

Going Global @ WPI



A handbook developed by the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division at Worcester Polytechnic Institute for students going to the residential project site:

Venice B 2010

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Section 1 – WPI and IGSD Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! You are beginning to prepare for one of the most meaningful experiences that you will encounter while at WPI. In order to insure that you have a successful experience, the *Going Global at WPI Handbook* has been compiled from a number of sources to provide as much practical information as possible that may be applicable to all project sites. The Handbook was prepared to inform the student who has been accepted to participate in the Global Perspective Program during the 2010/2011 academic year.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute has been practicing innovative, project-based technological education for over 30 years. WPI requires all undergraduates to complete a series of projects, including one in which they examine how science or technology interacts with societal structures and values - the Interactive Qualifying Project. Because of its commitment to a global perspective, the university offers its students opportunities to complete this unique degree requirement at locations around the world. WPI operates more than ten international project programs where students, with resident faculty advisors, live and work full time solving real-world problems for public and private agencies and organizations. WPI sends more engineering and science students overseas for experiential learning than any other U.S. college or university; during the 2010/2011 academic year, approximately 625 WPI students -- including over half of the junior class -- will travel to a global project site to complete one of these interdisciplinary projects.

A successful off-campus experience does not just occur; it requires careful consideration of things you will need to do before you leave, and while at your off-campus site. The Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division (IGSD) has developed this document to outline these considerations.

For the mutual protection of WPI, the students, and their families, the obligation assumed by each must be carefully defined and understood. You should recognize the fact that you have entered into a contractual agreement with WPI that states the obligations and responsibilities of both the university and yourself. This Handbook was created as the document that should be read carefully and thoroughly to avoid misunderstandings.

The following text is taken from the NAFSA: Association of International Educators' website. NAFSA is the predominant professional association in the world dealing with international education, and the section of the Association that deals specifically with study abroad currently known as the Education Abroad Knowledge Community. A committee of study abroad professionals (the Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad) developed the following document and is included here for your reference. Please keep in mind that while WPI's off campus program is unique in its structure, the University is committed to uphold the standards of the profession.

Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practices for Health and Safety

Statement of Purpose

Because the health and safety of study abroad participants are primary concerns, these statements of good practice have been developed to provide guidance to institutions, participants (including faculty and staff), and parents/guardians/families. These statements are intended to be aspirational in nature. They address issues that merit attention and thoughtful consideration by everyone involved with study abroad. They are intentionally general; they are not intended to account for all the many variations in study abroad programs and actual health, safety and security cases that will inevitably occur. In dealing with any specific situation, those responsible must also rely upon their collective experience and judgment while considering their specific circumstances.

I. Responsibilities of Program Sponsors

The term "sponsors" refers to all the entities that together develop, offer, and administer study abroad programs. Sponsors include sending institutions, host institutions, program administrators, and placement organizations. To the extent reasonably possible, program sponsors should consider how these statements of good practice may apply. At the same time, it must be noted that the structure of study abroad programs varies widely. Study abroad is usually a cooperative venture that can involve multiple sponsors. Because the role of an organization in a study abroad program may vary considerably from case to case, it is not possible to specify a division of efforts that will be applicable to all cases. Each entity should apply these statements in ways consistent with its respective role.

In general, practices that relate to obtaining health, safety and security information apply to all parties consistent with their role and involvement in the study abroad program. Much of the basic information is readily available and can be conveyed to participants by distributing it and/or by referring them to, or utilizing materials from, recognized central sources. Statements of good practice that refer to the provision of information and the preparation of participants are intended for parties that advise, refer, nominate, admit, enroll, or place students. Statements of good practice that suggest operating procedures on site apply to entities that are directly involved in the operation of the overseas program.

It is understood that program sponsors that rely heavily on the collaboration of overseas institutions may exercise less direct control over specific program components. In such cases, sponsors are urged to work with their overseas partners to develop plans and procedures for implementing good practices.

The use of letters is provided for ease of reference only and does not imply priority.

Program sponsors should:

- A. Conduct periodic assessments of health and safety conditions for their programs, and develop and maintain emergency preparedness processes and a crisis response plan.
- B. Provide health and safety information for prospective participants so that they and their parents/guardians/families can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation and behavior while on the program.
- C. Provide information concerning aspects of home campus services and conditions that cannot be replicated at overseas locations.

