ITALY
Language & Culture, UC Center Florence
Summer, Fall, and Spring

2012-2013 Program Guide
The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy,* disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the University’s student-related nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the campus Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action office.

*Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.
YOUR UCEAP NETWORK

Local UCEAP Support

Campus EAP Office
The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientations, and academic advising; and serves as your primary contact during the application process.

UCEAP Systemwide Office
The UCEAP Systemwide Office establishes and operates programs and coordinates UCEAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

- **Program Advisors** provide academic and operational program information to you and your campus as well as administrative support for all aspects of your participation.
- **Operations Specialists** manage the logistics of the program. They coordinate document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, acceptance and placement by host institutions, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements.
- **Academic Specialists** advise on academic policies, review courses taken abroad for UC credit, and document your registration, grades, petitions and academic records.
- **Student Finance Accountants** assist primarily with UCEAP statements, program fee collection, and financial aid disbursements (in conjunction with your campus Financial Aid Office).

Contact Information

Program Advisor
Katerina Georgieva
Phone: (805) 893-4430; E-mail: kgeorgieva@eap.ucop.edu

Operations Specialist
Kitty Christen
Phone: (805) 893-4430; E-mail: kchristen@eap.ucop.edu

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UCEAP Systemwide Office
6950 Hollister Avenue, Suite 200
Goleta, CA 93117-5823
Phone: (805) 893-4762; Fax: (805) 893-2583
UCEAP Online

Bookmark your Participants program page. This resource lists requirements and policies you need to know before you go abroad, including your Prededparture Checklist, UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad, Program Calendar, UCEAP Student Budgets, and payment instructions.

Connect with us! Join our Facebook network via the UCEAP Italy page.

Study Center Abroad

The academic program in Florence is overseen by a local Academic Coordinator in consultation with the UCEAP Systemwide Office and a UC faculty advisory committee. Student services and activities are provided by ACCENT (International Consortium for Academic Programs Abroad) in consultation with UCEAP.

Mr. Michelangelo D’Elia, Resident Director  
Dr. Mariarosa Mettifogo, Academic Coordinator  
ACCENT/UC Florence Study Center  
Piazza Santo Spirito, 10  
50125 Florence, Italy  
Phone: (calling from the U.S.): (011-39) 055 23 81 657  
Phone: (calling from Italy): 055 23 81 657  
Fax: (011-39) 055 094 4362  
E-mail: Florence@accentintl.com

Phone Number Codes

U.S. international code .............. 011  
(dial this to call from the U.S.)  
Italy country code................. 39  
Florence city code............. 055

Approximate Time Difference

Add 9 hours
Avoid planning any weekend trips before you receive the academic calendar at the orientation meeting in Florence. Absence due to previously arranged travel plans cannot be excused.

### Academic Information

**Orientation**

The on-site orientation in Florence is divided into three sections: 1) academics, 2) logistics, and 3) cultural and volunteer activities. There will also be a practical walking tour of the city center.

**Program Descriptions**

The intensive language and culture programs are designed especially for the University of California and taught by experienced Italian language instructors. Courses are demanding. Expect to be in the classroom or on required site visits and excursions from three to six hours per day. During the summer program classes are held Monday through Friday. During the fall and spring programs classes are held Monday through Thursday, with occasional Friday classes. You are expected to attend all field exercises and excursions, which are integral components of the courses.

Special tutorials are available in all programs and may be required if deemed appropriate by the language instructors and on-site Academic Coordinator. Many students have found these tutorial sessions valuable to their learning progress.

**Summer Quarter Program**

You will attend intensive language classes three to four hours per day and a culture class twice a week. There will be occasional required events and excursions in the afternoons and evenings. Both language and culture classes are structured to include field trips in Florence, written reports, and opportunities for conversation and listening comprehension.

During the on-site orientation, you will take a placement exam to determine your level of language proficiency. You will then be placed in the appropriate language class. The language course levels correlate roughly with the lower-division elementary and intermediate designations at UC. Each language course is worth 5 UC quarter units. You will complete approximately two levels in the quarter program, as well as one Italian culture course worth 4 UC quarter units. Upon successful completion of the quarter program, you will earn 14 UC quarter units of Italian language and culture credit. If you begin at levels five or six, an advanced Italian language course is available.

**Fall and Spring Semester Programs**

During the on-site orientation, you will take a placement exam to determine your level of language proficiency. You will then be placed in the appropriate language class. You will attend classes for 16 weeks. The courses are divided into three sequential Italian language courses for 6 UC quarter units each, and a fourth course in Italian culture, worth 4.5 UC quarter units.

The language courses focus on oral and written comprehension, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. All courses emphasize practice in speaking, reading and writing with individual and group oral presentations, role-plays, interviews with locals, and weekly written assignments. Local periodicals and other reading materials are used as the basis for several short papers during the term. You will complete three UC quarter levels of Italian language instruction.

All courses use the city of Florence to provide opportunities for interaction and enhancement of language skills, as well as immersion in Italian culture.
Culture Courses
The following culture courses may be offered in the summer, fall, and spring:

Renaissance Florence: the New Athens on the Arno
The streets of Florence thronged with wool merchants haggling to close their deals, painters’ apprentices rushing to purchase the right shade of pigment their masters required, moneylenders sitting at their counters shrewdly calculating profits, and masons pounding and hammering to create stately palazzo. At the same time, scholars in their studies discussed Plato and marveled over ancient Greek texts only freshly recovered from oblivion. The explosion of creative energy that took place in Renaissance Florence has never been surpassed and, to this day, it is dazzling to consider how much genius was born in this city by the Arno. The course offers an insight into that world, reading what Renaissance Florentines had to say about themselves, their society, the ancients, and their place in history.

Michelangelo: Art, Persona, and Politics in Renaissance Italy
The course examines the life and creative production—sculpture, painting, and architecture—of one of the great protagonists of the Renaissance, Michelangelo Buonarroti. The course explores the tensions that colored Michelangelo’s interactions with his patrons, rival artists, the Medici rulers of Florence, and the Catholic Church. We’ll consider how social and political conditions may have fostered or hindered his creativity, and how Michelangelo’s “creativity” and “genius” were understood both in the Renaissance as well as in recent historiography. In addition to familiarizing students with all of Michelangelo’s major works, the course is designed to enhance skills in historiographic analysis, stimulate independent critical thought, and sharpen argumentation skills.

