

Italy

UC Center Rome and UC Center Florence, including the Mediterranean Politics, Food, and Culture (MPFC) program in Florence, Sicily, and Barcelona

UCEAP Advising Notes

Objective of the Advising Notes Document

This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad adviser to review program specific details that may impact a student's *decision to apply* for an EAP program. The document is *not* a summary of eligibility requirements, academic, housing, application and other logistical details freely available to students on the UCEAP and BSA websites, and reviewed by a student in the Program Self-Assessment..

The best sources of detailed program information are the UCEAP webpages for these Italy options <http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/italy/Pages/default.aspx> and the Program Guides <http://eap.ucop.edu/guides/Pages/default.aspx> from the prior academic cycle. There are no guides yet for the programs that are new or being revised.

If any concerns you have are not addressed in the websites, the Program Guide, or this Advising Notes document, please contact the BSA Italy adviser.

Adviser Contact Information

For BSA Adviser name, phone, email and drop-in advising hours, visit <http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/contact/advising>

Why Study Italian?

- For career and professional reasons: http://weloveitalian.org/?page_id=1292 Italy has the eighth largest economy in the world and the second largest manufacturing surplus in the EU. And so many more good reasons...
- Because it's popular: <http://www.italiantribune.com/italian-the-worlds-fourth-most-studied-language/>
- It's easy and fun to take an Italian course at Cal: <http://italian.berkeley.edu/> Consider a double-major or minor!

Financial Aid and Scholarships for Study Abroad

- View UCB financial aid details and many scholarship opportunities on our webpage: <http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances>
- Deadlines to apply for scholarships are earlier than you may think, so do your research now!
- Some scholarships that are good for students going to Italy are:
 - The National Italian-American Foundation (NIAF) offers \$2500-\$12,000 grants: <http://www.niaf.org/programs/scholarships-overview/> for details. You don't have to be Italian-American...

- The UCB Classics Department offers various prizes and awards for travel and study in Italy and certain other appropriate countries. See this Classics Department webpage for details <http://www.classics.berkeley.edu/resources/undergraduates>.
- A UCEAP scholarship has been established for Berkeley students by the Lucheta family, creator of Torani syrups. There is no application to fill out. Recipients will be chosen based on financial aid criteria and notified of selection.
- Duttonhaver Scholarships for UCEAP year-long programs or extension to a year - http://eap.ucop.edu/Scholarships/Pages/Duttonhaver_DanWise.aspx
- Two UCEAP Jasmine Jahanshahi Scholarships in the amount of \$2,500 each are available yearly for students on semester or year-long UCEAP programs. For full details, see <http://eap.ucop.edu/Scholarships/Pages/JasmineJahanshahi.aspx>.
- UC Berkeley's Institute of International Studies Merit Scholarships – non-need-based scholarships of up to \$2000 each to support undergraduate research (can be done abroad) in any area of international studies (deadline is in November) - <http://iis.berkeley.edu/content/undergraduate-merit-scholarships>

Please note: Starting Summer 2017, most financial aid, including federal, state, UC, and Berkeley scholarships and grants, cannot be used by students studying on independent (non-UC) programs. Students who receive scholarships or grants from outside organizations should contact those organizations to confirm that the awards may still be used.

The Focus of this “Advising Notes” Document

There are two “Advising Notes” documents for Italy. The other is for the “immersion” options at regular Italian universities in Bologna and Milan where UCEAP students take the same courses that the Italian students take. If you would like to become an exchange student at Bologna (courses taught in Italian, but only Italian 2 is required before departure for Fall or Year) or Bocconi (courses taught in English or Italian for majors in a small number of fields – BusAd, Econ, Legal Studies, Poli Econ, Poli Sci plus minors in Public Policy,) please read the other “Advising Notes” document for details. I encourage students to consider one of these options if they’d like to get as immersed into Italian culture as possible.

This “Advising Notes” document focuses on the following UCEAP programs:

UC Center Florence: (2.0 GPA required; Sophomores through Grad students OK)

Made in Italy: Language, Food, Business and Culture, Florence – summer quarter; fall or spring semester (winter quarter is not an option for Cal students) (Students study primarily Italian language in this program – 12 semester units of language and one 3 unit subject course in English.)