- D. Provide orientation to participants prior to the program and as needed on site, which includes information on safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country. In addition to dealing with health and safety issues, the orientation should address potential health and safety risks, and appropriate emergency response measures.
- E. Consider health and safety issues in evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in a study abroad program.
- F. Determining criteria for an individual's removal from an overseas program taking into account participant behavior, health, and safety factors.
- G. Require that participants be insured. Either provide health and travel accident (emergency evacuation, repatriation) insurance to participants, or provide information about how to obtain such coverage.
- H. Conduct inquiries regarding the potential health, safety and security risks of the local environment of the program, including program-sponsored accommodation, events, excursions and other activities, prior to the program. Monitor possible changes in country conditions. Provide information about changes and advise participants and their parents/guardians/families as needed.
- I. Hire vendors and contractors (e.g. travel and tour agents) that have provided reputable services in the country in which the program takes place. Advise such vendors and contractors of the program sponsor's expectations with respect to their role in the health and safety of participants.
- J. Conduct appropriate inquiry regarding available medical and professional services. Provide information about these services for participants and their parents/guardians/families, and help participants obtain the services they may need.
- K. Develop and provide health and safety training for program directors and staff, including guidelines with respect to intervention and referral that take into account the nature and location of the study abroad program.
- L. Develop codes of conduct for their programs; communicate codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. Take appropriate action when aware that participants are in violation.
- M. In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health and safety circumstances, maintain good communication among all program sponsors and others who need to know.
- N. In the participant screening process, consider factors such as disciplinary history that may impact on the safety of the individual or the group.
- O. Provide information for participants and their parents/guardians/families regarding when and where the sponsor's responsibility ends and the range of aspects of participants' overseas experiences that are beyond the sponsor's control.

In particular, program sponsors generally:

- A. Cannot guarantee or assure the safety and/or security of participants or eliminate all risks from the study abroad environments.
- B. Cannot monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of participants.
- C. Cannot prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous or unwise activities.

- D. Cannot assure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings or provide or pay for legal representation for participants.
- E. Cannot assume responsibility for actions or for events that are not part of the program, nor for those that are beyond the control of the sponsor and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.
- F. Cannot assure that home-country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country.

II. Responsibilities of Participants

In study abroad, as in other settings, participants can have a major impact on their own health and safety through the decisions they make before and during their program and by their day-to-day choices and behaviors.

Participants should:

- A. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.
- B. Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the sponsor that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country(ies).
- C. Conduct their own research on the country(ies) they plan to visit with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
- D. Consider their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
- E. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
- F. Inform parents/guardians/families and any others who may need to know about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed of their whereabouts and activities.
- G. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
- H. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program.
- I. Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
- J. Obey host-country laws.
- K. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well being of others, and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
- L. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
- M. Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well being.

N. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host country.

III. Recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families

In study abroad, as in other settings, parents, guardians, and families can play an important role in the health and safety of participants by helping them make decisions and by influencing their behavior overseas.

Parents/guardians/families should:

- A. Be informed about and involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular program.
- B. Obtain and carefully evaluate participant program materials, as well as related health, safety and security information.
- C. Discuss with the participant any of his/her travel plans and activities that may be independent of the study abroad program.
- D. Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
- E. Be responsive to requests from the program sponsor for information regarding the participant.
- F. Keep in touch with the participant.
- G. Be aware that the participant rather than the program may most appropriately provide some information.

NAFSA: Association of International Education
Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practice for Health and Safety
Guidelines, Revised November 8, 2002

http://www.nafsa.org/knowledge_community_network.sec/education_abroad_1/developing_and_managing/practice_resources_36/guidelines_for_health

MANDATORY PAPERWORK

The following documents must be submitted to the IGSD office by the stated deadline before you leave WPI for your off-campus project experience. If any forms are missing, you will be in jeopardy of not being allowed to participate at off-campus programs.

Participant Paperwork Deadline: All paperwork for Venice B010 must be in the IGSD by Wednesday, October 6, 2010 before 3:00pm.

Statement of Agreement

Once accepted to the Global Perspective Program at WPI, every student is required to submit to the IGSD along with his or her housing deposit a signed and dated "Participant Statement of Agreement". The text of that document is included below for your convenient referral. Of course, you may request a photocopy of your signed "Participant Statement of Agreement" at any time.