Mediterranean Food and Culture
Florence and Tuscany are rightly famous for their cuisine, with an international reputation for producing the finest wines and olive oils. This course is designed to contrast the cultural eating habits of Florence against those of America to highlight the benefits of a Mediterranean-style diet. The cultural aspects that contribute to healthy living as well as modern nutritional ideas are also discussed. The course also covers the development of nutrition as a science and offers fundamental insights into the growing epidemics of obesity and diabetes in the developed world. The course takes full advantage of local markets and producers for visits and tastings, highlighting traditional food products and production techniques.

Florence in Italian and International Cinema
This course examines Florence and its presence in Italian and international cinema from the period immediately after World War II to the present. It presents a survey of films, movements, and genres in Italian cinema as well as the image of Florence in British and American cinema. The films are analyzed as aesthetic objects as well as in relation to the political, economic, social, and cultural environments depicted. The course is designed to broaden students’ knowledge of Florentine and Italian culture, society, history, economy, politics, literature, and cinema, as they learn how to critically analyze films and to recognize different film genres.
Exams are held during the last week of classes. You may not request early exams. Requests to leave early to attend UC graduation ceremonies cannot be accommodated. Anyone who leaves Florence before the official end of the final exam period will fail the course, no exceptions.

Course Registration
You will register for your culture course prior to departure. The Academic Coordinator in Florence will e-mail you instructions on how to complete your course registration.

Attendance Policy
You are allowed one absence per class on the summer quarter program. You are allowed two absences per class from the semester program. Any absence beyond the limit will result in a deduction of a third of a grade (approximately 3%) from your final raw total. If you are absent due to a medical reason, you need to submit a doctor’s note. In addition, two tardies are equal to one unexcused absence (being 10 minutes late to class gives you a tardy). There are no exceptions. No make-ups are allowed for missed work. If you miss class when an assignment (quiz, written or oral test, paper due) is taking place, you must submit a valid doctor’s note in order to avoid getting an F grade for the assignment.

Note to Seniors
You are required to take a full-time load of study while in Florence. As a senior, carefully plan with your campus advisor to be sure you will not go over the unit maximum for your campus regulations. The summer quarter program in Florence earns 14 UC quarter units (approximately 10 semester units), and the fall and spring semester programs earn 22.5 UC quarter units (approximately 15 semester units).

Do not plan to apply for graduation during the term immediately following your return from Florence, as grades may take longer to post to your UC transcript than your regular UC campus grades.

Grades
You must take all language courses for a letter grade. The culture course may be taken as pass/no pass and internships are graded on a pass/no pass basis only.

For more information about grades, see the Academic Information chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.

Internships
Internship opportunities may be available for interested students. See the Extracurricular Activities section of this guide for more information.
EXTENDING UCEAP PARTICIPATION

You are encouraged to use the Florence language program to prepare for other UCEAP programs. You may extend to another UCEAP program in Italy only if you have met the requirements for that program and have the approval of the Academic Coordinator.

Options for Summer Students
If you would like to attend either a fall or year program after the summer program in Florence, apply to both programs and obtain the appropriate visa before departing the U.S. A visa is not needed to study in Italy for less than 90 days (Florence summer), but if you plan to participate in another Italy program in the fall or year, you will need a visa for both programs.

Options for Fall Students
You may extend to a subsequent program in Italy by meeting with the Academic Coordinator and submitting the Request for Final Approval to Extend (RFA) form or the Petition to Extend form before the November 1 deadline. The Academic Coordinator will determine the level of language competency obtained during the Florence program. In order to expedite the fall to spring extension process, complete the Departmental/College Preliminary Approval to Extend (DPA) form while still on your home UC campus. If you meet all program requirements and the extension is approved, you will need to work with the appropriate Italy Study Center in order to extend your residence permit, obtain host institution registration documents, and set up housing for the spring term.

Once your extension has been approved, notification will be sent to your home campus registrar, Financial Aid Office, and Campus EAP Office. For information about the steps you need to take with regard to finances, see the Extension of Participation chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.
CULTURAL AWARENESS

Educate Yourself

Get acquainted with your new host city, country, and culture before you leave the U.S. Travel guides and travel-related websites such as Lonely Planet and Urban Lowdown are excellent resources.

Keep up with current events by reading articles in newspapers, magazines, and journals. It is an exciting time to travel to Italy, and the more prepared you are, the more rewarding your experience will be. You can also check out the ACCENT Florence Facebook page for up-to-date help on places to see and things to do in Florence.

Recommended Websites

- La Repubblica provides Italian national news daily.
- Ciao*Italy offers links to the most important daily national and local Italian newspapers.
- The Florentine is a bi-weekly English newspaper providing national and local news, sports, and local events.

Recommended Reading

Art History

Barolsky, Paul

Why Mona Lisa Smiles and Other Tales by Vasari, University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991. An insightful study of Giorgio Vasari’s interpretation and criticism of the most excellent architects, painters, and sculptors of Renaissance Italy.