UC Center Rome: (2.5 GPA required; Sophomores through Seniors OK)

When in Rome – summer quarter

Rome Through the Ages – fall semester

Art, Food and Society – spring semester (winter quarter is not an option for Cal students)

Multi-site: (2.5 GPA required)

Mediterranean Politics, Food & Culture: Florence, Catania (Sicily), and Barcelona – fall (Juniors and Seniors only)

European Transformations, Madrid & Rome – This program is no longer offered as a semester option due to visa problems and the quarter program is not an option for Berkeley or Merced students.

A link to each program is available from UCEAP’s Italy webpage:

<http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/italy/Pages/default.aspx>

These programs were created by UC just for UC students from all ten UC campuses. No Italian (or Spanish) students will participate. They are taught in English, so no prior Italian (or Spanish) is expected. They are not connected to any university abroad, but are administered by a UCEAP Study Center in each city.

Advice on How to Choose from Among these Options

A.) Academics

Before beginning your research on these options, please read our Academic Planning webpage that explains the process to find out if courses abroad might fulfill requirements for your degree: <http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/academics> Click on the Major Advising link on the left for details about your specific major as well.

Your academic needs and wishes will determine whether an option makes sense for you. Each program offers a different, relatively limited “set menu” of courses, so if a program’s course offerings cannot fulfill the major/minor/breadth requirements that you must fulfill while abroad (if any), then you can cross that program off your list of possibilities.

Please read carefully the “Courses and Credit” tab on each program’s UCEAP webpage so you understand clearly what is and is not offered by each option. Programs offered in the past will have a link to the MyEAP Course Catalog showing how courses have transferred back to UC. New programs will not have such a catalog yet, so you’ll need to base your decision on the course information that is or will be posted once courses have been finalized.

Generally speaking, the language courses will be lower division and must be taken for a letter grade; the subject courses will be upper division and were designed to fulfill breadth requirements and possibly major requirements in the corresponding department. Consult with your college and major/minor advisers about specific courses.

The programs’ courses are rigorous, so you will need to work hard in order to earn good grades. Some students have complained about this as they felt they shouldn’t have had to work that hard while abroad, but keep in mind that this is a UC program offering UC-quality courses. You will learn a lot, but you will indeed have to study, and all these programs have a strict attendance policy.

B.) Internships

Internships for academic credit can often be arranged in the **Rome and Florence** semester programs, but not in summer (not enough time.) See the Internship tab for further details and typical placement options. An internship in Rome or Florence is over and above the other required course work. Internships are not possible in the **Mediterranean Politics, Food, and Culture (MPFC)** fall program.

C.) Language Study

These programs have no language prerequisite, but differ in how much language is offered/required during the program. **MPFC** offers no language courses. **Florence** is primarily a language program in which students study Italian language for several hours 4-5 days per week and earn 12 semester units of Italian language credit during the semester (6.6 in summer) so don’t choose this option if language acquisition is not your primary objective. Students who begin the Florence (or Rome) fall program with Italian 3 completed may ask to extend to the immersion option in Spring in Bologna if they have a 2.85 GPA. **The Rome Fall and Spring programs** require about one semester’s worth of language course work. In Rome Summer, studying Italian is optional. Before choosing any of these programs, please be sure you understand how much language you will be studying.

Extra note about **Florence** - Expect this program to be academically challenging. Please don’t go to Florence with the idea that you won’t have to study hard. You will still have a good deal of free time for fun and for exploring Florence and Tuscany, but to do well academically, you’ll need to devote sufficient effort. Some students were not expecting such a rigorous program, even though they were informed before they applied. It is indeed an intensive program.

