

Office of Study Abroad

Dear Students,

As onsite Director of the Fairfield University center program at Florence University of the Arts, I would like to follow up on the previous communication from the Office of Study Abroad about next steps and responsible engagement as it relates to study abroad in Florence, Italy.

We are pleased to know that you are still considering the option to study abroad in Florence for Spring 2021. We recognize the significance of this unique and challenging moment and understand your need for information in order to evaluate your options and make an informed decision. Over the next month, we hope to be able to answer your questions and provide you with information that will aid you in arriving at the best decision for your academic and personal development as well as your holistic wellbeing.

We have been working closely with the Office of Study Abroad to assess the viability for a Spring semester program in Florence and our current priorities are your continued academic progression towards your degree and your continued health and safety. With respect to health and safety, we will follow up in the coming days with a specific communication regarding the reopening of Italy and Europe; health care access in Italy and specific regulations, policies and protocols for COVID19 prevention and containment.

With respect to academics, in order to best assess whether the Florence program is a good fit for your continued academic progression at Fairfield University, we recommend that you carefully review your degree evaluation and the course offerings at FUA; that you seek the necessary academic advising and identify whether you have a good degree of flexibility for course choices. Please make sure that you clearly understand how each FUA course will satisfy your specific academic requirements.

The Spring 2021 semester dates have been modified for a total length of less than 90 days and a visa for study in Italy is therefore not necessary. The modified program includes field learning and integrated learning to allow for full academic engagement and an exploration of Florence, Tuscany and Italy. When you consult the FUA course schedule, please pay attention to the course notes and public notes columns where you will find all dates and required field learning and integrated learning activities associated with each course. Some of these activities may be on days and times which differ from course times. The modified Spring 2021 semester dates are the following:

SPRING 2021 Florence Program Dates

Feb 21	arrival in Rome
Feb 28	arrival in Florence move in and orientation
March 1	courses begin
March 5,6,7	Mandatory Florence Discovery and Orientation Weekend
April 5-9	Mid term exam week
May 10,11,12	Final exams
May 13	Departure

**** Please note that there is no Spring break during the Spring 2021 semester ****

While there will be no Spring break or opportunities for individual travel outside of Italy , please know that the program has been structured to allow for engaged learning and guided travel within Italy.

Our partner FUA, a leader in experiential learning, has intentionally structured the Spring 2021 semester to begin with a three credit course entitled Cultural Introduction to Italy. All students enrolled in the program will take this one week intensive course which combines academic work with travel to Italian destinations. The course begins in Rome and then progresses to the cities of Perugia and Orvieto. Students will arrive at the Rome airport from the US and will be accompanied by FUA professors and staff through a full week of field learning. At the end of the first week, students will arrive in Florence, be greeted by program staff and move into their accommodations for

the remainder of the semester. Please note, that this course is an integral part of the program, so please begin thinking now about your academic needs and how this course may satisfy them. If you have any questions or concerns about this course, please contact us and if necessary speak to your academic advisor about your degree evaluation and academic needs.

We understand that taking the normal 15 credits during this condensed semester is intensive and starting the term with the one-week cultural Introduction to Italy course will alleviate some of the demanding rigor of a condensed model. In this new model of a 12 week semester, students will take a full credit load of 15 credits but complete three credits in the first week, and then take only 12 credits for the remaining 11 weeks of the semester.

Over the next six weeks, we plan to provide you with information that will help you to fully consider the Florence program for Spring 2021. We will communicate by email and newsletters and will also hold a few information sessions via Zoom. Please expect to hear from us in the coming weeks and make a note of the following dates for the zoom information sessions:

July 30th at 10am EDT, August 12th at 8:30am EDT and August 26th at 12:30pm EDT.

We look forward to working with you in the coming months and hope to see you in Florence in February!

Sincerely,

Joanne Maddux
Program Director
Fairfield University
Florence Center Program