Cole, Bruce


Fortune, Jane


Hartt, Frederick & David G. Wilkins


King, Ross

Brunelleschi’s Dome: How a Renaissance Genius Reinvented Architecture, Penguin (Non-Classics) (October 30, 2001). Filippo Brunelleschi’s design for the dome of the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence remains one of the most towering achievements of Renaissance architecture. The story of its creation and its brilliant but “hot-tempered” creator is told in this book.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Falcone, Linda</td>
<td><em>Italians Dance and I’m a Wallflower: Expressions in Italian Expression</em>, B'Gruppo srl (Prato) collana The Florentine Press, 2009. This is Italy from the inside-out. Irreverent, affectionate vignettes spotlight the mentality, temperament, and identity of a country whose citizens truly ‘step into speech.’</td>
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<td>Alessandro Falassi</td>
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<td>Ginsborg, Paul</td>
<td><em>Italy and Its Discontents. Family, Civil Society, State</em>. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. Essential reading to understand contemporary Italy. Ginsborg shows how smaller families, longer lives, and greater generation crossover have had significant effects on Italian society. Ginsborg looks at the 2000 elections, the influence of the Mafia, the decline of both Communism and Catholicism, and the change in national identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severgnini, Beppe</td>
<td><em>La Bella Figura, a Field Guide to the Italian Mind</em>, Broadway Books, New York, 2006. A hilarious trip into the hearts and minds of Beppe Severgnini’s fellow Italians. To get to his Italia, you’ll need to put aside idealized notions of Italy. Although La Bella Figura will take you to legendary cities and scenic regions, your real destinations are the places where Italians are at their best, worst, and most authentic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagner, Kenneth &amp;</td>
<td><em>Writing Across Culture: An Introduction to Study Abroad and the Writing Process</em>, New York: Peter Lang, 1995. Aimed at the student living abroad, it encourages the use of writing as a coping mechanism for culture shock.</td>
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<td>Tony Magistrale</td>
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ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

Travel Documents

Keep copies of all the forms you submit to the Italian consulate for your records!

Passport

You need a passport at the time you apply for the program. If you do not already have a passport, you must apply for one immediately, and you may need to expedite it. The regular process can take approximately four to ten weeks.

Passports must be valid at least three months beyond the end date of the program. If your passport will expire before that time, you will need to obtain a new one before you can apply for a student visa.

It is recommended that you scan your passport and e-mail a copy to yourself. This will speed up the replacement process if it is lost or stolen.

- The way your name is spelled, abbreviated, punctuated, etc., on your passport must be exactly the same in MyEAP and on all other documents submitted with your visa application. Even minor discrepancies can cause big problems.

Visa

A visa is a stamp placed in your passport by the authorities of Italy. The visa grants you permission to reside and study in Italy. You may not study in Italy without a student visa unless you have Italian or EU citizenship. There is no fee for a study visa for Italy.

You must obtain a student visa in the U.S. prior to departure.

To apply for a visa:

- Determine the Italian consulate for your campus (listed in the Predeparture Checklist).
- Collect the documents listed in the visa instructions in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.
- Submit the required documents, along with your passport, to the Italian consulate by the deadline indicated. This deadline is 60 days before the program start date (you can apply no earlier than 90 days prior to the program start date).
- You must apply in person.

Use the visa instructions and sample application in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist! Note that there are specific instructions for different campuses. Read the visa instructions carefully; they are detailed and it is important that you follow them precisely; if you fail to do so you may not receive a visa. The requirements are different for the Los Angeles and San Francisco consulates. To avoid delays (and last minute panic) apply as early as possible for your visa!

Summer quarter-only students are not required to obtain a visa. However, if you are planning to participate in another program in Italy for the fall or year, you will need to obtain a visa for the full period you will be studying in Italy.
Special Note for Non-U.S./Non-EU Citizens
If you are planning to travel outside of Italy during or after the program, investigate the requirements to do so as there may be visa restrictions for certain countries.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you are required to have a valid passport and a residence permit plus proof of permission to reenter the U.S. You will also need to provide proof of having a return flight to the U.S.

EU Citizens
If you are an EU citizen, you do not need a visa or a residence permit, but you will be required to register with the local authorities. Study Center staff will help you with this procedure.

Travel Before or After Your Program
You must submit your actual passport to the consulate 90 days prior to the start date of your program and it may not be returned for several weeks; therefore, be careful when planning international travel prior to your program. It may be possible to obtain a second, temporary passport to use while your regular passport is surrendered to the Italian consulate. Contact the U.S. Passport Agency for more information.

UCEAP recommends that you do not plan to depart for your program more than a week or two prior to the program start date due to the lengthy visa process. It is best to travel after the completion of your program. If you are a U.S. citizen, you may travel in Europe up to 90 days before or after the validity date of your visa. Non-U.S. citizens must check for their own requirements.

Residence Permit (Permesso di Soggiorno)

- The residence permit cost is approximately €156; you will need to pay this in cash (euros) when you apply.

After your arrival in Florence, the Study Center staff will help you obtain a residence permit for foreigners (permesso di soggiorno). You must provide the local authorities with specific documents, including certificates of financial guarantee. Refer to the Predeparture Checklist for specific requirements. You must have all of these documents ready to submit upon your arrival in Florence. You will pay approximately €156 in cash when you apply for a residence permit.

The permesso di soggiorno is required for legal residence in Italy. Failure to secure the permesso di soggiorno will result in deportation. Neither ACCENT nor UCEAP will refund any fees paid for the program in this case, and no academic credit will be awarded.

Summer quarter students will not need a permesso di soggiorno, but will submit a “Declaration of Presence.” The Study Center staff will assist you with this.
Always personally carry your passport, visa, ticket, prescription medications, residence permit papers and money when traveling. Never put valuables in your checked luggage.

Packing Tips

Luggage restrictions vary from airline to airline. Most carriers charge exorbitant fees for excess luggage or weight. Contact your airline for detailed information.

Identify each item of luggage on both the outside and inside with your name, home address, and address abroad. To avoid theft, never leave luggage unattended while traveling.

Essential
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Clothing that can be layered
- Prescription medication (for information on taking prescription medication abroad, see the Health chapter of this guide)
- Residence permit documents (semester students only)
- Current converter and plug adapter (see Electrical Appliances in this chapter)

Optional
- English/Italian dictionary
- Audio recording device
- Dressy outfit for formal occasions
- Vitamins (they are expensive in Italy)
- Familiar medical supplies for ailments such as sore throats, colds, and upset stomach
- Any sports attire you may need
- Mosquito repellent for the warmer months

Climate

Springtime weather in Florence may vary. It remains cool and rainy through the end of April, with some warm and sunny days. By early June it is likely to be warm, with summer temperatures and weather. The fall may be warm initially, but cold temperatures will prevail as winter approaches. It may snow during the winter months.

