

Congratulations! We hope that your program in Rome will be one of the most rewarding experiences in your academic career. The following information has been compiled to assist you in your preparations.



OVERVIEW OF UWRC

The University of Washington Rome Center (UWRC) is administered by the UW's Office of Global Affairs. The Rome Center office is staffed year-round by Sheryl Brandalik (Program Administrator), Laura Tagliapietra (Budget and Operations Administrator), and Matthew Newman (Information Technology and Computing Manager).

Students should direct program-related questions or concerns to their Program Director, who will consult with Rome Center staff if necessary.

PASSPORT & TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You must have a valid passport for travel to Italy. In addition to a passport, if your program of study is 90 days or longer, you must also obtain a *student visa*. Your program director will provide further information. Leave plenty of time before your departure to obtain or renew your passport and to apply for your visa.

Once you have arrived in Rome, you will be required to register with the local police headquarters. The UWRC will assist UW students in filing this paperwork. If your program of study is 90 days or longer you will have to convert your student visa into a stay permit (*permesso di soggiorno*). Contact the UWRC office for further details.

Once you have your permesso, or a copy of your declaration of presence, you must

carry this document with you at all times as proof that you are in Italy legally. You should also always carry a copy of your passport and the original when travelling out of town.

CASH FLOW & FINANCES

The common European currency is the euro. One euro corresponds in value to approximately \$1.33.

Spending Money

The amount of spending money required in Rome will vary from person to person, depending upon travel plans, eating preferences and other personal expenses. An average figure of \$15.00 - \$30.00 a day can be used when budgeting for meals.

Euros for Arrival

It is very helpful to have some euros for your arrival. Money exchanges can be difficult to find if you arrive late at night or on a holiday.

Credit Cards/Bank Cards

Credit cards are widely used throughout Italy and are a convenient way to obtain local currency when traveling abroad. The advantages of credit cards are that in addition to saving time waiting in bank lines or at a *cambio* (exchange office), the exchange rate with a credit card is usually better and often there is no service charge, as there can be in banks or exchange offices. Credit cards are also handy because if lost or stolen they can be relatively easily replaced. They also allow you to withdraw money in a variety of amounts from automated teller machines (ATMs): from as little as approximately \$20 at a time to a maximum of approximately \$300 per day. Most major credit or bank cards are accepted in shops and in Italian ATM's. Confirm the following with your bank before you leave: international cash advance charges, your PIN numbers, and from which account your money will be drawn.

Traveler's Checks & Exchanging Funds

You may also want to bring USD traveler's checks; American Express and Thomas Cook are two well known companies with central offices in Rome. Exchange rates and service charges will vary. Banks are usually open only in the morning and for one hour in the afternoon. Italians don't always "queue up" or make lines, and it is sometimes difficult to know what counter is doing the changing. Ask for the *cambio* and someone should point you in the right direction.

A note on exchanging money: At exchange offices do not accept bills larger than 100 euros, as these will be nearly impossible to use at shops, bars, etc.

Emergency Cash

Easy ways to get emergency cash to you from the U.S. include:

- Obtain a cash advance from your credit card and have someone in the U.S. immediately send a check to the credit card company to pay it off, to avoid high interest charges.
- Have someone send a money order through Western Union. The closest Western Union office is a 5 minute walk from the UW Rome Center.
- American Express money transfer.

We discourage students from receiving wire transfers from U.S. banks. Wire transfers may seem uncomplicated from the U.S., but tracking down the transfer and negotiating the exchange rate and the availability in Rome may prove to be a lengthy and difficult process!

Financial Aid

Make certain that you have finalized all financial aid paper work so that you do not run into financial difficulty once you are abroad. Bring the name and contact information of your Student Loan Officer with you, just in case you need to contact him/her.

HEALTH CARE

Health Insurance

Students must have U.S. health insurance with emergency coverage in order to study in Italy. Insurance can be purchased through the University. Typically in Rome, doctor's visits must be paid for in cash and then the patient must send the receipt and claim form to his/her U.S. insurance company for reimbursement.

It is a good idea to have a physical prior to departure, as is having an eye exam and any necessary dental work. The UWRC office has numbers and addresses of doctors, dentists and hospitals. The Salvator Mundi International Hospital accepts Blue Cross insurance and has many bilingual doctors.