I understand that my participation in the WPI Global Perspective Program is subject to my agreement to accept and abide by the following conditions of participation:

A. Financial Responsibility

- 1) I understand that my deposit of \$400 is used to secure my place in the program and will be credited toward my housing cost.
- 2) I understand that charges for any damages to housing, WPI property on site, the property of our host institutions, or project sponsors will be charged to my WPI account. When responsibility for damages to housing cannot be assigned to an individual student, all students in the housing unit will be charged an equal share of the cost. I also realize that an official hold will be placed on my records until all payment responsibilities are satisfied.
- 3) I agree to pay all housing charges as requested. The accounting office normally bills housing costs at program sites at the time of the usual billing for Spring, Fall, and Summer terms.

B. Withdrawal, Cancellation, or Dismissal

- 1) I understand that the \$400 acceptance deposit is fully refundable up to 120 business days before the beginning of the program. Notice of withdrawal must be made in writing to the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division. Withdrawals after this time are subject to forfeiture of the entire deposit, plus any unrecoverable portion of the housing costs or other program expenses advanced on my behalf.
- 2) WPI makes every effort to deliver every program offered. However, many circumstances beyond our control could affect the welfare and safety of our participants. WPI, therefore, reserves the right to cancel a program in the event of changes that adversely affect our ability to deliver a quality academic program in which we can reasonably safeguard the health, safety, and well-being of all participants. In the event of cancellation by WPI, all *recoverable* deposits, tuition, and housing costs will be fully refunded.
- 3) Students who are dismissed from a program for any reason will receive no refund of any costs involved and are subject to charges for any unrecoverable housing costs or program expenses advanced on their behalf.

C. Behavioral Responsibilities

- 1) I understand that all policies governing acceptable behavior as printed in The Policies section of *The Campus Planner & Resource Guide* apply to me during my participation at an off-campus program site. Failure to abide by these policies, either before or during my participation in an off-campus program, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including my immediate dismissal from the program. I recognize that the authority for adjudicating alleged violations of the WPI Code of Conduct while at an off-campus program site lies with the on-site WPI representative in accordance with basic due process.
- 2) I further understand that as a WPI student at an off-campus program site, I represent my institution and my country and will behave as an ambassador for both. I understand that grounds for dismissal may also be found in behavior disruptive to the group as a whole, or offensive within the host culture: disruptive sexual behavior, or behavior deemed offensive to the host culture; or disruptive, violent, or destructive behavior in student housing.
- 3) I understand that WPI must take steps to ensure that no offensive, disruptive or potentially dangerous conduct occurs while WPI students and faculty are abroad. Accordingly, WPI reserves the right to dismiss a student from the program on the basis of any observed conduct or behavior which causes WPI concern for the safety and well-being of students or others. The Dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies shall have the authority to make the final decision on dismissal from the program.

D. Academic Responsibilities

- 1) I understand that my participation in this program is subject to successful completion of all required preparation classes. I agree to attend all required orientation and re-entry meetings.
- 2) I understand that if I am placed on academic probation, I am no longer eligible to participate. The withdrawal refund policy stated above will apply.
- 3) WPI reserves the right to withdraw acceptance to students who are subsequently placed on academic warning. The withdrawal refund policy stated above will apply.

E. Medical Issues

- 1) I understand that there are certain risks inherent in travel to an off-campus program site and WPI cannot assume responsibility for all of my activities or medical needs. I understand that it is my responsibility to carry medical insurance that is valid at the off-campus site for the length of my stay.
- 2) I accept all financial responsibility for any medical treatment I receive while at the program site and understand that to obtain medical care abroad it is usually necessary to pay when the care is administered and seek reimbursement from my insurance company when I return home.

F. Legal Issues

- 1) I understand that as a non-citizen in a foreign country, I will be subject to the laws of that country. The use or possession of illegal drugs or other substances in violation of the laws of the host country or The Policies section of *The Campus Planner & Resource Guide*, before or during my participation in the program, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including my immediate dismissal from the program and legal action under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and / or the laws of the host country.

G. Travel Issues

- 1) I understand that I am responsible for making my own travel arrangements and for arriving at the program site on the designated arrival date and remaining until the official departure date.
- 2) I understand that while WPI encourages students to travel during their free time, the university can take no responsibility for my safety during independent travel. I further understand that I must inform the faculty-in-residence of my travel plans.