Clothing

Clothing in Italy generally is more expensive than in California, but there are many open-air markets in Florence where you can find good deals. Italians tend to dress up more than most Americans; you may want to keep up with new styles and purchase clothes while you are in Italy. The UCEAP Student Budget does not include funds for the purchase of clothing abroad.

Take clothing that is easy to care for, preferably clothes that can easily be drip-dried. All housing options come equipped with washing machines, but dryers are rare in Italy, so be prepared to hang-dry all of your clothes.
**Electrical Appliances**

The voltage in Europe is 220–240 rather than the standard U.S. 110 volts, and the electrical outlets are different from those in the U.S. Some U.S. electrical devices will run on either voltage; others will require a converter to change the voltage from the European standard to U.S. standard. A plug adapter is needed to fit U.S. plugs into European outlets. All electrical appliances provide information about their voltage, usually on a label attached to or near the appliance cord. If your appliance indicates 110–240, you will only need a plug adapter in Italy. If it indicates only 110, you will need a voltage converter.

Converters do not work with hair dryers, alarm clocks, or electric razors. Consider purchasing these items when you arrive in Italy as they are inexpensive. Laptop computers require a plug adapter only; do not use a voltage converter with your laptop.

Because the cost of electricity abroad is high and improper use of appliances may damage both the electrical outlets and the appliances, it is a good policy to ask before using outlets.

**Independent Travel to Italy**

**Insurance for Personal Possessions**

The [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) includes a personal property benefit. Review the plan carefully prior to departure and determine if it provides enough coverage to suit your needs. Consider also that your parents may already have insurance coverage for personal possessions. Find out if their insurance will cover your items while in transit and while abroad, and also inquire about deductibles.

You may decide to purchase additional coverage, especially for items of high value such as a computer or camera. If you decide to do so, it is best to obtain insurance before departure because most theft occurs in the airport or while moving into housing. You are responsible for your own personal property. You can safeguard your belongings from damage or theft by locking your doors and securing money, jewelry, passport, and other possessions.

Use logical precautions to safeguard valuables; for example, avoid wearing expensive clothing or jewelry and going to questionable parts of the city, especially at night or when you are alone. Your vulnerability can be minimized through actions and appearance. Be cautious about inviting casual acquaintances home.

**Travel Arrangements & Arrival**

You must make and pay for your own travel arrangements—even if you are on financial aid. The Financial Aid Office is not responsible for purchasing tickets. You are strongly urged to purchase changeable airline tickets.

Detailed arrival information, including Study Center contact information and directions to Florence are provided in the Arrival Information Sheet in the online UCEAP Predeparture Checklist. Carry this information with you to Italy.

You are responsible for arriving at the specified meeting location in Florence on the required date and time for the official start of the program. The Official Start Date is provided in the program calendar on the UCEAP website. Students who fail to appear on the Official Start Date are subject to dismissal from the program (per the UCEAP Student Agreement).
The start date and calendar of a program can change due to unforeseen circumstances. You are responsible for making modifications in your travel itinerary to accommodate such changes. UCEAP is not responsible for any unrecoverable transportation charges incurred for independent travel arrangements.

In order to be kept informed of any program changes, you must update MyEAP and notify the UCEAP Systemwide Office of any changes to your mailing address, e-mail address, or telephone number. You must provide your flight information to ACCENT no fewer than 30 days prior to the departure date and inform ACCENT of any subsequent changes.

If you feel more comfortable traveling with a companion, contact fellow UCEAP students at your home campus to discuss the possibility of making joint travel plans. You can also look for a travel companion on the UCEAP Italy Facebook page.

Financial Aid Students

Your financial aid package is based partly on the UCEAP Student Budget for the program. The estimated round-trip airfare amount is based on the cost of a changeable student fare to Italy. If your independent travel costs are greater than the airfare estimate in the UCEAP Student Budget, notify your financial aid counselors. Neither UCEAP nor the Financial Aid Office can guarantee that the additional cost will be funded by financial aid.

Orientation

- Attendance at all orientation sessions is mandatory (UCEAP Student Agreement, Section 10). If you miss the orientations, you may be dismissed from UCEAP.

The specific arrival date, time, and meeting place for you to meet with the UCEAP group in Florence are listed in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist. Bring your passport and residence permit papers in order to complete the check-in.

The mandatory orientation consists of a meeting with all students to discuss important academic, logistic, and health & safety matters. There will also be a practical walking tour of the city center.
**Local Transportation**

Getting around Florence can be confusing at first, but don’t worry; it will eventually become second nature. Just remember to find a reference point in the city (like the Duomo) so you can always orient yourself. It’s also okay to get lost on occasion (if time permits) because finding your way around the city is one of the best ways to learn about it.

The typical modes of transportation in Florence are walking or taking the bus. You can purchase a monthly bus pass for €35. Make sure you ask for the Abbonamento Mensile (only EU citizens can get the student discounted monthly pass; non-EU citizens are not eligible). You can purchase individual tickets for €1.20 at any Tabacchi, or a card for 10 rides for €10. Riding the bus without a properly validated ticket is illegal and can incur hefty fines, and also gives Italians a bad impression of foreigners. Remember, we are all ambassadors of our home country as well as guests in Florence.

You may want to purchase a Carte Verde card, which entitles all travelers up to 26 years old to a 10 percent discount on all regular national train tickets and a 25 percent discount on all European train tickets. Cards can be purchased for approximately €40 at travel agencies or the Trenitalia ticket office in Italy.

For more information regarding scheduling and rates for local bus transportation, go to [www.ataf.net](http://www.ataf.net)
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Understanding Your Finances

Understanding your finances before, during, and after your program is crucial to having a successful time abroad. The following list outlines just a few of the many things you will need to know before departure.

Detailed information on the following topics can be found in the Money Matters chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad:

- Contact information for finance questions
- How to estimate the cost of your program
- Budget instructions and information
- How to and who can make payments to UCEAP
- UCEAP student account information
- Banking before and after arrival
- Fees and penalties
- Loan information
- How financial aid works while abroad (how do I get my financial aid from my home campus and how are my fees paid?)
- Various forms (e.g., direct deposit, etc.)

