Florence Program Packet

Pursuant to Italian legal requirements, students interested in studying at FSU Florence must be at least 18 years of age by the start of the program. Contact IP-Info@fsu.edu for more information.

FSU | FLORENCE

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Important Contacts & Addresses

Florida State University International Programs- Tallahassee Office

A5500 University Center
282 Champions Way
P.O. Box 3062420
Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2420
Hours: 8: 00 a.m. - 5:00p.m. EST, Monday – Friday
Contact: IP-Info@fsu.edu, 850-644-3272
Web: international.fsu.edu

FSU Florence

Via dei Neri 25, 50122
Florence, Italy
Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CET, Monday - Friday
Contact: IP-Florence-Info@fsu.edu, 011-39-055234-0604
Web: Study Center Webpage
Socials: Instagram, Facebook

FSU Florence Staff Contact Information
Dr. Charles Panarella, Director: cpanarella@fsu.edu
Laura Buonanno, Associate Director: lbuonanno@fsu.edu
Dr. Lucrezia Fossi, Student Affairs Coordinator: lfossi@fsu.edu
Giacomo Sproccati, Academic and Recruitment Coordinator: gsproccati@fsu.edu
Ilaria Mugnaini, Housing Coordinator: imugnaini@fsu.edu
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Leandro Resano, IT Coordinator: lresano@fsu.edu
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Kathleen Dowling, FSU Florence Librarian: kdowling@fsu.edu
Tamara Pfeil, Financial Coordinator: tpfeil@fsu.edu
Maria Zapata Castillo, Assistant Financial Coordinator: mz25d@fsu.edu

Local Authorities

Emergency Services	112

U.S. Consulate

Address:	Lungarno Vespucci, 38, 50123 Florence, Italy
Phone	(011) 39-055-266951
Fax	(011) 39-055-284088
Website	U.S. Consulate General Florence

Making International Calls: Making international calls from the U.S. to Italy: First dial “011” (for international call), followed by “39” (the country code), then the specific area code (dropping the first zero) and location number.
Time Differences: Countries adhere to varying time zones. Learn about time differences between locations worldwide.

Student Perspectives

Learn more about what to expect in Florence from current students!

Check out student-created videos and posts from current and recently returned study abroad participants on Instagram @fsuip or reference the Florence YouTube Shorts playlist or Florence Study Center playlist.

"You have the opportunity to meet all these amazing new people and discover these new places, and it will be your home for however long you're there. And if you really do it right, Florence will be a forever home no matter where you go next." **- Past Program Participant in Florence**

Academics

Your program is first and foremost an academic experience, so prepare to invest as much time, effort, and thought into coursework abroad as you do on main campus. Class sizes abroad are small and facilitate interaction with fellow students and faculty. A greater emphasis is placed on participation in class discussions, and courses may have required site visits. Prepare to be an active and committed class participant. **Your attendance and participation are mandatory for each class, regardless of the setting and mode of teaching.**

View the courses associated with your program on the IP website by referencing the *Academics* section of your Program Page or by using the Course Search page. For information about academic requirements and policies, visit the Academics webpage. IP Course registration typically occurs within 60 days of departure; registration instructions will be shared in the IP Portal.

Florence Study Center Minor

The Florence Study Center Minor enhances a student's program in Italy. It requires 15 credits, 9 of which must be earned in Florence and includes a cultural component. Contact IP-AcademicAdvising@fsu.edu for more information.

Academic Resources

Many academic resources at FSU are available virtually to students in Tallahassee and abroad:

- Tutoring Resources at FSU
- Reading & Writing Center (RWC)
- Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)

Office of Accessibility Services (OAS)

OAS provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. We do our best to accommodate all students based on their documented needs. If you anticipate needing to request accommodations for a documented disability, you must:

- Contact OAS at 850-644-9566 (Voice) or 850-644-8504 (TDD) **as soon as possible** so we can assess our ability to provide appropriate accommodations.
- **Ensure FSU IP obtains a copy of your OAS Eligibility Letter.**

NOTE: Accommodations provided on FSU main campus may not always be feasible at an FSU IP facility or study abroad location. Visit the OAS website for more information.