Medications, Prescriptions, and Cosmetics

Prescription items, including glasses and contact lenses, should be brought from home. Bring an extra pair of eye glasses and extra contact lenses and a generous supply of any medications you use regularly, in their original labeled containers. You can get most medications in Italy, but some brands are difficult to find, or more expensive, such as Advil/Motrin, Peptobismol, some allergy medicines and decongestants. Vitamins are expensive in Italy and often only available in small doses; bring what you'll need with you. The pollution in Rome can sometimes aggravate asthma or allergy related conditions, so it is advisable to bring extra allergy or asthma medicine. **Packages containing medications, vitamins, and cosmetics arriving in Italy are stopped at customs; unless accompanied by an Italian prescription, medications may be confiscated.**

**DO NOT MAIL
MEDICATIONS, VITAMINS, OR
COSMETICS!!!**



WHAT TO PACK

Be conservative with luggage - bring only what you are able to carry by yourself. Your bags should be lockable and your purse and camera bag should have adjustable shoulder straps. If you will be flying a great deal, consider purchasing a lead protective pouch which protects film and computer disks against repeated exposure to security X-ray machines found in airports.

Clothing

The weather in Rome gets very hot and humid in the summer and quite cold and damp in the winter. Remember that Italians dress more conservatively than Americans. Especially in the city (and always in the churches), shorts, short skirts, tank tops and sun dresses will often be inappropriate. Remember to bring adequate cold weather clothing, too.

Suggested clothing includes turtlenecks and sweaters (to layer), coat or jacket, lightweight raincoat and compact umbrella, walking shoes, sandals, and dressier shoes, shorts, bathing suit, bathrobe, and one dressy outfit.

Laundry Facilities

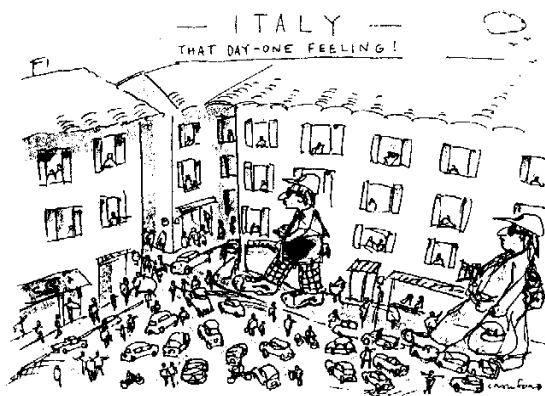
Coin-operated washers and dryers are available to students living in apartments at the UWRC. Some students in 'off-campus' housing will have washers but not dryers, therefore clothing must be dried on a rack or clothesline. Keep this in mind when packing.

Supplies and Books

Film can be expensive in Italy, so you may want to bring your own supply. Ektachrome and Fujichrome are easy to have processed, while Kodachrome is sent to Germany for processing. The *Blue Guide to Rome and Environs* by Alta Macadam and a good Italian/English dictionary will be good to have with you. Students in UW architecture programs should bring 2-3 rolls of yellow flimsy trace (different lengths are good: 12" and 24" or 36"), as it is not available in Italy.

American electric current is 110, while

Italian is 220. Be extremely careful that you have the correct power cords, necessary converters and adapters for any appliances or computer equipment that you bring from the U.S. Some American hairdryers, travel irons, and lap top computers may function in Italy if they are already equipped with a dual voltage converter. In this case you will only need a plug adapter (does not convert voltage) which we suggest you buy in America.



ARRIVING IN ROME

The University of Washington has quarters on the 1st, 3rd and 4th floors of Palazzo Pio 95, the largest building in the small Piazza del Biscione. The Rome Center Office is on the 3rd floor. Please let your professor know your arrival date and time. If you arrive in Rome prior to the first day of your program you will need arrange for your own housing in a *pensione* or hotel until your program housing starts.

By plane

The major Rome airport is Leonardo da Vinci in the town of Fiumicino, located about 25 kilometers southwest of Rome. (Ciampino is Rome's other airport, used mainly for charter flights.) After claiming your baggage and going through customs, you should change some money before going into the city. The airport exchange desks will change traveler's checks, and are open in the afternoon.

The easiest but most expensive way to reach the UWRC from the airport is to take a metered yellow or white taxi. Tell the driver the address--Piazza del Biscione 95 (*novantacinque*), and say that it is near

(vicino) Campo de' Fiori. You can also write the address on a piece of paper and hand it to the driver. *Comune di Roma* taxis charge a flat rate of €40 to go from the airport to the *centro storico* (historic center, or downtown) and *Comune di Fiumicino* taxis charge a flat rate of €60. You must pay in cash, but tipping is not mandatory. Make sure that the driver knows that *you* know about the flat rate, since many try to turn on the meter, thereby charging up to twice as much!

The least expensive option for getting to downtown Rome from the airport is a shuttle train that departs from the second level of the airport and has three stops in Rome: Stazione Ostiense, Stazione Trastevere, and Stazione Tiburtina. Tickets cost about €8 and are sold in vending machines before arriving at the train platform.

From the same tracks there is also a non-stop train direct to the Stazione Termini, Rome's most centrally-located train station. The cost is about €15 one way. Once you arrive at any of these train stations you can take a metered cab to the UW Rome Center (or see below for bus instructions).