MyEAP Student Account

Your MyEAP Student Account is similar to your UC campus financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. You can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard or Discover). The fees that you owe UCEAP will be applied to your account after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP. For the amount due to UCEAP prior to fees being posted on your account, refer to the UCEAP Student Budget Payment Vouchers. Program fees are subject to change.

UCEAP Student Budget

Carefully review your UCEAP Student Budget. Your UCEAP Student Budget lists the fees you will pay to UCEAP and an estimate of the personal expenses you will need to plan for. It does not include the cost of recreational travel or personal entertainment. Review your UCEAP Student Budget frequently. The Payment Vouchers are on the second page of the UCEAP Student Budget.

Instructions

- Download and print your UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
- Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
- Give the UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your UCEAP bills. Sign this person up for Third Party Authorization so they can make payments online.

For further information see the Money Matters chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad and the Money Matters tab of your Participants Portal. If you will be receiving financial aid, see also the UCEAP Financial Assistance web page.
Handling Money Abroad
Obtain enough euros from your bank (about €450) prior to departure to cover the first few days in Italy. This will cover your residence permit, food, and other incidentals. You should also carry some money in U.S. dollars for use while traveling. You cannot use American checks in Italy. If anyone mails funds to you in Florence from the U.S., be sure the funds are sent in the form of an international money order. A better way to get money sent to you is through Western Union.

ATM Cards
You cannot open a bank account in Italy. Take an ATM card linked to your checking account in the U.S. This is by far the easiest way to access money abroad, and the exchange rate will be better than any other options. ATM cards provide a convenient way of getting cash, making deposits and transfers, and verifying account balances.

Ask your home bank:
- Do they have a partner bank in Italy?
- Will I be able to access my account while abroad?
- Will my PIN (personal identification number) work and will I able to withdraw cash with my ATM card in Europe?
  (Keep in mind when choosing a PIN that ATMs abroad do not have letters on the keypads as they do in the U.S.)
- What is the daily limit that I can withdraw from my account?
- What fees will I be charged to withdraw money abroad?

It is best if your card is affiliated with Visa or MasterCard so that you can receive cash advances in case the ATM does not work.

Notify your bank that you will be studying abroad. Due to fraud, some banks have put blocks on cards because they were unaware that the student was studying abroad and suspected that the ATM or credit card had been stolen.

Credit Cards
It is strongly recommended you take a major credit card to Italy. You are also advised to bring an additional credit card reserved for emergency use. Major credit cards such as MasterCard, Visa, and American Express are accepted in most major stores and restaurants in Italy and in other European countries. Visa and MasterCard tend to be more widely accepted than AmEx.

Credit Card Cash Advances
Although procedures vary, you can arrange to use your credit card to obtain a cash advance; however, the interest rates are usually quite high. A PIN is not usually required if the transaction is conducted inside a bank, but you must have your passport.
Exchanging Money After Arrival

You can exchange money at foreign exchange offices, airports, railroad stations, and some tourist information centers and travel agencies. Avoid exchanging money at hotels and tourist shops; although they are convenient, their rates are often less favorable.

Travelers Checks are discouraged since American Express has closed all locations in Florence and banks will not accept them.

For travel to countries that use a different currency, you will get the best exchange rate if you use your ATM card to get cash once you arrive at your destination.
Communications Abroad

Phone

An English-speaking operator for calls to the U.S. can be reached through the following numbers:

- AT&T: 800 172 444
- MCI: 800 905 825
- Sprint: 800 172 405

You can call the U.S. from Italy by dialing 001 + area code + phone number.

Pay phones are located throughout the city. Most of the pay phones in Florence work on a phone card system. Prepaid Italian phone cards (scheda telefonica) are available at the post office, tobacco shops (tabacchi), and cafés. Phone cards can be economical, giving callers to U.S. landlines up to 500 minutes for €5. Note that international calling cards purchased in the U.S. are the most expensive way to call home, and students often find that they do not work. The calling cards purchased in Italy are less expensive and more effective. The “Europa” and “USA” cards tend to have the best rates for calling the U.S. and are available at most newsstands and tobacco shops. A card from a long distance provider such as AT&T, MCI or Sprint will allow calls to be billed to your home phone account.

You are advised to purchase a cell phone either from a returning Italy student at your campus or after arriving in Italy. Cell phones are particularly useful for emergencies. The phones may be sold after the term to future Italy students at home. Cell phones from the U.S. are costly to operate abroad unless they are capable of using an Italian SIM card. If you already own a smartphone, check with your provider about using it abroad. There may be inexpensive options available.

One of the most popular means of communication is using the Internet to make phone calls at an inexpensive rate. Skype is a free option for calling from computer to computer through the Internet. Visit Skype online for more information. SkypeOut is a Skype service through which you or your parents can charge the account to make calls to regular landlines and cell phones. Google Voice is another option for Internet calls offering competitive rates.

You are advised to buy a headset in the U.S., where electronics generally cost less.

During orientation, you will receive detailed information about the various ways to call home, recommended phone cards and buying a cell phone in Italy.
Mail

Mail service to Italy can take as long as one month. Use DHL or FedEx to send packages to Italy because regular express mail delivery is not guaranteed outside the U.S. Keep in mind that a Value Added Tax (VAT) of at least 20 percent will be charged upon arrival if the package is declared with a value (insured packages, new merchandise, etc.). It is preferable not to have packages—especially electronics—sent to you in Italy because of delays and fees. When in doubt, ask the Study Center staff for assistance.

Postage stamps may be purchased at the post office or more commonly at tobacconists where the “T” for tabacchi sign is displayed. Telegrams can be sent from any post office.

You may have important letters, packages, and documents sent to the ACCENT/UC Study Center in Florence. Address them as follows:

[Your name]
c/o ACCENT/UC Florence Study Center
Piazza Santo Spirito, 10
50125 Florence, Italy

Computer Access & Use

Internet Access

The Study Center has a computer lab with a wireless Internet connection, providing access to e-mail. You can telnet your UC account while abroad. In addition, there are many places throughout Florence where Internet access is available for a reasonable cost (about €2.50 per hour). Most places offer student discounts. One popular local Internet café is “The Internet Train,” which has multiple locations throughout the city center. Details will be provided after arrival. Internet access is not guaranteed in any housing assignment.

