times when you are traveling. Beware of street people who often work in groups, particularly in train stations, churches and other places frequented by tourists. You may see women and children working together to distract tourists or travelers. The best solution is to ignore and move away from them. Only exceptional cases may require you to enter a public place like a bar to ask for help and to call authorities. Do not keep your money or your passport in exterior pockets and hold other belongings tightly. Pickpockets on buses are also very common. More on safety and emergency procedures will be covered once you arrive in Florence.

Personal Travel: Travel within Europe during the Break

Most students use the program break as an opportunity to travel in Europe before heading to the next city. Be sure to budget for the cost of your travel between not only your entry point in Europe and your first city but also between London and Florence. You are responsible for your travel expenses, accommodations and meals during the break as well as transporting all of your luggage. Remember to be realistic about your travel plans and to use good judgment during your independent travel.

Eurail Passes

If you plan to do a fair amount of rail travel on your own before or after the program or during the break, you might be interested in one of the varieties of Eurail passes available for travel in and among 17 European countries but not travel in Great Britain. Several passes with different restrictions and durations are available including Eurail Youthpass, Eurail Youth Flexipass, Eurail Saver Pass, Eurail Flexipass, and the Europass. If you are interested in one of these passes, you should contact your own travel agent or the official Eurail website at www.eurail.com for advice on which type of pass to purchase.

BritRail Passes
Eurailpasses are not valid for travel in Great Britain. The BritRail Classic Pass and the BritRail Flexipass cover England, Wales, and Scotland. Airport services—Heathrow Express, Gatwick Express, and Stansted Skytrain—are also included. The BritRail Classic Pass is valid for travel on a certain number of consecutive days. Passes are available for 8 days, 15 days, 22 days, or 1 month. The BritRail FlexiPass permits the holder to choose travel days within the period of validity. Passes are available for 4 days of travel in two months, 8 days of travel in two months or 15 days of travel in two months. Tickets are available in the U.S. from BritRail (www.britrail.net) or Rail Europe (www.raileurope.com).

Other Passes and Train Tickets
www.railpass.com features a wide variety of regional and national train passes. A word of caution: You may need to do a lot of train traveling before a rail pass begins to save you money. Compare the cost of purchasing tickets individually with the price of any pass. Remember to keep the receipt part of your pass or tickets so you can get a replacement or refund in case of loss.

Air Travel
Flying within Europe can be affordable if you search for discount/student fares. If your schedule allows some flexibility, you may save money by arranging your travel between European cities once in Europe. There are many inexpensive airlines offering good deals including Ryanair and EasyJet. To find more budget airlines, check out www.skyscanner.com.

Accommodations
Youth hostels are the least expensive housing option while traveling in Europe; a bed generally costs around $20 or $30 a night. They vary greatly in quality, however, and often have curfews and daytime lockouts that may restrict your schedule to some extent. If you plan to stay in hostels, visit the Hostelling International website at www.hihostels.com or hostelworld.com for locations and more information. Pensiones and hotels will cost more money than hostels, but they generally give you more privacy, security, and flexibility. Most tourist information centers in train stations and airports can help you to find accommodations, but a good guidebook will also come in handy. Many guidebooks list lodgings that readers have liked in the past.

Living Arrangements

Florence
When you first arrive in Florence, you will be staying at the Hotel Palazzo Vecchio for 1-2 nights, getting acquainted with staff and other program participants. The cost of the hotel stay and reservation has been taken care of by ACM Florence.

Hotel Palazzo Vecchio
Via Bernardo Cennini, 4 - 50123 Firenze, Italia
Tel. +39 055 212182
Email: info@hotelpalazzovechhio.it
Website: www.hotelpalazzovecchio.it

If you plan to arrive before the official program start date, you will be responsible for your own arrangements. To reserve a room at the Hotel Palazzo Vecchio for a few nights before the program starts, please contact Mr. Andrea Pucci at manager@hotelpalazzovecchio.it and make sure to mention that you are with the ACM program in your email.

Host Families
Upon arriving at the program site you will be matched with a host family. After the night(s) at the hotel, you will be placed in an Italian home. There are generally two ACM students in a household, and you'll share a room;
singles are available only if there are an odd number of women and/or men. Some or all members of your host family may be able to speak English, but you should expect to communicate in Italian.

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. The commute is generally between 15 and 30 minutes by bus or on foot. You will be provided a Florence bus pass and given orientation on using the bus system.

ACM students enjoy a great deal of diversity in their living situations. You may be placed in a multigenerational household with babies and 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 express your preferences on your housing preference form.

