ITALY
Language and Culture, UC Center Florence
Summer, Fall, and Spring
2011-12 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

EAP Online
Bookmark your Participants program page; it contains vital resources and requirements you need to know before you go abroad, including the Predeparture Checklist, UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad, Program Calendar, EAP Student Budgets and Payment Vouchers, and policies.

Local EAP Support

Campus EAP Office
The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientation, 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 EAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

- **Program Advisors** communicate program information, both academic and operational, to students and campuses, and coordinate and provide academic and administrative support in all aspects of your participation.
- **Operations Specialists** coordinate the logistics of the program. Document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, placement and acceptance by the host institution, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements are examples of program details the Operations Specialists coordinate.
- **Academic Specialists** advise on academic policies; review and record courses taken abroad for UC credit; process student registrations, petitions, and grades; and document and maintain students’ academic records.
- **Student Finance Accountants** assist primarily with EAP statements, program fee collection, and financial aid disbursements (in conjunction with your campus Financial Aid Office).

Contact Information

Program Advisor
Michele Casey
Phone: (805) 893-4430; E-mail: mcasey@eap.ucop.edu

Operations Specialist
Kitty Christen
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Student Finance Accountant
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UCEAP Systemwide Office
6950 Hollister Avenue, Suite 200
Goleta, CA 93117-5823
Phone: (805) 893-4762; Fax: (805) 893-2583
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
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
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 exception.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Orientation
The on-site orientation in Florence will discuss academic and logistical matters regarding the program. The orientation is divided into three sections: 1) academic, 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 Monday through Friday, from four to six hours per day.

Special tutorials are available in all programs and may be required if deemed appropriate by the 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 to 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. The following culture courses are offered:

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 various kinds 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.
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.

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 the skills and abilities 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 in the developed world of obesity and diabetes. The course takes full advantage of the local markets and producers for visits and tastings, highlighting the traditional production techniques and food products.

Fall and Spring Semester Programs
During the on-site orientation, you will to take a placement exam to determine your level of language proficiency. You will attend classes for 16 weeks. The courses are divided into three sequential Italian language courses for 6 UC quarter (4 semester) units each, and a fourth course in Italian culture, worth 4.5 UC quarter (3 semester) units. Culture course topics may include Italian Renaissance art, food and culture in Tuscany, and the history of Florence.

The language courses focus on listening comprehension, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. All courses emphasize practice in reading and writing with weekly written assignments. Local periodicals and other articles 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.
Attendance Policy

Classes are held Monday through Friday most weeks of the program. There are several Friday classes and/or excursions and one Saturday excursion. You are expected to attend all field exercises and excursions, which are integral components of the courses. There are no unjustified absences. You may only be absent from class if you are sick and bring a doctor’s note the day you return to class; otherwise, you will have 3 percent deducted from your final grade for each absence. In addition, two tardies are equal to one unexcused absence (being 10 minutes late to class gives you a tardy). There are no exceptions.

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 a longer time 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.
EXTENDING EAP 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 Pre-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

Hartt, Frederick and 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.

Labella, Vincenzo
## Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Description</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></td>
<td>B’Gruppo srl (Prato) collana The Florentine Press, 2009.</td>
<td>This is Italy from the inside-out—product of the author’s fifteen years of permanent Italian living. Linda Falcone’s irreverent, affectionate vignettes spotlight the mentality, temperament, and identity of a country whose citizens truly ‘step into speech.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower, Raymond and</td>
<td><em>Culture Shock! Italy: A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette</em></td>
<td>Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2008.</td>
<td>This handbook to culture, customs, and etiquette provides helpful insight to everyday life in Italy, breaking down stereotypes and allowing the reader to have a better understanding of the Italian lifestyle. Read it before arrival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alessandro Falassi</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagner, Kenneth and</td>
<td><em>Writing Across Culture: An Introduction to Study Abroad and the Writing Process</em></td>
<td>New York: Peter Lang, 1995.</td>
<td>Aimed at the student living abroad, it encourages the use of writing as a coping mechanism for culture shock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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. To obtain a visa, your passport must be signed and all personal information must be accurate (e.g., name, date of birth, etc.).

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

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.

Visa

A visa is a stamp placed in the passport by the authorities of Italy. The visa grants its bearer permission to enter and reside in Italy for the purpose stated. You may not study in Italy without a student visa unless you have Italian or EU citizenship.

You must obtain a student visa to study in Italy in the U.S. prior to departure. To apply for the visa, you must collect a number of documents based on the visa instructions in the online UCEAP Predeparture Checklist and submit them, along with your passport, to the Italian consulate listed for your campus in the Predeparture Checklist, by the deadline indicated. This deadline is 90 days before the program start date, and 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; failure to do so could prevent you from receiving a visa. The application and 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.
Non-U.S. Citizens
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.

Special Note for Non-U.S./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.