By train

If you arrive in Rome by train from another European city, you will probably arrive at the Stazione Termini. Take a metered cab (especially if you have a lot of luggage) from the station to the UWRC. The cab ride should cost between €10-15, depending on the time of day and amount of luggage you have.

From the train station

If you choose to take a bus to the UWRC, you should purchase a bus ticket (€1; sold at newsstands, tobacco shops, and from vending machines). From the main train station (Stazione Termini) take either bus #64 or bus #40. If taking #64, get off at the first stop on Corso Vittorio Emanuele (just *past* the large bus hub at Largo Argentina). If taking bus #40, get off at Largo Argentina. (If arriving at the Trastevere train station, take the #8 tram from the stop outside the station to Largo Argentina.)

Please note that the #64 bus is almost always crowded and pick-pockets are VERY common. Be extremely careful to guard your belongings, especially when you are standing up or when getting on and off the bus.

If taking bus #40 or tram #8, from Largo Argentina, walk up the main street Corso Vittorio Emanuele, turning left into Via del Biscione. Walk up Via del Biscione (just a couple of blocks)—towards the Campo de' Fiori—until you reach Piazza del Biscione 95.



ITALIAN LAW & POLICE

There are several kinds of police in Italy: *Carabinieri* (military), *Polizia* (national) and *Polizia Municipale* or *Vigili Urbani* (city traffic police). Terrorist activity in Europe over the past years has resulted in an intensification of security measures and police are frequently heavily armed. Remember at all times that you a visitor in a foreign country as well as a representative of the University of Washington. The U.S. and Italy are different in many ways, and while some Italian laws and customs may seem unreasonable, students should be aware of them and should be sensitive to them. It is not uncommon in Italy to be asked by police to show identification. If asked, please be polite and cooperative and show a copy of your passport and your "declaration of presence" receipt.

Possession and use of illegal drugs are serious crimes for which the consequences in Italy are severe. DON'T risk incriminating yourself or your classmates by involvement in any illegal activity. Individuals arrested are subject to foreign, not U.S. laws, including imprisonment or deportation.

In churches, cloisters and other religious sites, remember that you are entering as a privilege. Your conduct and clothing should show respect to the culture and religion of Italy.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

While in Rome, you will be expected to act in an appropriate manner at all times and if it becomes necessary to bring disciplinary action against you, the University of Washington Student Conduct Code will be followed. Please read and understand the code and its procedures. It can be found at: <http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html>.

A copy is also posted on the UWRC bulletin board.

SAFETY IN ROME

Many European cities are safer than large American cities, in terms of violent crime. However, you should still do everything you would normally do in a large metropolitan city in order to ensure your safety. It is not typically Italian to invite new friends into your home or school, nor is it typical to accept such an invitation; doing so often gives 'the wrong impression'. It is also a good idea for women to go out with a male student or group at night, and no students should accept rides from strangers.

Petty crime, especially pick-pocketing, is common in Rome. The best way to protect yourself against this is to only carry with you what is strictly necessary. A money belt around your waist or pouch around your neck is advisable. Backpacks, large purses, camera bags and expensive jewelry should be avoided when possible. Pickpockets use clever ploys and often work as teams, in which one appearing to be very friendly and helpful works to distract you while the other picks your pocket or bag. This can also be true of the overly helpful person who offers to show you the sights, or offers to help you get oriented on your map. Be careful; the 'distract & rob' trick is a common one.

The squares outside the Rome Center (Campo de' Fiori & Piazza del Biscione) have recently been the gathering spot for

large numbers of young people, especially in the summer. The Italian police have occasionally made arrests for drug use near the Rome Center. You should be aware that this can take place close to your academic facility and safeguard against possible problems by not walking alone at night and by avoiding contact with those congregating in the piazzas.



WHERE TO STAY

Student apartments

Most student accommodations are in "off-campus" housing. Apartments are within a 30-minute walk of the UWRC and are furnished, with fully-equipped kitchens and bedlinens.

When you check in you will need to pay a refundable damage deposit (€50) and key deposit (€20), exact change only. You may need to sign a housing agreement as well. Overnight guests are not allowed in student apartments.



TRANSPORTATION

Walking is a great way to see the city, but be careful of the traffic. There are very few sidewalks and many motor scooters and vehicles! The bus and subway systems are convenient and inexpensive. Bus/subway tickets cost €1 and can be used to transfer within 75 minutes from the time they are

first validated. They are sold at ticket booths, ticket vending machines, some newsstands, and most tobacco shops. Enter buses from the back door and validate the ticket in the machine inside the bus; get off from the central doors.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH PARENTS AND FAMILY

It is important for your family to know how you are while you are studying in Rome. Arrange a plan to keep in touch with a family member, especially in the case of an emergency and keep family up-to-date on your studies and travels, especially any independent travel that does not involve your university program.