H. Federal Compliance Issues

- 1) I understand there are Federal regulations regarding the export of information to foreign countries or foreign citizens, with which all of us at WPI must comply. WPI's emphasis on engineering programs makes us particularly sensitive to these regulations. If I take a laptop computer (or other type of computer digital storage device, I hereby assure WPI that I will not have any restricted information on that device as such action may be considered an export.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the above stated conditions of participation.

Participant Signature	date	site	term
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Printed Name	student number	date of birth*
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**If participant is under 18 years of age, both parents and/ or legal guardian must also read and sign this form.*

I am the parent or legal guardian of the above Participant, have read the foregoing Participant Statement of Agreement Form (including such parts as may subject me to personal financial responsibility), and will be legally responsible for the obligations and acts of the Participant as described in this Participant Statement of Agreement Form, and agree, for myself and for the participant, to be bound by its terms.

X

Signature of Parent / Guardian	Date
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X

Signature of Parent / Guardian	Date
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Travel Information Form (Appendix A)

The IGSD must have completed Travel Form from each student on file before the student leaves for their site. The office keeps a copy of this itinerary and we send a copy with the faculty advisor. By doing this, the IGSD staff, the advisor and the local coordinator knows when and where every student will arrive and will alert them if a problem arises.

Any students traveling outside the United States to a WPI project site must supply the IGSD with a scanned copy of the information pages of their passport. Electronic copies will be sent with the faculty advisor and kept on file in the IGSD. If a passport is stolen or lost while outside the U.S., having copies of this document will greatly facilitate having a new one issued while overseas. Another thing that one can do to facilitate having to process a new passport while overseas is to carry duplicates of passport photos with the passport number written on the back. These photos must be carried securely, yet separate from your passport.

Students should understand that they are responsible for making their own travel arrangements and for arriving at the program site on the designated arrival date and remaining until the official departure date. If you are traveling by air, you must have confirmed reservations. Flying stand-by is not acceptable.

Students and their families should also understand that while WPI encourages students to travel during their free time, the university can take no responsibility for the student's safety during independent travel. The student must inform the faculty-in-residence of any travel plans.

You may not take vacation days off from your project work, even if you have the permission of your project mentor. If you have an urgent family or academic or job related need to travel away from the project site on a project work day, consult with the faculty member in residence before making any travel plans.

Health Update and Records Release Form (Appendix B)

The IGSD must have a completed Health Update and Records Release Form on file for each student before the student leaves for her site. The IGSD keeps a copy and sends a copy with the faculty advisor in case of an emergency. The student should list any medical conditions that could affect the student while off-campus (i.e. epilepsy, diabetes, depressive episodes, etc.) Also, the student must list any changes in their health not noted on medical records on file with WPI Health Services. Medical allergies must be listed, as well as prescription medications.

The IGSD strongly recommends that every student who plans to travel outside of the United States should read closely all information put forward by the Center for Disease Control specific to the geographic area where they will be going. This information is included in this handbook.

When traveling abroad it is a good idea to take a supply of your prescription medications sufficient to last for the entire length of the trip. Prescription medicines should always be kept in the original containers with the prescription label intact to avoid problems with customs officials. It is also important to take along a copy of the prescription from your physician, clearly written, in generic terms, and with an indication of the condition being treated.

Two people need be listed as emergency contacts. These contacts should be people empowered to make a medical or legal decision on behalf of the participant (i.e., parent, guardian, living adult relative). Contact information for each must also be provided to the IGSD on this form: name, relationship, address, phone (home and work), and email.

Students must accept all financial responsibility for any medical treatment received while at the program site and should understand that to obtain medical care abroad, it is usually necessary to pay when the care is administered and they will have to seek reimbursement from their insurance company when they return home.

Participants and their families should understand that there are certain risks inherent in travel to an off-campus program site and WPI cannot assume responsibility for every activity or medical need. It is the student's responsibility to carry medical insurance that is valid at the off-campus site for the length of the stay. Students must accept all financial responsibility for any medical treatment received while at the program site. Students should understand that to obtain medical care abroad, it is usually necessary to pay when the care is administered and they will have to seek reimbursement from their insurance company when they return home.