Residence Permit (Permesso di Soggiorno)

- The residence permit cost is approximately €75; 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. The permesso di soggiorno is required for legal residence in Italy.

Failure to secure the permesso di soggiorno will result in deportation. According to Italian law, students found to be without proof of a valid permesso di soggiorno are required to leave Italy immediately. 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.
Packing Tips

Luggage restrictions vary from airline to airline. Most carriers charge a lot of money for excess luggage. You are responsible for contacting 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)
- Currency 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 an upset stomach
- Any sports attire you may need
- Alarm clock/radio with batteries
- Photos of friends and family

**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 patterns. 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. Many fashion trends move from Italy to America; you may want to keep up with new styles and purchase clothes once 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.
Always personally carry your passport, visa, ticket, prescription medications, and money when traveling. Never put valuables in your checked luggage.

Flights are often changed or canceled; confirm your flight schedule with the airline about two weeks before departure and again at least 48 hours beforehand.

Electrical Appliances
The voltage in Europe is 220–240 rather than the standard U.S. 110 volts. Most electrical sockets in Italy have round holes. A plug adapter is used to fit U.S. plugs into the European outlet and changes the voltage from the European standards to U.S. standards. All electrical appliances provide information about their voltage, usually on a label attached to the appliance cord. If your appliance indicates “110–240,” you will only need an adapter in Italy. If it indicates only “110,” you will need a voltage converter with round European plug prongs.

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, travelers checks, 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 and Arrival

Be sure to note the start date and time before purchasing an airline ticket.

You are responsible for making and paying 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. Standby tickets are not appropriate for EAP students.

Do not ask others to carry any items abroad for you (laptop, camera, extra bags, etc.) and do not volunteer to do so for others. Airlines may not allow you to take them, or customs abroad may charge a high duty. This is particularly a concern with electronic goods.
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).

If you feel more comfortable traveling with a companion, contact fellow EAP 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. Detailed arrival information, Study Center contact information, and detailed directions to Florence are provided in the Arrival Information sheet in the online UCEAP Predeparture Checklist. Carry this information with you to Italy.

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 Systemwide Office of UCEAP of any changes to your address, e-mail address, and 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.

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

The mandatory orientation consists of a meeting with all students to discuss important academic and logistic matters regarding the program. 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 EAP 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 EAP
• EAP student account information
• Banking before and after arrival
• Fees and penalties
• Loan information
• How financial aid works while on EAP (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 home campus Financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. The fees that you owe UCEAP are posted to your account, and you can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard or Discover). Fees will be applied after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP.

EAP 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. The fees due to UCEAP will be posted to your MyEAP Student Account after your program predeparture withdrawal date. Program fees are subject to change. View your EAP Student Budget frequently.

Instructions
• Download and print your EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
• Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
• Give the EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your EAP bills. Sign them 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 are on financial aid, see also the EAP Financial Information web page.
Handling Money Abroad
Obtain enough euros from your bank (about $250) 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, but the best way to get money sent to you is through Western Union.

ATM Card
You cannot open a bank account in Italy. Instead, take an ATM card linked to your checking account in the U.S. This is by far the easiest way to access money abroad. ATM cards provide a convenient way of getting cash, making deposits and transfers, and verifying account balances. Ask your bank whether your account will be available to you abroad. In general, you can use cards that are marked with the symbols for the Cirrus and Plus systems throughout Europe.

Confirm with your bank that your PIN (personal identification number) will work in Europe. Generally, any four-digit numerical PIN will work abroad, and those consisting of more or fewer digits will not. Keep in mind when choosing a PIN that ATMs abroad do not have letters on the keypads as they do in the U.S. Check with your bank to determine the daily limit of funds that you can withdraw abroad, and the fees associated with using a foreign ATM.

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 (AmEx) are accepted in a number of 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 cards 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 the bank, but you must have your passport. (Obtain an international PIN, in case a cash advance is needed after hours.)

Exchanging Money After Arrival
You can exchange money at banks, 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 withdrawn all locations in Florence and banks will not accept them.

For travel to countries that use a different currency, it is best to use your ATM card to get cash once you arrive at your destination. You are going to receive the best exchange rate that way.
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. Inexpensive phone cards can be economical, giving callers to U.S. landlines up to 500 minutes for €5. 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 when used abroad. 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 bill.

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. Do not take a cell phone from the U.S., unless it is capable of using an Italian SIM card, as they are costly to operate abroad.

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. You are advised to buy a headset in the U.S., where electronics generally cost less. SkypeOut is a Skype service through which you or your parents can charge the account to make calls to regular landlines and cell phones. Currently, SkypeOut costs 2 cents per minute to an Italian landline, American landline, and American cell phone, and 30 cents per minute to an Italian cell phone.

Google Voice is a new option for Internet calls offering competitive rates.