Immigration

Passport Requirements

A valid passport is required for international travel. Many countries require your passport to be valid for at least 6 months after your date of return to the U.S. Reference the Visas & Immigration: Italy page on the IP website for additional guidance.

If your passport does not meet these requirements or you do not have a passport, you should apply for one AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! Current passport processing times are listed on the U.S. Department of State website. **Failing to obtain a passport**—and consequently being unable to participate in your program—**does not release you from the liability of program fees**.

FSU International Programs is a U.S. Passport Acceptance Facility. Therefore, you can apply for your passport and have passport photos taken in our office. For details, call 850-645-9714 or visit our website. Most students cannot renew their passport online or by mail using the DS-82 form, as it requires your previous passport to have been issued at age 16 or older. If you don't have a valid passport, plan to apply in person using the DS-11 form at a local acceptance facility.

Visas

Programs under 90 days: U.S. citizens are not required to obtain a visa to study abroad and are permitted up to 90 days of travel within Italy and the **Schengen Area**. U.S. citizens are permitted to travel up to 90 within 180 days in Italy and the Schengen Area.

Programs over 90 days: Students must obtain a student visa. International Programs will share detailed instructions outlining the visa application process.

Learn more by visiting the Visas & Immigration: Italy page on the IP website.

If your program requires a visa, keep in mind:

- You may be required to submit your signed physical passport book to your host country's immigration authority for visa processing prior to departing for your program. **Therefore, you *should not* plan any international travel in the 3 months leading up to your program.**
- Further visa information & instructions specific to your program will be provided via the IP Portal when available.

Contact IP-Visas@fsu.edu as soon as possible if you have international travel plans prior to the start of your program or currently reside outside of the United States.

Non-U.S. & Dual-Citizens should contact IP-Visas@fsu.edu as soon as possible since visa requirements for non-U.S. citizens are different from those of U.S. citizens. Non-U.S. citizens must possess a Permanent Resident Card or a U.S. visa to re-enter the U.S. after their program.

Airfare

Do not purchase airfare until you are notified by International Programs to do so.

Permission to purchase airfare will be distributed via the IP Portal; **always reference the "Announcements" area of the IP Portal for airfare guidance & permission before purchasing**, keeping in mind that some programs may not receive permission until after the commitment fee deadline. There is no group flight, and your program fee does not include airfare. International Programs is not responsible for any fees associated with flight changes, delays, or cancellations.

Keep in mind, you MUST arrive in Florence on your program's official arrival date and depart on the designated departure date. For exact dates, reference the International Programs website and IP Portal. Late arrivals and early departures are not permitted.

You may want to modify your travel plans before or during your program. Purchase changeable or refundable tickets to maximize flexibility and minimize airline fees in the event you need to make changes. Travel insurance may also cover flight cancellation/change fees, lost luggage, etc. Speak with your airline for specific details.

Once approved to purchase airfare, you will be instructed to submit your travel plans through the IP Portal so staff can plan for student arrivals.

NOTE: Airlines may not permit passengers to board international flights if traveling on a one-way ticket without 'proof of onward travel'. If you're not ready to finalize your plans after the program, we recommend booking a roundtrip flexible/changeable ticket using a tentative return date that can be changed later if needed. Contact your airline about 'proof of onward travel' requirements.

While you're in Transit

- Consider putting an AirTag or Tile tracker in your checked luggage in the event it is misplaced in transit.
- Have your passport accessible in your carry-on luggage, as well as 1 or 2 outfits (in case of flight delays/cancellations or lost luggage), electronics (i.e. chargers and outlet converters), medications, and toiletries.
- Most international airports have free Wi-Fi.
- Drink lots of water to stay hydrated and get up to walk around often to help your circulation. Do simple stretches while in your seat. Try to sleep; it will help you combat jet lag. Wear layers, as the temperature on the plane and in airports can vary.

Arrival & Transportation

Florence's narrow, medieval streets prevent us from providing group transportation for students upon arrival or departure. **You are responsible for securing your own transportation to/from your residence** upon arrival and departure.

Throughout your time in Florence, GroupMe will be the primary channel for communication between students and staff. **If you encounter flight delays, cancellations, or missed connections while traveling, notify the FSU Florence team of your new anticipated arrival time as soon as possible via the FSU Florence GroupMe**. Additional information, including the link to join the FSU Florence GroupMe, will be provided closer to departure.