According to the Linguaviva contractual agreement with the families that ACM follows, breakfast and dinner 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 take 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 large meals and enjoy the company of friends and family, and dinner can often involve many courses, lasting for two or more hours. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn about your host family and the cuisine of Italy. Lunch is not included in the program fee; students are provided a small space in their host families’ refrigerator to store ingredients for cold lunches that you can then take to Linguaviva. Alternatively, there are several inexpensive restaurants near Linguaviva where you can purchase lunch in the middle of the day. Please keep in mind that you do not have the use of the kitchen in your host family's house or apartment for food preparation except for lunches.

Respect for 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.

Each student will have one load of laundry done per week by their host mother. Since there will almost always be two of you with a family, we recommend that you share washing, doing one white wash and one dark wash per week together, specifying that you want your clothes washed at a low temperature (maximum 40° C).

Here are a few tips for living with an Italian family:

- Your family in Italy will expect you to wear slippers inside the house, so bring a pair with you. Many of the apartments have cold marble or ceramic floors, and you will 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 indicate so on the Medical Information Form and let the Director in Florence know.
- 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.
- Ask your host family if friends and your (American) family can call you there, but also plan on using your cell phone 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).

**London**

You will be living in apartments at **Kamen House** (62-66 Farringdon Rd, Clerkenwell, London EC1R 3GB, UK), located near Farringdon and Chancery Lane Underground Stations. The building consists of 16 two and three bedroom apartments, which each have a minimum of two bathrooms. There is also a spacious shared lounge and an open-plan kitchen.

The flat includes a fully equipped kitchen with cooking utensils, a dishwasher, and a microwave oven. Each flat also includes an in-unit washer and dryer as well as independent heating systems. Students will need to provide their own towels and purchase consumable supplies such as paper towels and bathroom tissue. The purchase of all food items is the responsibility of the students. The common area includes a lounge area with a flat-screen TV and a telephone line for incoming calls.

The building’s housekeepers will provide basic weekly cleaning and linen service, but ACM students are expected to keep their flats in clean condition. You will be living in this building as a member of a community of students and, out of consideration for other residents, common areas should be kept as tidy as possible.

The facility includes a private combination safe in each of the flats. While the Kamen House is located in a safe area, please also be sure to always keep your door locked. While you might feel safe leaving your dorm room door unlocked from time to time on your home campus; do not do this in London.

The flat is close to St. Paul’s Cathedral and well connected to academic and social areas of London, including Monticello House where you will be attending classes. You are a 20 minute walk to Monticello house or a direct tube ride for those rainy days.

If you plan to arrive in London before the official program start date, you will be responsible for your own arrangements. Space in the Kamen House is not likely to be available in advance of the program dates.

**Please keep in mind that this housing option is subject to change**
Cultural Norms and Expectations

Cultural Differences
By design, an off-campus program is unlike life on your home campus. In addition to everyday differences—what and when you eat, you may also encounter larger, more elusive cultural contrasts. A big part of living abroad is recognizing and integrating into your new cultural surroundings. As you meet and establish friendships with English and Italian people, you might find that you need to adapt to different rules of etiquette and consider social and political perspectives 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 differences can help smooth the transition to life in another country. We encourage you to play the role of an anthropologist: observe Italian and English behavior on the street (and in your host family) and try to adapt. Italians and Brits 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. 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. This is all a part of becoming attuned to the cross-cultural challenges of education abroad.

Italy
Especially in Italy, where communicating in a foreign language can mean that even basic speech requires effort, you might sometimes start to feel tired of confronting so many challenges. But keep trying! It takes courage to remain open to so much newness, but in the end, your efforts will bring rich rewards. 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 an incomplete list of some of the cultural contrasts you may encounter in Italy:

- 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.
- 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.

ACM ALUMNI ADVICE: Be patient with yourself and your peers as you go through the process of adjusting to life in London and Florence. Something will be different from what you’ve expected. Don’t be afraid to talk about any concerns and ask questions! The ACM staff are there to help you!
ACM ALUMNI ADVICE: Don’t eat on public transportation or in public buildings (except in cafeterias). Italians don’t “eat on the run” and they don’t bring snacks and lunches to meetings.