Laptops

UCEAP strongly recommends that you bring your laptop, especially if it is enabled for wireless access. Make sure you have the right type of adapters/converters. There are wireless connections available in the Study Center as well as many of the classrooms. In most housing situations it is not possible to connect laptop computers to the Internet unless you purchase an Internet Key from one of the communications providers. These are available for a reasonable fee.
HOUSING & MEALS

Accommodations

Private Apartments
Privately owned apartments vary in size and layout and are located throughout Florence. Apartments have a combination of single, double and triple bedrooms (4–7 people on average). Each bedroom is furnished with beds, a closet or armoire, sheets, pillows, and blankets. Kitchen facilities include a stove, refrigerator, cooking utensils, and dishes. Kitchen and bathroom facilities are shared by everyone in the apartment. All of the student apartments are located in and around the center of Florence, within a 30- to 40-minute walk or bus ride from the Study Center.

Homestays
Living with an Italian family is an excellent way of absorbing Italian language and culture; it is an opportunity designed to enrich your stay. The homestay experience allows you direct contact with all aspects of Italian society.

Florentine hosts are carefully screened by ACCENT and are not necessarily traditional families, but may be single parents, retirees, or widows. Students are placed in double or single rooms in homes within the Florence city limits, with commutes to classes of approximately 25 to 40 minutes by foot or public transportation.

In the homestay, you will be entitled to do one load of laundry per week. A normal load is considered to be approximately 5 kilos (11 pounds). Wireless Internet is not provided or available in the homestay, but you may rent a USB Internet access key to be used at your own expense.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I apply for and obtain accommodations?
A: You are required to live in UCEAP-sponsored housing. Detailed housing information is provided in your online Predeparture Checklist. Read the housing information and complete the housing preference form. You will choose which type of housing you prefer (shared apartment or a homestay). The housing preference form must be returned to ACCENT by the deadline. Your first preference is not guaranteed.

All housing placements are final for the entire duration of the program. Read the housing descriptions and list your choices in order of preference. Ask questions if there is something that you do not understand. If you do not return your housing preference form by the deadline, you will be assigned a place in whichever housing option remains available.

Q: When will I know where I will be living?
A: You will receive an e-mail 2–4 weeks prior to your departure that will state your housing assignment. Specific housing details (e.g., room assignments, address, and roommates) will be communicated when you arrive in Florence. Most students will stay in privately owned, shared apartments.
Q: What should I expect when I first arrive?
A: UCEAP will provide you with the specific arrival meeting time and place in the online UCEAP Predeparture Checklist. Upon arrival, you will receive detailed information regarding your housing. You will be responsible for your own transportation to your accommodations in Florence. If you arrive before the official arrival date, you will be responsible for arranging your own accommodations until the program starts.

Q: How do I pay for housing?
A: Your housing costs are included in your UCEAP fees. The UCEAP Student Budget, located on the UCEAP website, provides an estimate of the costs. The actual cost of each option is listed in the UCEAP Florence Housing Information sheet included in your online Predeparture Checklist. The housing cost in the UCEAP Student Budget is based on rooms in privately owned, shared apartments. If you choose other housing, your UCEAP student account will be adjusted accordingly. Your UCEAP account will be charged the entire cost of your rent, regardless of your housing option. Amounts are always listed in euros on the housing information sheet, but you will be billed in U.S. dollars at the applicable exchange rate at the time of billing.

Q: Is there a deposit and housing contract?
A: There is a non-refundable housing deposit billed through your UCEAP fees. You will sign an ACCENT housing contract, which is included in the Predeparture Checklist. The ACCENT cancelation fees are outlined in the Predeparture Checklist as well as the UCEAP Student Budget.

Q: May I have overnight guests?
A: Overnight guests are prohibited by Italian law. The ACCENT staff can provide information about hostels and hotels in the area for visitors. You may have visitors to your apartment but they are not allowed to stay after midnight. Disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from UCEAP, will be taken if you are found to have guests in your apartment after midnight. Please note that all occupants in an apartment are held responsible if one roommate hosts a guest after midnight.

Q: What is student life like in Florence?
A: In Florence, students are living throughout the city. This creates an opportunity for you to enrich your experience by learning the local culture. Living in a centuries-old city is a memorable experience for visitors to Italy, but with the beauty and history there is a small price to pay; you will not have all the conveniences of a UC campus. Although the Florence Study Center is well equipped, you may need to be more flexible and patient, particularly with regard to computer availability. Apartments may not have elevators, so be prepared to get some exercise on the stairs.
Meals

Meals in modest restaurants range from about €19 to €30, while meals in reasonably good restaurants run from about €30 to €50 per person. Food expenses are generally higher in Italy than they are in California. Many students get together to prepare meals at home.

If you live in a homestay, you will receive breakfast daily and dinner four nights a week. Use of the stovetop and oven will not be allowed. You will have space to store food in the refrigerator and you will be allowed to use small appliances such as a toaster, kettle, and microwave oven.
**Extracurricular Activities**

**Get Involved**

Join clubs, sports, musical, theater, or arts groups; volunteer at local organizations, attend lectures and receptions held in academic and community circles, and get the most out of your time abroad!

Participating in extracurricular cultural and social activities while on UCEAP is an excellent way to meet people, improve your language skills, and integrate more fully into the community. The ACCENT/UC Study Center offers several student-oriented activities to get you involved in the community.

In Florence you will have a very unique experience thanks to its rich cultural and artistic history. The peak of its glory was in the Renaissance, which has spilled over into today, and it is evident in the architecture and artwork that surrounds you. This is an ideal setting to learn in—both inside and outside the classroom.

There are clubs, sponsored activities, and various facilities available in the community, but you must take the initiative to find them. There are many museums that highlight different mediums, including art, history, science, and even shoes! Living and learning in Florence is a very hands-on experience; one you’re not likely to forget!