When you arrive in Florence, you must take a taxi directly to your residence. Your residence assignment & address will be emailed to you by FSU Florence staff 1-2 weeks prior to departure.

- **DO NOT report directly to the FSU Florence Study Center in Via dei Neri, 25 unless it is your assigned residence.**
- The typical cost of a taxi from the airport is about €25-35 (**Credit/Debit cards are NOT always accepted, so be prepared with Euros). Uber is not currently available in Florence.**
- A Program Assistant or staff member will be present at the location specified in your email to check you in.

If you are flying to another Italian city, such as Rome or Milan, trains to Florence can be booked using Trenitalia or italotreno.com. Reference this guide on how to read the signboards at an Italian train station.

Program housing will begin on the arrival date for your program and end on the departure date. If you plan to travel before or after program dates*, you must make other housing arrangements; view our list of recommended hotels.

*Independent travel before/after the program may not be permitted if studying abroad for 12 or more weeks during the fall, spring, or summer. Review the immigration information provided in this packet or the IP Portal when available. You are also welcome to contact IP-Visas@fsu.edu prior to planning independent travel outside of your program dates.

All on-site orientation programming is mandatory for all students.

Transportation in Florence

The FSU Florence Study Center is located in the heart of the city centre, a bustling and compact area designed to be navigated on foot. Relatively inexpensive buses & taxis are readily available to reach outlying areas. A bike sharing service called Mobike is also available. Use the CityMapper app to help you navigate like a local.

Personal Travel

Wait until you receive your program calendar and finalize your class schedule before booking any trips away from Florence during program dates. Some programs may have mandatory academic excursions over a weekend. You should not plan travel that will cause you to miss classes; strict academic standards will be maintained on the programs. Class absences due to personal travel are unexcused and may result in academic repercussions, such as grade deductions.

Excursions are included in your program fee, and there will also be time for independent exploration. For safety purposes, you must fill-out IP's online independent travel form each time you travel outside your host city for personal travel. You are advised to thoroughly research your travel destination(s) and consider associated risks.

Ensure you have your IP international insurance policy information and/or Travel Assistance ID Card, and emergency contact card with you when traveling independently. More information will be provided during pre-departure and on-site orientation sessions.

The Study Center

FSU Florence Study Center is located in the heart of the historic district only a few blocks away from the Duomo, the Uffizi Gallery, Piazza della Signoria, and the Arno River. It serves as a place where you can gather to meet peers, attend classes and study in the library, receive tutoring, or participate in student and staff led activities. Learn more about FSU Florence.

Housing

Students live in mostly double (some triple) rooms in shared Florentine-style student residences within a 25-minute walk of FSU Florence. Each residence has unique features, layouts, and styling but includes access to furnished living, kitchen, and dining spaces, as well as washing machines, Wi-Fi, security measures, and a cleaning service with a change of bed linens and towels.

Housing Check-In: Begins at 9:30 a.m. on the arrival date.

Housing Check-Out: By 10:00 a.m. on the departure date for the program.

Building assignments will be emailed by FSU Florence staff within 1-2 weeks of departure. Information provided by students on the housing questionnaire in the IP Portal is considered for housing assignments, along with many other factors. **Room and roommate assignments will be announced upon arrival and cannot be changed.** Overnight and unauthorized guests are not allowed in program housing.

Local context: Student residences are located within the historic city center, which is a protected UNESCO world heritage site. While preparing to live and study in the heart of this beautiful medieval city, keep in mind:

- Most buildings in the city are not air-conditioned in the summer and may not be heated as warmly in the winter; expect indoor heating and cooling levels to be different than in the U.S.
- Laundry facilities are available, but dryers are not common appliances in Italy and most residences are not equipped with dryers.
- You'll love walking along the banks of the Arno River but may not love how the river attracts mosquitoes, particularly during warmer months; Florentines use readily available wall plug-ins to help deter mosquitoes.
- European electrical current (220 volts) is two times stronger than in the U.S. (110 volts); be mindful of how many electronics/appliances you plug-in at once because it could trip the circuit breaker, requiring the breaker in your apartment or elsewhere in the residence to be reset. Temporary electrical outages can be common in Italy, especially during peak periods of electricity usage.