E-MAIL

The UWRC Computer Lab (generally open Monday-Friday 8:30 am to 5 pm and some evening and weekend hours) provides email and Internet access. However, since the Lab is intended primarily for academic use, you should not count on unlimited access for personal email or web browsing. Information about nearby Internet points is available in the UWRC office.

FAXES

Students may send and receive faxes at the UWRC for a fee.

MAIL

All your mail should be addressed to you c/o:

Name of Your Program/School
UW Rome Center
Piazza del Biscione 95
00186 Rome, ITALY

Your name and your program's name should both be clearly marked on the envelope. Mail delivery can be slow and erratic. If you send packages to yourself they should be sent air mail. Even though some U.S. Postal officials assure you that packages sent by ship take only one month, they may take up to three months or more to reach Rome! **Declaring a LOW VALUE (max \$30) and labeling as personal effects will help avoid additional high duty charges. Also, packages containing any type of food item are**

frequently stopped at customs for inspection, and a handling fee of at least 40 euros is automatically charged; please be aware of the potential costs involved in receiving food gifts from friends/family.



TELEPHONE CALLS

Telephone calls should be directed to students' cell phones. Emergency messages may be left with the UWRC Office. Messages left on the UWRC answering machine after hours, however, cannot be distributed until the following work day.

Please note that unless specifically authorized, Rome Center staff cannot give out students' addresses or home Rome phone numbers to family or friends calling. All students are required to have a cell phone, and there is also a pay phone on the third floor of the UWRC.

Students can make international calls with an Italian magnetic telephone card (available in various denominations at tobacco shops) or with an American AT&T, MCI or Sprint calling card. If using an Italian telephone card to immediately pay for the call, the most economical time to call the U.S. from Europe is in the evening or on Sundays.



MEALS

Your eating habits may change as you become accustomed to Italian eating and dining customs. Italians often have

breakfast in a bar, ordering a *cappuccino* and a *cornetto* (croissant) or other pastry. Bars also have soft drinks, fruit juice, *spremute* (fresh squeezed fruit juice) and *tramezzini* or *panini* (sandwiches). Food and beverages served at a table cost twice as much as they do if you stand at the counter. If you're not going to sit down, pay at the cash register first (tell the cashier what you will order). Take your *scontrino* (receipt) and place your order at the counter.

Italian lunches and dinners are often long, with several courses, sometimes *antipasto* (appetizer), *primo piatto*, (first course; usually soup, pasta or rice dish) and *secondo*, (meat or fish) with *insalata* (salad) or *contorno* (cooked vegetables) with the *secondo*. You are not required to order all courses, and some restaurants have economically-priced "tourist menus". Many restaurants charge a *coperto* (cover charge)--usually between €1 to €3 per person. Check menus for prices before sitting down.

For a quick lunch, *pizza rustica* shops (also called *pizza al taglio*--by the slice) sell a wide variety of kinds of pizza and charge by the weight of each slice.

Rome's numerous open-air markets sell fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as some cheeses and meats. Markets are generally open Monday through Saturday from 8:00am to about 2:00pm. You can also buy cheese, sandwich meat and other groceries in *alimentari* (small grocery stores) or in a supermarket (*supermercato*). Separate shops usually sell meat and fish. *Alimentari* are open in the morning until lunch time and in the afternoon, but are closed on Sunday. One day per week (Thursday in the Fall, Winter and Spring and Saturday in the Summer) most Roman *alimentari* don't reopen in the afternoon. Bread and plain pizza (*pizza bianca*--"white"--with just olive oil & salt, or *pizza rossa*--red--with just tomato sauce) can be purchased at a *forno* (bakery). Fresh milk is sold in a *latteria* (dairy products shop), and also in some bars or *alimentari*.

The drinking water in Rome is considered safe.

ROME CENTER FACILITY & OFFICE POLICIES

Office Assistance

The office is open weekdays from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. Since the office staff is small and the demands on their time large, please do not ask them to assist you with personal travel arrangements, course work or make non-emergency phone calls.

Studio/Classroom hours

Unlike some classrooms in the U.S., UWRC Studios and classrooms must be vacated by 12:00 midnight.

Library

The UWRC library is a non-circulating collection. Books must be used only in the Library, which is generally open Monday-Friday 8:30 am to 5 pm and some evening and weekend hours.

Computer Lab

The UWRC Computer Lab is housed in the same space as the Library and follows the same schedule. You will receive an additional handout with all the specifics.

Guests

If you bring visitors to the UWRC, please introduce them first to a member of the office staff.

Luggage Storage

The UWRC can store a small amount of luggage, space and time permitting, for students traveling before or after their program. See Rome Center staff for permission to leave luggage.

Buon viaggio
and

Ci vediamo presto!
(See you soon!)

Rome Center website:

www.depts.washington.edu/roma