UK
In Britain, don’t let the fact that we share a common language delude you into thinking that there are no significant cultural differences between the U.S. and Britain or that you need not adapt your way of interacting to function smoothly in your daily life. There are very real cultural differences, and one of the most significant is the high premium Britons put on politeness. They are, for example, far more likely to under-state rather than over-state a situation, as Americans are prone to do. You’ll find that “please,” “thank you,” and “sorry” are used with great frequency. And in making requests to one another, Britons tend to be overly polite—or at least that’s how it seems to us. Instead of saying, “I want to do such-and-such,” Britons are more likely to say, “Would it be possible for me to…?” or “Might I…?” We urge you to begin to do the same—you’ll find that people are much more likely to respond positively to your requests. Persistence is fine, but a lack of courtesy, especially losing your temper, is likely to be counterproductive. You’ll also find British politeness expressed in “queuing”—lining up for service and to get on buses and trains. It’s the norm in Britain, and you should do it too.

Although we share the same language, there are often significant differences in the meanings of words, with the same words expressing quite different and even opposite things on the opposite sides of the Atlantic. Some of these differences can be quite amusing, while others are simply confusing. You’ll learn some of these differences as you go along, and may at times find it humorous or, possibly, frustrating. Be prepared for these moments of mutual incomprehension!

Mental and Intellectual Preparation
Pre-Program Reading
You will receive a list of texts you’ll need for your courses in London and Florence. Readings and books are available in Florence for the Florence portion unless otherwise indicated. For London and especially for the plays you will be seeing in the Faculty Director’s course, you will be able to purchase books in London. You may also be asked to read one or two books before the program starts.

In the meantime, start to do some general reading about London and the UK, and about Florence, Tuscany, and Italy. Most libraries have collections of travel guides that can answer questions you may have about what to see and do during your time in England and Italy, and you can find specific reference books to help with the customs and cultures of both countries. (An option that previous ACM students have found particularly useful and relevant are CultureSmart guidebooks published by Kuperard.) You’ll make many discoveries on your own, but a good travel guide and map can help you get your bearings in an unfamiliar place and reduce the time it takes to start feeling at home.

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 experience in person when you get to Europe. Italian and English novels are good 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 and interested in American current events and politics. You may be asked your opinion on many international current events as well, so it’s useful to stay apprised of what’s going on in the world.
Travel Guides
Italy - CultureSmart: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture (available through Amazon)
Britain – CultureSmart: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture (Amazon)
Lonely Planet
Rough Guide
Blue Guide: Florence

Art and History of Florence & Italy
Eve Borsook, The Companion Guide to Florence
Gene Brucker, Renaissance Florence, The Golden Age 1138-1737
Martin Clark, Modern Italy 1871-1982
Peter d'Epiro and Mary Desmond Pinkowish, Sprezzatura: 50 Ways Italian Genius Shaped the World
George Holmes, The Oxford History of Italy
Christopher Hibbert, Florence: The Biography of a City
Ross King, Brunelleschi's Dome: How a Renaissance Genius Reinvented Architecture
Ross King, Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling
Richard Turner, Renaissance Florence: The Invention of a New Art
Giorgio Vasari, Lives of the Artists (abridged edition that includes lives of 16th century masters as well as earlier masters)

Art and History of London & Britain
Peter Ackroyd, London: The Biography
Christopher Hibbert, The Story of England
John Summerson, The Classical Language of Architecture

Online News Sources
BBC online
http://www.bbc.co.uk
Corriere Della Sera's Italian Life section (in English)
http://www.corriere.it/english
Florence newspaper La Nazione (in Italian)
http://www.lanazione.it
The Guardian
http://www.guardian.co.uk/
The Guardian Weekly
http://www.guardianweekly.co.uk/
The Independent
www.independent.co.uk/
The New Statesman
www.newstatesman.com/
The Observer
observer.guardian.co.uk/
The Spectator
www.spectator.co.uk/
The Sunday Times
www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/
The Telegraph
www.telegraph.co.uk/
Timeout London
http://www.timeout.com/london/
Language Adaptation: Florence
There are many online resources, apps, and travel dictionaries that can provide you with lists of useful Italian words and phrases that may help you during your first few days in Italy. For example, the Fodor’s website (http://www.fodors.com/language/italian/) offers additional useful Italian phrases and includes links to sound files to help your pronunciation. If you have no Italian language skills, we encourage you to make an attempt to learn some basic words and phrases in advance of your arrival. At the very least, you should be able to communicate basic courtesy phrases:

Language Adaptation: London
DO NOT ASSUME that just because you speak and understand English there will not be communication challenges in London. There are extensive word and slang differences between British English and American English. You can find extensive lists of American English to British English conversions on the internet. One example can be found at: http://www15.uta.fi/FAST/US1/REF/engtran.html. Or you could consider purchasing a handy pocket dictionary to help