Housing Rules & Regulations will be reviewed by staff during on-site orientation. You must familiarize yourself with these rules & regulations because any violation is grounds for dismissal from the program. Housing facilities

will be inspected at the end of the program. Any damages will be assessed to your FSU account. For more information, refer to the Housing Terms and Conditions and the FSU International Programs Contractual Agreement, which all participants are required to sign in the IP Portal. The agreement outlines your contractual obligations as a participant on our program.

Packing & Climate

Research the seasonal weather and local climate trends for your location and pack accordingly:

Late fall and winter can be cold and damp. Bring clothes that can be layered. Bring or purchase on-site rain gear such as an umbrella or rain poncho.

The summer and early fall can be very hot. When packing for summer, remember that churches do not allow shorts, halter tops, or miniskirts. Bring a scarf or light sweater to cover your shoulders during church visits.

Pack soccer cleats if you plan to participate in soccer activities.

Pack lightly, review the Packing List for guidance, and remember you can buy most items locally if you discover you need something!

Do not bring:

- Electric hair tools from the U.S. (ex: straighteners, hair dryers, curling irons, etc.); it's best to buy these items locally and share with roommates to avoid problems with incompatible voltage.
- Any valuable or sentimental items such as jewelry, expensive watches, expensive cameras, or keepsake items you would regret losing.
- Additional furniture or large furnishings, such as couches or TVs, are not permitted.

Don't Forget

- Comfortable walking shoes are a MUST. You will be walking more than you usually do in the U.S.; break them in before arriving to avoid blisters.
- Purchase & pack any required textbooks & course materials; instructions for locating your course required materials (i.e. textbooks) will be provided when you register for classes. eBooks (recommended) are often available from the FSU Bookstore, FSU Libraries, Amazon.it, or other online sites. If you order print books in Italy, it should be from an Italian website to avoid customs fees and delays (e.g. Amazon.it). Additionally, the FSU Florence Library has extra print copies of some textbooks available for checkout. Details about which textbooks are available at FSU Florence and the reservation process will be provided within the instructions for locating your course required materials.
- Make copies of your passport pages that contain the issue date, your signature, and your photograph. Leave copies with family and bring copies with you while traveling (stored separate from your passport) in case your passport is lost or stolen.

Cell Phones & Laptops

It's important to establish a communications plan prior to departure and stay connected to family and friends while abroad. Reliable cellphone coverage is essential for your program, especially in emergencies – do not rely solely on Wi-Fi.

Cell Phones

Research which option below is the best fit for you.

Keeping your phone on airplane mode and relying only on unsecured, public Wi-Fi for all communication is not recommended. Wi-Fi is not available everywhere; you should always have a reliable data plan that can be used within your host county and any destinations you plan to visit independently.

NOTE: If you choose an option that requires you to unlock your phone, contact your network provider **BEFORE** you depart for details about this process as it varies by provider.

Option 1: Purchase an international eSIM data plan

How it Works: Newer phone models may be compatible with embedded SIM cards (eSIM) for international data. Learn more about eSIMs.

Notes: Regional or global packages available. May be compatible with U.S. numbers. **Only compatible with unlocked phones.** Can purchase before travel but cannot activate until abroad.

Estimated Cost: Relatively affordable, depending on plan/ carrier

Option 2: Purchase a data plan from a provider abroad

How it Works: Sign-up for a monthly or prepaid data plan with an international carrier, receive a new number.

Notes: Cannot purchase until abroad. **Only compatible with unlocked phones.** Program staff abroad may be able to provide more information after orientation.

Estimated Cost: Relatively affordable, depending on plan/ carrier

Option 3: Use an international data plan from a U.S. provider

How it Works: Pay per day or as you use data, depending on your carrier.

Notes: Often the most expensive option unless your U.S. carrier provides free international data roaming.