A few students with no prior knowledge of Italian who participated in the Florence program complained that they were at a disadvantage in their beginning Italian classes in Florence. Other UCEAP students in their class either knew a little Italian somehow or were familiar with another Romance language due to high school

Spanish or French classes or due to growing up in a Spanish-speaking family. The same thing happens in beginning Italian classes at Cal, so this situation is not unique to the UCEAP program. If you have no background whatsoever in Italian or any other Romance language, you might want to buy the Italian text used at Cal and do some self-study before departure. Once in Florence, you may have to study more than students who do have such a background, so please take that into consideration before choosing this intensive Language and Culture program. Language classes in all Italy options must be taken for letter grades that will transfer back to your UC transcript.

D.) Housing

All these programs offer shared housing with other UC students from the program. The programs that take place only in Rome or Florence also offer homestays, which are recommended for students who wish to immerse themselves as much as possible in Italian culture. Homestays are not an option in the MFPC multi-site program.

E.) One city or more?

Some students are attracted to the idea of experiencing more than one city during their semester abroad. Please think carefully before choosing a multi-site program primarily for this reason. Some multi-site alums have said that it was discombobulating to uproot themselves from the first city after such a short time when they were just getting comfortable there, in order to move on to the next city. They said that in retrospect, they wish they had stayed in one city and simply visited the other city at some point or after the program was over. If you're contemplating choosing the multi-site program as a way of spending time in a Spanish-speaking country in addition to Italy, please also investigate the many options in Spain, Mexico, Argentina, and Chile as alternatives before making a final decision.

F.) Competitiveness of these Options

Rome and Florence have not been impacted recently. Most students who meet the minimum eligibility requirements and submit a well-prepared application with an articulate Statement of Purpose have a good chance of being selected.

The Mediterranean Politics, Food, and Culture program was impacted last year. If more applications are received for the spaces we have been allotted by UCEAP, the selection criteria that will be used include GPA and academic record; whether applicants intend to take courses related to their major; class standing; Statement of Purpose – priority will be given to students who successfully convey an understanding of the program and can articulate thoughtfully why this program in particular is a good fit for them and how the program will benefit them academically, professionally, and personally. Students interested in this option are encouraged to speak with the adviser prior to applying to see if a back-up application might be approved, if necessary.

G.) Summer vs Semester in Rome (or Florence which is similar)

Unless there is a reason why you can study abroad only in the summer, I would encourage you to study abroad for a semester for four reasons. 1. The summer program in Rome lasts only 6 weeks and costs ~\$8700. The semester lasts 15 weeks and costs ~\$14,000-15,500. Airfare is included in those budgets. So more than twice as long, but not twice as expensive. 2. Financial aid works normally for a semester, so if you receive full financial aid at Cal, you will receive financial aid to cover the entire UCEAP budget, even if it is higher than Cal. Summer is not considered a regular term, so the financial aid that is available does not always cover the full budget. It varies by student. Visit our study abroad financial aid counselors in 160 Stephens Hall. They can tell you what you are likely to receive for a summer or semester based on your current financial aid data in CalCentral. 3. If you study abroad in summer, you can't get a job to earn money. 4. The longer you can be in Italy, the better your Italian will become, and the more you will learn about the culture. So keep all this in mind as you deliberate about the best timing to study in Italy. Feel free to discuss this with the Italy adviser.

H.) Type of city:

Florence is a beautiful medium-sized city (population ~400,000) famous for its history and great art treasures. Despite its moderate size, what it offers is so vast and remarkable that boredom is unlikely to

occur. It can be somewhat difficult to interact with the locals, however, as many Florentines prefer to speak English because of the crowds of tourists who visit almost year-round. The UC study center is not affiliated with any Italian university in Florence so meeting Italian college students can be challenging. Volunteer opportunities can get students engaged with local Italians, if they wish. Meeting other study abroad students is inevitable, however, as Florence is one of the most popular study abroad destinations in Italy, if not all of Europe. It is possible to escape the foreign influx, but it will require intention and effort on your part. Please consider whether a medium-sized city often full of tourists and study abroad students is the appropriate locale for you to fulfill your study abroad goals. Here is an article from the Los Angeles Times about Florence: <http://www.latimes.com/travel/la-tr-florence-20110717.0.4596462.story>