**Working Abroad**

With a study visa, you are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week. Past UCEAP participants have worked as English language teachers, babysitters, and waiters.
Volunteer Opportunities

You are strongly encouraged to get actively involved in the community, get to know locals, and practice your Italian through volunteer activities. The ACCENT/UC Florence Study Center has established opportunities for you to engage in a “service learning” project. You can learn while contributing to the local community.

It may be possible to turn one of these activities into an internship. You would be engaged in a writing project, performing a minimum number of required work hours, and completing a final project. Internship availability may vary from semester to semester. Students typically earn 2.0 units for internship work.

The following are some of the opportunities available.

Cultural work:
- catalogue original documents from the Medici era with the Medici Archive Project at the Archivio di Stato
- assist with the photographic archive for the neighborhood association Il Cortile
- support event planning and live performance recordings with the Accademia della Musica in Sesto Fiorentino

Environment:
- assist with the care, preservation and restoration of beauty in Florence with Il Quadrifoglio and Angeli del bello

Social work:
- work on immigration and cultural integration with Cospe
- work with local associations for after-school educational activities with teens
- serve meals in a soup kitchen
- help to organize a food bank or a “charity market”
- teach English language and culture to schoolchildren

Animal care:
- assist in feline colonies in the city
Travel throughout Italy

You can use Trenitalia trains to travel throughout Italy. Before boarding, purchase tickets by cash or credit card from automatic machines, ticket agents at the station, or travel agents in the city. You must validate the ticket at a machine in the station before boarding the train. There are fines for traveling without a validated ticket; the amount depends on the length of the trip.

You may want to purchase a Carte Verde card, which entitles all travelers up to 26 years of age to a 10 percent discount on all regular national train tickets and a 25 percent discount on all European train tickets. You can purchase cards for approximately €40 at travel agencies or a Trenitalia ticket office in Italy.

The Touring Club Italiano (TCI) publishes good Italian travel guides. There are several guidebooks for Florence and surrounding areas in Tuscany. These books summarize the geography and history of the area and provide locations and details about important monuments. They include good maps and bibliographies.

In addition, you may want to refer to some of the following guides available in the U.S.:

- Lonely Planet's Travel Survival Kit for Italy
- Michelin Italy (Green and Red guides)
- Blue Guides South Italy, North Italy, Rome, Florence, Venice
- Companion Guides Venice, Florence, Rome
- Time Out Guides Florence, Rome, Venice
- Mediterranean Island Hopping
- A Guide for the Independent Traveler
- Let's Go Italy
- Let's Go Europe
- Berlitz Guides Venice, Rome, Florence, Sicily, Italian Riviera, Italian Adriatic
- Michelin and Espresso also publish guides to fine Italian restaurants

Familiarize yourself with the UCEAP Student Travel Policy, which prohibits travel to places identified by the U.S. Department of State as ones to be avoided for safety reasons.

While travel opportunities may be tempting, do not allow your travels to interfere with coursework or needed study time. Opportunities for travel are plentiful, and UCEAP does not wish to discourage you from taking advantage of them. However, it is expected that you will attend all class sessions and adhere to the program's absentee policy at all times. As stipulated in the UCEAP Student Agreement, you must regularly attend all classes for which you are registered and conform to all applicable rules.

Failure to abide by UCEAP travel guidelines or the Student Agreement is cause for dismissal from the program.

Travel Sign-Out

You are required to inform Study Center staff about your travel plans, especially if you leave for more than a weekend. An emergency may arise abroad or at home that makes it necessary to reach you promptly. For your convenience, there is a Travel Sign-Out form in MyEAP. Please use this whenever you travel out of the Florence area.
In addition to the following sections, read the Health chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.

Access the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travelers’ Health web page for additional travel health information.

**Health**

Italy has a well-developed health care system. If you feel sick or have a medical emergency, seek medical attention and contact the Study Center immediately. The Study Center can recommend English-speaking health practitioners and specialists, advise about the UCEAP insurance claim process, and help you make arrangements with your professors if an extended absence is expected. In an emergency, go to the emergency room at the local hospital.

You must pay for health services at the time they are rendered. You can process a refund online through the UCEAP claims process. Ask the local staff. Reimbursement may take from four to six weeks from receipt. More information about the UCEAP insurance can be found in the insurance section of your Participants program page.

The UCEAP insurance coverage is paid for by the University. See the UCEAP Insurance Plan brochure for details.

You must print your UCEAP Insurance Card to submit with your residence permit documents when you check-in upon arrival in Florence. Keep a copy of this card with you at all times.

**Prescription Medications**

You cannot get American prescriptions filled in Italy. Italian pharmacies will not dispense drugs without a prescription from a doctor licensed to practice in Italy. Antibiotics will not be dispensed without a prescription from a local doctor.

Some medications and certain antibiotics regularly prescribed in the U.S. may not be readily available in Italy (e.g., some ADHD medications that contain amphetamines). It is your responsibility to research any medications that are prescribed for you. Call the University of California travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance, on the dedicated UC phone line at (866) 451-7606 or e-mail ops@europassistance-usa.com.

Do not have medications shipped to you; they will be confiscated by customs. If you regularly take a certain medication, take an adequate supply with you to Italy, packed in your carryon luggage, along with a copy of the prescription and a letter from your doctor that describes your diagnosis, treatment, and the prescribed medications, including their generic names. You can take this letter to an Italian doctor who will assess whether the same medication can be prescribed. All medications must be clearly labeled. Most common over-the-counter medications are available at Italian pharmacies. Discuss any medical or health concerns with your doctor before departure.
Mental Health

Most students expect to quickly adapt to their new culture—and they need to adjust rapidly if they are to effectively meet the academic demands placed upon them. Culture shock is a normal developmental phase of adjustment to a new cultural environment. It is not a psychological disorder. Most students who experience culture shock function reasonably well under the stress and are able to keep up with the responsibilities of school and everyday life. Culture shock is usually transitory—lasting a couple of weeks—and does not imply mental illness or an inability to cope. However, there are occasions when the experience of culture shock can stir up deeper emotional issues such as suicidal thoughts. These reactions should not be ignored; if they persist, a student needs to immediately seek help.

Moving to a different country for an academic term can mean the loss of a support network, a routine, and a familiar environment. A student’s secure sense of identity can also be lost. Similar transitional challenges occur when the student is ending the study abroad experience and getting ready to return home.