Estimated Cost: Expensive, depending on plan/carrier

Laptops

Most students bring a laptop or tablet abroad for convenient computer access. We recommend doing the following prior to departure:

- Verify your computer charger can accept higher voltages abroad (220v). You will still need an outlet adapter for the plug (i.e., from flat to round prongs).
- Check if your homeowner's insurance covers computers when away from your primary residence. If not, consider purchasing laptop insurance through Safeware, a worldwide insurance provider for all electronic devices.
- **Do NOT pack your laptop or laptop charger in your checked luggage.**

Mail

Share the following information with those in the U.S. who are interested in sending you mail abroad.

Letters
Letters can be sent to the FSU Florence Study Center address, as listed in the Contact Information section of this packet. Priority mail between Italy and the U.S. may take from 6-10 days.

Packages

Avoid sending packages from the U.S. to Italy whenever possible. Students can be charged up to 30% customs duty on the declared value of international packages. Instead, students can either purchase needed items locally or have items delivered to the study center from Italian Amazon. **DO NOT send packages to Italy using UPS or the U.S. Postal Service** as you will likely be charged a higher fee to obtain your package from customs.

Students are financially responsible for all customs fees; the amount(s) will be added to their myFSU account. FSU Florence is not responsible for failed deliveries or lost items.

Currency & Banking

Visit your program page on the IP website for an outline of the costs that are/are not included in your program fee.

Consider the following feedback provided by former program participants regarding finances:

- Research the cost of everyday living before going abroad, such as the average cost for meals out, groceries, transportation, etc. Students often wish they knew how much things cost prior to their program to prepare accordingly.
- **Create a budget** based on how much you plan to spend on meals, personal entertainment, and travel over the duration of your stay. **Students frequently report spending more than anticipated during their program, especially on independent travel.**
- Don't forget to factor in the exchange rate!

See how much former students reported spending during their program.

Academic site-visits are included in the program fee for many classes. Occasionally, additional fees are required for course expenses such as theater tickets, museum entrances, art supplies, etc. These fees are visible in the textbook compliance section when you register for classes.

Tips to Save Money

- **Adapt a residential mindset**. Shop for food at nearby markets or grocery stores and cook in your residence.
- **Stay local.** Spend weekends exploring more of the city or host country instead of traveling elsewhere.
- **Do research BEFORE booking independent travel**. Determine the currency and exchange rate, how much lodging and food costs, as well as any activities of interest. Some countries or activities will be vastly more expensive than others, which will impact your budget.

Currency

Italy's national currency is the euro. It's good to exchange $75-$100 dollars for euros before you leave to avoid bad rates and high fees at airport currency exchanges. Don't travel with lots of cash, you only need enough to arrive safely at your destination.

Banking & International Purchases

Set-up online banking prior to departure to monitor your U.S. bank account(s) while abroad. You should have multiple ways to access money while abroad, including credit/debit cards (make sure they don't charge foreign transaction fees). **Unless advised otherwise during the pre-departure process, DO NOT plan to rely solely on cash during your time abroad; always bring a credit and/or debit card with you.**

Former students have reported positive experiences with using a reloadable card through Revolut, which isn't tied to a specific bank. **This is not an endorsement**; research your options to find the solution that works best for your travel and financial needs.

Debit Card	Credit Card
A debit card can be used to withdraw funds from your U.S. bank account in the form of local currency at ATMs abroad.	Credit cards are useful for everyday purchases and offer excellent exchange rates (always pay in local currency, not U.S. dollars, if asked during check-out).
Contact your financial institution about ATM transaction fees. You can limit the fees if your U.S. bank has a 'sister' bank in the host country and/or by limiting the frequency of withdrawals, though you should not keep large sums of money on your person or stored in your residence.	Consider applying for a credit card with no foreign transaction fees/international fees. **Mastercard and Visa are the most widely accepted credit cards overseas.** Not all vendors will accept American Express or Discover Cards.
Cards must be linked to a checking account (other prepaid/reloadable cards are not always accepted abroad).	Credit cards are also useful for large purchases or in the event of an emergency.

Contactless Payments (e.g., Apple Pay, Google Pay): Set-up contactless payment by linking credit/debit cards to your mobile device prior to departure. Contactless Payments are heavily used in many large cities abroad, but you should always carry other sources of funds too.