Cultural Adjustment
In the first weeks when you arrive on site it is not uncommon to experience challenges in adjusting to a different culture. You may be surprised, dismayed, and even feel 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 any feelings of jet lag), they are likely to be excited and entranced by the novelty of being in a new location and delighted with most things around them. In the second stage, once the initial euphoria has worn off, they may focus on the ways in which everything is different or “foreign.” The tendency is to highlight the differences and compare them unfavorably to things at home—the food is bad, the computer facilities are inferior, services are badly organized, etc. During the third stage, their view of home and their program location is more nuanced—they are likely to take a more analytic approach to both locations and to find good and bad things in each.

As a student studying abroad, you will undoubtedly feel uncomfortable at times, especially in the beginning, and likely hear your fellow students expressing similar responses. This is not unusual, and we anticipate that after a time these feelings of discomfort and insecurity will dissipate. It’s very normal for all students to experience challenges with cultural adjustment. You are not alone and we can help in many ways. 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.

Insurance, Health, and Safety
While studying off-campus offers new educational 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. You need to be aware of your health and your responsibility for monitoring new or ongoing medical concerns. You will not have the same support systems or forms of assistance that you have turned to on your home campus or in your hometown. You will have days that are exciting and rewarding and also days where everything seems strange and exhausting. The visiting director, ACM, on-site staff and counseling services, and new friends can all serve as great support systems. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind as you prepare for your semester in London and Florence.
For information about health and safety in Italy & the UK as a whole, two very useful websites are those of the U.S. Department of State and the Centers for Disease Control. These can be found at:

**CDC - Italy**

**CDC – United Kingdom**

**U.S. Department of State – United Kingdom**

**U.S. Department of State – Italy**

(The Consular Information Sheet contains information about visa requirements, safety and crime, and road conditions among other things, while the Background Notes are more similar to an almanac entry, providing a summary of Italian and United Kingdom politics, history, the economy and basic statistics).

Once you have been registered for your medical insurance (see below), you will also have access to country-specific health and safety information on their website.

**Insurance**

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

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

- Coverage for both medically-necessary office visits and hospitalization;
- No exclusion for mental disorders or alcohol-related accidents or illnesses;
- Coverage for prescription drugs (excluding preventative medications such as malaria prophylaxis);
- No exclusion for pre-existing conditions (except in the case of pregnancies beginning before the start of the program);
- Medical evacuation coverage; and
- No deductible.

The policy will cover students from the official arrival date through the official departure date for their programs. It covers you not only while you are in the host country, but also during any time you may travel away from the program site—e.g., during program vacation periods.

The policy, however, should **not** replace any coverage you have in the U.S., nor should you discontinue your U.S. American health insurance coverage—it provides only limited amounts of coverage for follow-up treatment of illnesses or injuries which begin while you are abroad and only provides for up to 30 days.

The cost of this coverage is included in your program fee, and ACM will handle your registration for the insurance. It is also possible for you to independently purchase supplemental coverage through CISI to extend the days that you will be covered by the ACM policy. (If, for example, you plan to leave early for the program site or do some traveling outside the U.S. after the program, you can purchase health insurance coverage for that additional time.) The cost of this additional coverage is approximately $40/month. CISI will e-mail students a welcome letter and an ID card a few weeks prior to departure; the welcome letter will describe how to log on to www.culturalinsurance.com to view the tools available to policyholders and to purchase any additional coverage. (You will need the ID number provided on the card and also a credit card to which the cost of the additional coverage can be billed. It is also possible to purchase the additional coverage by phone.)
CISI is a medical insurance plan and will not cover your personal property. Please consult your parents'/guardians’ insurance to ensure adequate coverage of anything you take to or purchase in Italy or the UK.

Health
Medications and Other Medical Preparation
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 only be shared with on-site staff when necessary.

If you have any pre-existing medical problems, bring a letter from the attending physician that describes the medical condition and any prescription medications (including the generic name). While vaccinations are not required to travel to the Italy and the UK, the CDC provides a list of recommended vaccines and medicines for disease prevention.

If you take one or more prescription drugs regularly, you will want to be sure you can continue this medication while abroad. Speak with your physician about the possibility of obtaining a supply to take with you. (And please make sure to keep it in its original container in your carry-on luggage with a copy of the prescription.) We recommend that students bring a 6-month supply of their prescription medications because prescribing rules and drug availability vary all over Europe. If you cannot get a supply to take with you, you will want to verify that this medication can be obtained in Italy and the UK. You should not plan to have drugs (of any kind) sent to you while abroad.