If you find that you cannot manage a healthy transition, contact the local staff for help in setting up appointments and paying directly for services through the UCEAP insurance.

Students with Disabilities

Contact the UCEAP Operations Specialist if you need accommodations. All disability-related information will be treated confidentially. Advance planning is important.

If needed, note-takers and tutors may be available. Budget for possible costs of accommodations as you are responsible to pay for them at the time of delivery. In general, most professors are more than willing to give extra time for exams.

Most parts of the Florence city center have small cobblestones or large paving stones which can be challenging for wheelchair users. Cars may be parked on the sidewalks, which are usually narrow and may not have ramps. Medieval and most historical buildings in Florence are exempt from compliance with the Italian Disabilities Act.
SAFETY

Safety issues will be discussed in your orientation after you arrive in Florence.

In case of an emergency (personal medical emergency, political unrest, etc.), it is important that you are prepared and that you communicate immediately with the ACCENT staff and follow all advice you receive.

Update your local contact information in MyEAP and provide your contact information to the Study Center.

There are some strategies you can practice anywhere in the world to minimize your risks. Personal safety starts with awareness. To be alert to potential dangers and risks to your wellbeing, you need to know what is going on in your immediate environment. The choices you make about behavior, attire, travel, personal property, relationships, etc., can directly influence your exposure to risk. Follow your instincts. If a situation is uncomfortable, remove yourself from the situation. Carry official ID and a charged cell phone with you at all times. Follow safety advice carefully.

Preventing Theft

The crime rate in Florence is low, but petty crime can be a problem. Take normal precautions against petty street crime at crowded tourist sites (Ponte Vecchio, major squares, cathedrals, Uffizi Gallery), open markets (Parcellino, San Lorenzo), major train stations (Santa Maria Novella), and on public buses. Avoid public parks and gardens at night, especially Cascine.

Tips:

• Never carry your wallet, passport, or other valuables in the outside or back pocket of your backpack or clothes, and never leave your personal belongings unattended.

• Be especially careful in crowded areas and on buses and trains. Purse snatchers have been known to slash purse shoulder straps. Thieves often work in pairs; one distracts while the other pickpockets. Make a copy of the first page of your passport to use as a form of ID; leave your actual passport safe in your room. In case your passport is lost or stolen, immediately notify the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate, local authorities, and the ACCENT staff.

You are responsible for all of your belongings both inside and outside of program housing. Lock all windows and doors whenever you leave your housing, regardless of how long you will be gone or how far you will be going. Many thefts have occurred due to negligence in securing accommodations.

Police Response

The police forces in Florence are well trained and have adequate resources to offer good assistance. Response times are efficient in most areas of the city.

Demonstrations

There are occasional large-scale protests in the city. Demonstrators generally do not turn violent, although vandalism is sometimes a concern. Rallies and strikes can disrupt public transportation. Avoid large crowds and demonstrations as a precaution.
**Scams**
Check restaurant and bar bills carefully; foreigners are sometimes overcharged. Always request a menu to review prices. There is a high occurrence of credit card fraud in Florence. Check your statements regularly.

**Excessive Drinking & Safety**
Most of the safety problems students have experienced while abroad are related to excessive drinking. You are expected to abide by the UCEAP Substance Abuse Policy.

Drinking alcoholic beverages significantly increases risks to health and safety, and the danger increases as the amount of drinking increases. Drinking excessively will impair your ability to judge situations and make good decisions, which can make you a target for crime. You will be particularly vulnerable to robbery and physical and sexual assault.

**Public Transportation & Road Safety**
Transportation in Italy is generally safe if you use common sense and observe basic precautions. If traveling with bags, keep them in sight at all times. When using public transportation, avoid depositing luggage near doors, as this is the most opportune place for theft, especially when the vehicle is stopped.

A conductor or member of Italy’s railway police (Polizia Ferroviaria) is present on most trains. A member of the railway police is almost always present on long-distance and night trains and greater numbers regularly patrol train stations. Emergency brakes are also available, but a heavy penalty can be levied against someone who unnecessarily stops the train. If you feel threatened, stand next to the emergency call system to indicate that you are prepared to use it if necessary. Consider changing compartments, but only do this if it can be done safely.

Bus travel in Italy is generally very safe with the most common threat being petty theft.

**Natural Disasters**
Several major earthquake fault lines cross Italy. Principal Italian cities, with the exception of Naples, do not lie near these faults; however, smaller tourist towns, such as Assisi, are near faults and have experienced earthquakes.

**Fire Safety**
Purchase a battery-operated smoke alarm and use it in your residence. Memorize an escape plan. Know your exits. Read more about Fire Safety in the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.
Emergency Contacts

What Is an Emergency?
An emergency is a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action. The following are considered emergencies:

- Any life/death situation
- A traumatic event requiring immediate assistance
- An arrest
- Civil unrest or natural disaster in the host country

In an Emergency
Contact local emergency services first and then contact the following:

If you are in the U.S.
- **During office hours** (8 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific Time): Contact your Operations Specialist at the UCEAP Systemwide Office
- **After office hours:** Call the 24-hour emergency phone number at (805) 893-4762

If you are abroad
Carry the local emergency contact information at all times. There are four phone numbers equivalent to the U.S. 911 in Italy:

- **Ambulance and Emergency Doctors** ........ 118
- **Police** ........................................ 113
- **Fire Department** ............................. 115
- **Carabinieri** (Military Police) ............... 112

U.S. Consulate in Florence
Lungarno Vespucci, 38
50123 Florence, ITALY
**Phone:** (+39) 055-266-951 (2–4 p.m.)
**Fax:** (+39) 055-215-550
**E-mail:** uscitizensflorence@state.gov
**Web:** florence.usconsulate.gov

If you have a health or safety emergency and do not have access to local or UCEAP representative emergency information, contact the UCEAP travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance, available 24/7:

- **Call international collect:** 1+202-828-5896
- **Call within the U.S.:** 1+866-451-7606
- **E-mail:** ops@europassistance-usa.com