Before departure, don't forget to:

- Notify your financial institution(s) of international travel plans & dates to avoid cards being declined abroad.
- Keep a record of all card numbers and know how to contact your bank if they are lost or stolen.
- Change pins longer than 4 digits, which may not be accepted abroad.

Health & Wellness

Before Departure

FSU requires all students to show proof of certain immunizations prior to registering for courses in the U.S. or abroad. If your immunization records are in Florida SHOTS and meet the immunization requirement for the University, you are not required to submit additional documentation. You will be notified if any action is needed via a To-Do item or an immunization hold placed on your myFSU account. If neither is present at the time of course

registration, you are considered cleared for immunizations and no further action is required. You can review the status of your immunization clearance online.

Familiarize yourself with the entry requirements and health matters in your program location. Some countries have specific requirements for inoculations based on previous travel or vaccination history. More information is available through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website. The FSU Health and Wellness Center also offers a travel clinic which provides immunizations. It is the student's responsibility to confirm whether their previous travel or vaccination history requires additional inoculations.

Bring enough of your prescription medication to last for the duration of your stay, if possible. This is often referred to as a 'Vacation' or 'Extended' prescription. Travel with medications inside your carry-on luggage, and make sure all medication is in the original container(s) with clearly legible prescriptions.

Not all U.S. prescription drugs are available abroad. Adderall & Concerta are examples of drugs not available in all countries. Don't postpone discussing your medication needs with your doctor. If you have questions about medication availability in your program location, or experience difficulty obtaining a prescription for your time abroad, contact our office for assistance as soon as possible.

Other Recommendations:

- If you wear glasses or contact lenses, take an extra pair and/or a copy of your vision prescription. Bring enough contacts to last the duration of the program as you may not be able to receive more via mail.
- Complete routine or preventative medical & dental care before you leave.
- A tetanus booster shot is suggested if you have not had one within the past 10 years.
- A flu shot is also suggested prior to departure.

While Abroad

Proactively maintain your health & wellbeing. Your physical, mental, and economic health are highly intertwined. Seek support as soon as the need arises to limit unnecessary stress.

Program fees include international medical & evacuation insurance coverage through IP's contracted insurance carrier, Chubb, and assistance provider, On Call International, with brokerage services and support provided by HUB Global Solutions.

Coverage is effective from the official start date of your program through the official end date of your program. Under IP's insurance policy, participants receive coverage for medically necessary expenses related to accidents, injuries, and illnesses that arise while you're abroad. To view the policy brochure including benefits, exclusions, ID card, and claims information, visit the International Programs Health & Safety webpage.

This policy is NOT intended to replace your domestic insurance coverage, which we advise you to maintain while studying abroad.

Mental health appointments are covered by your IP insurance, and appointments can be arranged through telecounseling or in person, depending on availability. **If you are experiencing a mental health emergency and need immediate assistance, On Call International is available 24/7/365 at +001 978-237-0279 (from outside the US) to provide crisis support, triage to a mental health professional, and connect you with available resources and providers. This number is also located on the Travel Assistance Identification Card included within the policy brochure.**

Notify your on-site program staff if you need medical assistance, and they can provide support. Students can also contact On Call International directly to receive medical and travel assistance services using the contact information

and policyholder details outlined on the Travel Assistance Identification Card. We advise all students to be prepared with a method of payment that can be used to cover medical expenses up front, keep all receipts and documentation, and seek reimbursement by submitting a claim.

Alcohol Awareness & Illegal Drugs
The legal age to drink alcohol in Italy is 18. Should you choose to exercise this right, you must do so responsibly. Should students violate the FSU Student Conduct Code with behavior related to alcohol consumption, they will undergo a student conduct code process, after which outcomes are appropriately assigned. In short, know your limits and drink within moderation, never to excess. Drinking before or during class or class excursions is prohibited unless it is part of the curriculum (e.g., a wine tasting). Drinking to excess during FSU sponsored activities and trips is also prohibited.

Florida State University does not tolerate the possession, use, manufacture, production, sale, exchange, or distribution of illegal drugs by students participating in FSU study abroad programs. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action onsite and/or upon return to campus.

Many countries impose severe criminal penalties for possession of illegal drugs and drug-related offenses, including detention and arrest, and travelers have been detained for unintentionally bringing prohibited items into another country. Do not travel internationally with illicit substances, such as cannabis or cannabis-derived products, regardless of their legality in other locations or whether you possess a U.S.-based prescription.