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. EAP students recommend using DHL or FedEx to send packages to Italy because regular express mail 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 discouraged to have packages sent to you in Italy because of delays and fees, especially electronics. 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 and 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 and double 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 of the aspects of Italian society.

Florentine hosts are carefully screened by ACCENT and they are not necessarily traditional families, but may be comprised of single parents, retirees, or widows. Students are placed in double or single rooms in homes within the Florence city limits, with varying 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: 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 EAP Florence Housing Information sheet included in your online Predeparture Checklist. You are required to live in UCEAP-sponsored housing. The housing cost on 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.

**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.

Amounts are always listed in euros on the housing information sheet, but you will be billed in U.S. dollars at the appropriate exchange rate at the time of billing.

**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 withdrawal from EAP, 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 generally 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.
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 EAP 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 some clubs, sponsored activities, and various facilities available in the community, but you need to take initiative to find them. There are many museums that highlight a number of 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!

Service Learning (Volunteer) Opportunities

The ACCENT/UC Florence Study Center has established opportunities for you to engage in a “service learning” project. You can learn while you contribute to the local community.

The following are descriptions of the volunteer opportunities.

St. James Church

They organize the “Food Bank” every Thursday and a Charity Market once a month. You can volunteer to assist with these activities. In the past, they also organized International Youth dinners on a weekly basis; if they reinstate this event, you can help with organization and food preparation.

Angeli del Bello—Angels of Beauty

You can volunteer to clean parks, walls, bridges and, by doing so, contribute to the restoration of some of the lost beauty in the city of Florence.

Caritas Soup Kitchen

You can volunteer to help serve meals at the Caritas soup kitchen that provides meals to Florence’s disadvantaged in a friendly, hospitable, sympathetic, and respectful climate. The attention to dignity is expressed in the courteous attitude of the volunteers serving meals. Particular attention is paid to the meal: the eating habits of the guests are considered, with respect to their religious practices and traditions. This service is done entirely by volunteers, who freely offer their time in order to help the disadvantaged in Florence. Caritas Diocesana Firenze website: www.caritasfirenze.it
You are strongly discouraged from “couch surfing” when traveling. This is defined as using an Internet social network (used by travelers around the world) to organize free places to stay.

The UCEAP Student Budget does not include funds for recreational travel.

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 old 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 the 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 the 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 course work or needed study time. Opportunities for travel are plentiful, and EAP 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 may make 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.

**Working Abroad**
With a study visa, you are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week. Past EAP participants have worked as English language teachers, babysitters, and waiters.

Contact the embassy or consulate of Italy for information about working abroad.
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HEALTH

In addition to the following sections, read the Health chapters 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 immediately and contact the Study Center as quickly as possible. The Study Center can recommend clinics and English-speaking general practitioners and specialists, provide the necessary UCEAP medical insurance claim forms, 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. To claim a refund through the UCEAP Insurance Plan, you must complete a claim form, attach itemized bills and receipts, keep copies of all documentation, and mail the originals to the address indicated on the claim form. Reimbursement may take from four to six weeks from receipt.

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

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, your 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.

Students with Disabilities

Contact the UCEAP Operations Specialist if you need accommodations. All disability-related information will be treated confidentially. Advance planning is important. Note takers and tutors may be available for you if needed, but there may be expenses involved that would be your responsibility. In general, most professors are more than willing to give extra time for exams.

The city of Florence is very difficult for students in wheelchairs, as most of the streets and sidewalks are cobblestone and very few buildings have elevators. Furthermore, medieval and most historical buildings in Florence are exempt from complying with the Italian Disabilities Act.
SAFETY

Safety issues will be discussed in your orientation after you arrive in Florence. Be aware of your surroundings and avoid walking alone at night. Common sense is key to staying safe and avoiding theft.

In case of an emergency situation in Florence (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. Be sure to update your local contact information through MyEAP and provide your contact information to the Study Center.

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.

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. Beware of gypsy women and small children.

UCEAP recommends making 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 occur due to negligence in securing accommodations.

Police Response

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

Demonstrations

The threat of civil unrest in Florence is low. Most large-scale protests are concerned with government actions or foreign policy and are usually peaceful. Demonstrations generally do not turn violent, although vandalism is a concern. Rallies and strikes can disrupt public transportation. Although the threat of violence is low, 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.
Public Transportation and 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 riding the metro, avoid depositing luggage near doors, as this is the most opportune place for theft, especially when the train 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 if it can be done safely.

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

What Constitutes an Emergency?
Emergencies are circumstances out of the ordinary, unplanned, or unexpected, which threaten the health, safety, and well-being of you and/or your fellow students. The following are considered true emergencies:

- Any situation that places a student or students at risk, including illness or harm, or other traumatic incidents that require immediate response
- A student who has been arrested
- Civil unrest or a 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 the Operations Specialist at the EAP 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 Study Center emergency contact information, call the UCEAP 24-hour emergency phone number after calling local emergency services.