Medical Services
Good medical facilities in the Italy and the UK are widely available. VU has a medical/teaching hospital on campus. Due to the university’s close ties with this hospital, most students utilize this facility should they need medical care. ACM’s insurance provider CISI has certain “preferred providers,” but if students choose to visit a “non-preferred provider” they can still be reimbursed for costs later by CISI. Pharmacies, known as an “Apotheek” are ubiquitous and can assist with emergency prescription needs.

Psychological Counseling
If you require regular sessions with a counselor, please include this information on your Medical History Form so that we can help to make arrangements in advance. Our staff and our partners at is experienced with the resources available in Italy and the UK and the benefits available to you through our health insurance provider.

Safety
Florence and London are safe cities and hospitable and secure countries. Like any place else in the world, however, there is some crime and random violence, but most of it is preventable or avoidable with appropriate caution. You should be especially careful when you first arrive on-site when everything is unfamiliar. ACM staff and the ACM Faculty Directors will provide you with more information during your orientation when you first arrive and can advise you about safety as you travel around Italy and the UK.

While participating in the program, you will be living and studying as a foreign guest and will be expected to conform to the standards of Italian and British society. Keep in mind that you are subject to all local laws and that if you violate local laws, even unknowingly you may face legal consequences. As a member of the ACM-sponsored group, your actions will reflect on the program and could jeopardize the position and legal status of the program. ACM has carefully cultivated good relations with people in Florence and London and illegal or inappropriate actions can imperil both yourself and the program.

Crime and Random Violence
By and large, Florence and London are modern and relatively safe cities, and Italy and the United Kingdom are hospitable and secure countries. Like any place else in the world, however, both cities have some crime and random violence. Pickpockets commonly target tourists at historic sites and restaurants, on public transportation, and in other crowded areas. Avoid keeping cash or valuables – like your passport – in easily accessible pockets or purses. It’s generally safer to carry a wallet in a front pocket rather than a back one.

We encourage you to travel with a partner or in a small group. Follow the staff and 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.

**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. 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 an invitation. Many students have found it necessary to adopt the more conservative dress and behavior than in the U.S.

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

Whole volumes could be written about Italian men, but for [women] travelers the most important fact is that they are usually harmless. Italy is a modern country, but many old-fashioned attitudes remain. [A] woman alone can attract appreciative comments, whistles, hisses or snatches of song. But remember that most Italians live in tightly-knit communities where the domestic sphere is ruled 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 local residents 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.

In recent years, there have been isolated incidents of sexual assault perpetrated against 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 all students.

1. **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. Leave with the group and stay safe.

2. **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.

3. **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.

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

**Communication and Emergencies**

All students are required to have a mode of communication where the visiting faculty director and/or ACM staff can get in immediate contact with you should there be an emergency. The emergency phone number for the ACM is 312.561.5911. Please see all other contact information above.

Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)](https://www.travel.state.gov) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.

**Independent Travel**

You also need to be mindful of your personal safety as you travel independently on weekends or during the break. **You are expected to inform the director and your host family of any travel plans and your expected time of return.** You will be provided access to [ACM's Independent Travel Form](https://www.acm.org) to submit anytime you travel away from Florence or London without program staff. This form allows ACM to contact you or provide you with resources in case of emergency or change to program itineraries. When traveling, always use your hotel safe and keep baggage locked and secure. Monitor media and local information sources and factor that information into any personal travel plans or activities.

**Motor Vehicles**

You may not acquire or operate any kind of motorized vehicle while you are a participant in the ACM program, including motorcycles, motorbikes, or scooters. You will probably find, as do a great many residents of Italy and the UK, that public transportation and walking are the most efficient means of getting around.

**Alcohol and Drug Use**

**Alcohol**

One significant area of difference between Amsterdam and the U.S. has to do with consumption of alcohol. While there is not the rigid enforcement of a drinking age in Amsterdam, you will also find that the Dutch rarely drink to become intoxicated. Rather, alcohol is consumed in moderation on social occasions and with meals. Public drunkenness and rowdy behavior are frowned upon and will likely serve to identify you as an American thus potentially singling you out for further unwanted attention. Please keep in mind that your judgment is likely to be impaired by alcohol and that you may lose the ability to evaluate situations with the same caution and sensitivity you would normally use.
Drugs
Despite the common misperception that marijuana and hashish are controlled substances in the Netherlands, possession of more than 5 grams is a misdemeanor that can still result in a fine. “Coffee shops” are often frequented by petty criminals who prey on tourists under the influence of drugs. Students who frequent coffee shops can fall victim to pickpocketing, identity theft, sexual assault, and other crimes. Marijuana and other drug use can be very dangerous and can result in health implications and academic or legal consequences. It is illegal to take any controlled substance, such as marijuana, into or out of the Netherlands.