For complete information on student conduct processes, victim rights, and appeals see the Student Conduct Code.

Policies

All program participants are bound by the rules, policies, and procedures set forth in the FSU General Bulletin, Student Handbook, and Student Conduct Code. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these policies before you leave.

Title IX policies and reporting requirements apply to all FSU IP study abroad programs and must be adhered to by all FSU IP participants and staff. FSU IP faculty and staff, including Program Assistants, are considered mandatory reporters and are legally obligated to report incidents of discrimination based on sex and sexual misconduct.

Incidents are reported to the FSU Title IX office and the student's home institution (if they differ). Students may report information on their own behalf, or on behalf of another to the FSU Title IX office through report.fsu.edu. For more information, please visit FSU Title IX and Know More.

FSU Amnesty Policy
Students should also be aware of the FSU Amnesty policy, which encourages students to seek help in situations involving medical emergencies related to alcohol or drug use without fear of disciplinary action for personal consumption. While this policy does not exempt students from accountability for other violations (e.g., harassment, assault, or repeated misconduct), it supports a culture of safety and responsibility.

Safety & Security

Our highest priority is the welfare and security of our students, faculty, staff, and facilities. We have emergency plans in place for each location and work closely with our insurers and 24/7 emergency response providers to monitor and respond to all situations worldwide. We follow guidance from the respective U.S. Embassies, U.S. State Department, as well as local officials and keep students apprised of any new information. For more information on

IP's security policies and procedures, please contact our Director of Emergency and Risk Management, Brianna Magley, at 850-644-1927 or b.magley@fsu.edu.

- **Research & Preparation:** One of the most important ways to prepare for your study abroad experience is to thoroughly research your program location and any destinations you plan to visit during independent travel. Take time to familiarize yourself with local laws, cultural norms and customs, environmental conditions, and any potential risks to help you make informed decisions and navigate new environments safely and respectfully.
    - **Local Laws:** You are subject to the laws of the country in which you are traveling. Before departure, research local laws and review prohibited or restricted items for your destination through the U.S. Department of State's (DOS) International Travel webpage. Violation of local laws and regulations may result in serious legal or criminal consequences.
        - **Weapons:** You are strictly prohibited from keeping or using firearms, knives, weapons (including pellet, air guns, paintball guns or other dangerous articles or substances). Furthermore, mace and/or pepper spray may be illegal in the countries you visit. It's your responsibility to know weapons laws in the host country if you intend to bring self-defense items.
        - **Illegal Drugs:** Students should never travel internationally with cannabis, cannabis-derived products, or other illegal or illicit substances, including prescribed medical marijuana. Even if a drug or product is legal or decriminalized in your home country/state, or destination abroad, transporting it across an international border may result in arrest or other severe criminal penalties.
    - **Waiver:** All IP participants must sign and submit a general Waiver of Liability through the IP Student Portal. The waiver contains valuable information regarding risks in your foreign location and resources that you are expected to utilize.
    - **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program** (STEP): STEP is a free service provided by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) to citizens traveling or living in a foreign country. For eligible U.S. citizens, we strongly recommend registering your upcoming trip so the DOS can assist you in an emergency. The DOS also maintains the Studying Abroad webpage with Travel Advisory and guidance information, and practical safety tips for individuals studying abroad.
        - Non-U.S. citizens are encouraged to seek travel advice from the Embassy or Ministry of Foreign Affairs of your country of citizenship and inquire about similar traveler registration programs that may be available to you.

- **Resources:** Even though you're not on FSU's main campus, you have access to many resources while abroad. Program staff are available to support you in a variety of ways, including connecting you with local providers and resources, along with campus partners who can provide services while you're abroad.
    - **Victim Advocate Program:** the University takes all types of victimization seriously, including sexual violence, relationship violence, and domestic violence. Advocates are available and on-call 24/7 via call, text, or WhatsApp to provide confidential support services, even for students abroad.
    - **TalkCampus:** is an anonymous platform for FSU students to connect and receive support from fellow peers. The mental health service app is free, with 24/7 access and available in multiple languages. FSU Students can sign up online.
    - **kNOw MORE Initiative**: FSU's kNOw MORE initiative promotes a safe and respectful community through education, prevention, and support. Through the kNOw MORE website, students can access educational resources on healthy relationships, power-based personal violence, and sexual violence awareness and prevention.