Rome is a vast cosmopolitan city (population ~3,000,000) that also has huge numbers of tourists and study abroad students, but it is more able to absorb them due to its size. Because of heavy traffic, Rome is not a quiet, cozy city, but it offers millennia of eye-opening art and architecture. The UC study center is not affiliated with any Italian university in Rome so meeting Italian college students can be challenging. Volunteer and internship opportunities can get students engaged with local Italians, if they wish. Please consider whether a large, heavily-touristed metropolis is the appropriate locale for you to fulfill your study abroad goals. Here is a link with numerous articles from the New York Times about Rome: <http://intransit.blogs.nytimes.com/category/rome/>

UCEAP Alumni/ae are also a good resource for information about the programs. If you would like to be put in touch with alums, simply send the Italy EAP Adviser an email addressed to the alums (e.g., “Dear alums, I have some questions about the program...”) and the message will be forwarded to them. Include only 2-3 of your most important questions in your message so as not to overwhelm the alums initially.

Here is an excellent blog from the spring 2015 program in Rome by Cal student Michael Drummond. His photos are fabulous and he writes very thoughtfully about his life in Italy. <https://dromand.wordpress.com/>

MISCELLANEOUS IMPORTANT DETAILS TO KNOW:

Important Dates

In case you are selected, please mark your calendar now for the mandatory 3-4 hour Italy orientation. For Summer, Fall or Year, reserve *Saturday, April 28, 2018* (8 AM to 8 PM, exact time TBA.) For Spring '19 reserve *Saturday, December 1, 2018* (8 AM to 8 PM, exact time TBA.) Once the exact date and time have been chosen, you'll be notified by the Italy adviser.

Taking Italian Language Classes at Cal P/NP

Italian classes you take at Cal may be taken P/NP, *but with your application you must provide a written note from your instructor or the Italian Department stating what your letter grade would have been. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for this without prompting from the Italy adviser or BSA office.* This is required even though there is no minimum language requirement or minimum Language GPA for Rome or Florence. A Language GPA must still be calculated and provided to UCEAP by our office.

Critical Passport Details

Your passport must be valid for *3 months beyond the end date of the EAP program* --- check the dates on the EAP Italy webpages to check this year's end dates – your program will be similar.

Also, your MyEAP application name and your passport name must be identical (not just similar!) If there is a discrepancy of even one letter, hyphen, middle initial vs. full middle name, Jr., etc, the Italian consulate will not issue you a visa. Please check your passport name and use precisely that name on your MyEAP on-line application, even if it doesn't match the name you use at UC Berkeley. If your passport name has an error, either get your passport fixed before you apply for UCEAP, or simply use the incorrect name on your UCEAP application in order to avoid a crisis later on.

Travel Advisory #1 - Visa Application Prevents Travel Abroad Three Months Prior to Program Start Date

Due to the complicated, bureaucratic student visa application procedures followed by the Italian consulates, you should not make any plans to travel abroad in the three months leading up to the beginning of your program in Italy. The Italian consulates require that EAP students submit their visa application paperwork *and their actual passport* to them. Thus, you will not have your passport while your visa is being processed. It may be possible to apply for a duplicate US passport, so if you must travel outside of the US during the three months prior to the official start date of your Italy program, you should contact the National Passport Agency to find out how long it will take to get the second passport and how to apply for it, just in case you need to. Detailed instructions on the student visa application process for Italy will be included in an e-mail from the systemwide office of EAP (UCEAP) near Santa Barbara after selection. Do not purchase a plane ticket or make any other irreversible travel plans until you have received those instructions.

Exception to the above: Florence and Rome summer, as no visa is required for Italy programs shorter than 90 days. If you want to do both Florence or Rome summer plus a Fall program, however, you must apply for each separately, and apply for a visa for the Fall option.

Also, if you are thinking of participating in back-to-back options, it would be wise not to choose Italy as your second program abroad due to the visa application process; better to go to Italy first, and then to a country with an easier visa application process second. (Exception: if you study somewhere in Spring, then in Rome or Florence Summer, that could work because no visa is required for Italy Summer.) Please remember: applications for back-to-back applications must be approved by both BSA advisers BEFORE you start them!