Any accusation of an ACM student regarding drug possession or use could have severe repercussions on the program, the staff, and the students. Therefore, the possession or use of any illegal drugs may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

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

ACM Program Policies
The Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) is a consortium of 14 residential liberal arts colleges in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Colorado. ACM programs reflect the academic standards and policies of its member colleges, and the standards and policies in the paragraphs which follow are applicable to all ACM off-campus study programs.

The ACM Off-Campus Study Program mission begins:

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

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

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

ACM Code of Student Responsibility
The ACM Code of Student Responsibility reads as follows:

I understand that I am required to comply with all policies and procedures of the ACM including policies outlined here as well as program-specific rules introduced during the on-site orientation. My participation in an ACM program represents my college and the ACM consortium at all times. I know that my behavior must respect the values and norms of the host community while promoting the safety and well-being of other students and my program’s faculty and staff. I will strive to ensure that my behavior supports the educational nature of the ACM at all times.
Studying off-campus during your college career can be both very exciting and very challenging. Many students return to their home campus feeling dramatically changed, eager to embark on a new academic or career path, or with a clearer understanding of who they are as an individual. Off-campus study is a privilege; an option within higher education that not all students can select as a part of their collegiate experience. It often creates lifetime memories and presents multiple prospects for personal growth. In order to protect this opportunity for all students, however, ACM has instituted some policies and to ensure it remains accessible to the greatest possible number of students.

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

**ACM Policies and Procedures**

On our website, you will find the following ACM policies and procedures for which you are expected to adhere to:

- ACM Code of Student Responsibility
- ACM Policy on Academics
- ACM Housing Policy
- ACM Policy on Alcohol and Drugs
- ACM Policy on Sexual Harassment
- ACM Policy on Dual Relationships
- ACM Policy on Sexual Assault
- ACM Policy on Non-Discrimination
- ACM Student Conduct Procedures
- ACM Policy on Tuition, Program Fees, and Refunds
- ACM Policy on Health and Safety Notification
- Off-Campus Study Contract
- ACM Photograph and Video Release
- Evaluations and Surveys

Please read through these closely before signing the ACM Comprehensive Release form (this is included on the accepted student web page). These policies were designed with your health and well-being in mind. They are intended to support you, your peers, and the entire off-campus study community as you develop personally, professionally, and academically on your Off-Campus Study Program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACM Chicago Office</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associated Colleges of the Midwest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 E. Adams, Suite 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL  60603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel:312.263.5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax: 312.263.5879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Hour Phone: 312.561.5911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Gillespie, <a href="mailto:jgillespie@acm.edu">jgillespie@acm.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Off-Campus Study Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlee Stein  <a href="mailto:mstein@acm.edu">mstein@acm.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Campus Study Program Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **ACM in Florence**         |
| Beloit College Florence Program |
| c/o Linguaviva               |
| Via Fiume, 17                |
| 50123 Florence               |
| ITALY                        |
| Tel: (011 39) 055 538-3524   |
| Fax: (011 39) 055 283-667    |
| Student mailing address:     |
| Student’s name               |
| Beloit College Florence Program |
| c/o Linguaviva               |
| Via Fiume, 17                |
| 50123 Florence               |
| ITALY                        |
| Hotel Piazzo Vecchio         |
| Via Bernardo Cennini, 4      |
| 50123 Firenze, Italia        |
| Tel: +39 055 212 182         |
| Josephine Rogers Mariotti,   |
| [jmariotti@acm.edu](mailto:jmariotti@acm.edu) |
| Program Director             |
| Rosita Cirri, [rcirri@acm.edu](mailto:rcirri@acm.edu) |
| Program Coordinator          |

| **ACM in London**            |
| Student mailing address:     |
| ACM – Student’s Name         |
| Monticello House             |
| 45 Russell Square            |
| London WC1B 4JP              |
| United Kingdom               |
| Susan Jaret McKinstry,       |
| [sjaret@carleton.edu](mailto:sjaret@carleton.edu) |
| Director in London and Affiliated Scholar in Florence |
| (Carleton College)           |
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