- **Valuables:** Students should not take sentimental valuables abroad or leave cash, passports, or other items of value unattended or unsecured in their residences. If in need of cash in the local currency, students should plan regular visits to the ATM rather than store large amounts of cash in their rooms. Students are responsible for ensuring their residences are always left secure – do not prop open doors, leave doors or

windows unlocked, or give keys to anyone. Students are strongly encouraged to purchase personal travel insurance that will cover their belongings while abroad. The International Programs insurance policy does not cover loss or theft of participants' possessions.

- **Pickpocketing:** In many large cities around the world, pickpocketing and other crimes of opportunity are amongst the most common issues travelers encounter. We caution you to always be aware of your surroundings and be cautious of individuals who attempt to distract you. Keep valuables such as phones, wallets, purses, passports, and jewelry secure and avoid leaving items unattended, even for a moment. Be especially mindful in crowded areas, on public transportation, and in popular tourist locations. When traveling, particularly on overnight trains or while staying in hostels, take extra precautions to secure your belongings and keep important items close to you at all times.

- **Cybersecurity:** The prevalence of cybercrime is a growing concern worldwide. Travelers are often targets for travel scams and cybersecurity risks. Review the following guidance and resources to educate yourself on potential cyberthreats you may encounter and take action to secure your devices and personal information before you leave home:
    - FSU's Information Technology Services resource for how to Protect Yourself while Traveling.
    - U.S. Department of State's website for guidance on how to Protect Yourself from Scams.
    - Perpetrators may compromise public Wi-Fi networks, charging ports, or use other tactics to steal credit card or personal information.
    - Avoid using public Wi-Fi and making purchases on unsecure websites or unknown links.
    - Use a portable power bank for your electronics and avoid public charging ports, especially at airports.
    - Be cautious when sharing personal information online or on social media.
    - Never click suspicious links in emails or texts about personal or payment details.

Students are advised to adhere to the following guidance while abroad:

- **Practice Awareness:** Stay alert and aware of your surroundings. Use your best judgement to stay away from unsafe situations.
- **Use the Buddy System:** Always travel in pairs or in a group. Avoid going off on your own, especially at night.
- **Share Your Plans:** Communicate with others about your plans. Let your friends and roommates know when to expect you home.
- **Set Boundaries:** Communicate your sexual desires and limits. You have the right to change your mind at any time; communicate that clearly, too.
- **Secure Your Residence:** Keep the doors and windows of your housing locked at night and any time you leave the residence.
    - If students notice others in the building leaving the main entrance door unsecure, they should notify the IP staff immediately.
- **Exercise Moderation & Caution:** Alcohol and substance use are often connected with incidents of sexual assault.
    - Do not accept drinks from people you don't know or trust.
    - Monitor your drink at all times – never set it down or leave it unattended.
    - Drink responsibly and avoid intoxication. Being incapacitated makes you more vulnerable to exploitation.
- **Utilize report.fsu.edu:** Students can report information regarding incidents or concerning behavior on behalf of themselves or others through **report.fsu.edu**.
    - Students are also encouraged to notify and communicate with program staff, who can provide support and connect you with available resources.

Tips & Resources

The following comments came from students who recently attended our study abroad program in Florence:

- Be sure to read the notes when registering for classes about select textbooks being available for check-out at the library.
- Comfortable shoes are a must since Florence is a walking city and you will be walking a lot during excursions.
- Bring a small change purse/bag since a large portion of your money on hand will be in coins.
- Leave extra space in your suitcase for souvenirs and clothes.
- Research the weather in Florence before leaving.
- Bring a reusable water bottle with you, along with any favorite over the counter medication in the event you get sick (Vitamin C, DayQuil/NyQuil).
- Budget well while abroad.

Do your Research

The more information you find out about the country beforehand, the better off you will be once you get there. The resources and apps listed on this linktree may be helpful as you begin your information search.

(Note: Florida State University is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.)

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