Travel Advisory #2 – Travel During the Program

Weekend travel to *distant* cities from your host city is not encouraged during the program, because it is difficult to get back in time for class on Monday morning. Fortunately, there are many wonderful places to visit that are quite close by to all the host cities. The programs have a strict attendance policy that limits the number of classes students can miss before having their grades docked or being sent back to California. What this means is that you should plan to do any extensive long-distance traveling only *after the program ends or during breaks*. One advantage of participating in the spring option (rather than fall) is that after the semester ends you have the rest of the summer to travel around Europe after it's over. By then you'll be a pro at getting yourself around, and you can even play tour guide for your friends and family members who might want to visit Italy.

Italy is a Catholic Country

One point about Italy in general may seem obvious, but bears mentioning: On the surface, Italy is an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country so Catholic religious symbols and artwork are everywhere. Most students who go to Italy (whether Catholic or not) accept and appreciate this, but if this fact would bother you (as it has bothered a few students who studied in Italy in the past,) you might want to consider other options. Feel free to discuss this with the Italy adviser if you have any concerns.

Please note that courses in the Rome program plan field-trips to Vatican-owned buildings and churches. The Vatican expects visitors to wear appropriate attire on the premises (i.e., no micro-mini-skirts, no bare shoulders, bellies, or feet, etc.) Most students have no problem with this expectation, but if you would find it burdensome, you might want to consider other options.

Graduating Seniors Spending their last UC Term Abroad in any UCEAP Program

Graduating seniors must enroll in a full course load while abroad, even if they do not need the courses or units for graduation. (Requests by DSP students who provide documentation may be considered for a reduced course load.) Only one-third of units taken abroad may be on a P/NP basis (typically about one course); the rest must be letter-graded. Each program's policy is a bit different, so consult the Academics section of each program guide for details.

DSP Students

If you receive accommodations at Cal and would like to know if they are also available in the program abroad that interests you, it is a good idea to email your BSA adviser to inquire about your specific needs. That way, if your needs cannot be accommodated in that program, you can investigate other programs that might.

Medical Marijuana

Marijuana is not legal in Italy or Spain, even if you are approved for medical marijuana use in California. Please consult with your primary care physician for a legal substitute before applying to the program.

Grad Students *(Florence and immersion options only – other options are not open to grad students)*

Please read the “Graduate Students” link on our website at <http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/Pages/GraduateStudents.aspx> in order to know what you need to do right away to find out if EAP can work for you, i.e., complete and submit to our office the “Graduate Preliminary Inquiry Form” (GPIF) or the “Graduate Student Agreement” (GSAG.) The GSAG is different from the GPIF. The GSAG is specifically for summer language & culture programs, and it basically confirms that graduate students and their departments are aware that the courses offered on the program are only at the undergraduate level. The GPIF is an academic planning form that graduate students fill out for semester and year programs to confirm with the study center that the EAP program offers graduate courses they will be able to use towards their degree.

Learn about Italy before Choosing your Option and Writing your Statement of Purpose

Try http://www.iicsanfrancisco.esteri.it/IIC_SanFrancisco/ for Italian cultural events in the Bay Area. Read the Lonely Planet and other books and on-line resources about its history, politics, art, or culture. A recommended reading list is included in the Program Guides (see top for links.) You should read up on Italy before writing your Statement of Purpose, so you know something about the country and the city in which you want to study. A typical Italian university student knows far more about the U.S. than the typical UC student knows about Italy. You still have time to increase your knowledge before you go there. Take courses next semester about anything related to Italy --- you’ll be glad you did once you arrive in Italy.

Selection Interviews

If you need to be interviewed, you will be notified by the Italy adviser after your application has been reviewed.

Conclusion: If, after reading the information above as well as the separate “Advising Notes” for Italy Immersion, you are still uncertain about which option would be best for you, please feel free to talk with the Italy adviser about the various possibilities *after* you have read the UCEAP Italy website information carefully. <http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/italy/Pages/default.aspx>

Grazie mille! Buona fortuna!