All students traveling off-campus to participate in a WPI program are required to carry medical insurance that is valid at the program site for the entire length of the program. The IGSD must have the name of your insurance provider and your subscription number. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that they are covered for the entire length of the program while they are off-campus.

Voluntary Acknowledgement Form

All participants are required to sign a Voluntary Acknowledgement Form that is kept on file in the IGSD. The text of the form is below for your convenient referral. We hope that by asking participants to read and sign such a form that we remind them of the nature of their participation and the responsibilities which are assumed by the individuals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT and RELEASE

I acknowledge that I am voluntarily participating in the _____ (the "Program"), which is being offered by Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI). I further acknowledge that WPI has provided me with adequate information about the Program, both verbally and through written materials, and that I have read and understand such information. I agree to comply with any immunization or medical treatment necessary to participate in this program. I also acknowledge that any laptop computer (or other form of computer or digital storage device) that I may take abroad cannot contain any restricted information as such action may be considered an export subject to Federal control and regulation.

Assumption of Risk and Release of Claims. Knowing the risks described, and in consideration of being permitted to participate in the Program, I agree, on behalf of my family, heirs, and personal representative(s), to assume all the risks and responsibilities surrounding my participation in the Program. To the maximum extent permitted by law, I release and indemnify Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and its officers, employees and agents, from and against any present or future claim, loss or liability for injury to person or property which I may suffer, or for which I may be liable to any other person, during my participation in the Program (including periods in transit to or from any site in country where the Program is being conducted).

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS.

Participant Signature

date

Printed Name

date of birth*

*If participant is under 18 years of age, both parents and/or legal guardians must also read and sign this form.

I am the parent or legal guardian of the above Participant, have read the foregoing Acknowledgement and Release Form (including such parts as may subject me to personal financial responsibility), and will be legally responsible for the obligations and acts of the Participant as described in this Acknowledgement and Release Form, and agree, for myself and for the Participant, to be bound by its terms.

X

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Date

X

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Scan of Passport

You are required to bring your passport to the IGSD office so that staff can scan a copy of the face and information pages. IGSD keeps this on file.

International Student Identity Cards (ISIC)

All WPI students completing course requirements abroad are required to get the ISIC. As you have been charged the \$24.00 cost of the card, it makes the most sense to get yours from the IGSD. If you choose to purchase a card elsewhere you will forfeit the \$24.00. In some countries, the student discount network is highly developed, and an ISIC will entitle students to reduced entrance fees at museums and theaters, special rail or bus passes, and even discounts at hotels and shops. While it cannot be guaranteed that you'll get discounts wherever you go, the ISIC is the most accepted card for international access to all student discounts that are available.

With the International Student Identity Card, you gain access to a 24-hour, toll free help line that can provide aid in the case of a medical, financial or legal emergency while abroad. You can call the ISIC Help Line from the United States at (877-370-4742). Outside of the United States, call collect 715-342-4104. The call is free, but be prepared to provide your card number to the ISIC Help Line.

The most important reason for the ISIC requirement is the additional insurance coverage that you get. The ISIC provides a basic sickness and accident insurance policy to students while traveling outside the United States. International Student Identity Cards also provide students with emergency evacuation insurance, if due to injury or sickness, a legally licensed physician certifies the severity of your condition is such that you must be evacuated for medical treatment. In addition, cardholders are eligible to have expenses covered for the repatriation of remains in the unlikely event of death while abroad. (For more specific coverage information, contact American Home Assurance Company 70 Pine St. New York, New York 10270).

Students who are traveling to sites outside of the United States are required to carry with them an International Student Identity Card (ISIC). The cost of this card is built into the expenses associated with going off-campus and does not require additional fees to be charged to the student. However, students must supply the IGSD with two photos in order to process the card. These photos can be taken at the IGSD Office.

Students are required to come to the IGSD, located in the Project Center, to fill out an application form for the ISIC and turn in their photos (extra passport photos will suffice as well, but please keep in mind the need to carry two other passport photos with you when traveling). IGSD staff will process your card, which will be given to you when all mandatory paperwork mentioned previously has been completed and turned in to the IGSD. If you need the number from your ISIC to book your flight, a photocopy of your card can be provided to you at your request. For more specific information about discounts, go to www.isic.org.

ATC Laptop Form (Appendix C)

WPI will provide one laptop per team if you request it. You do not have to use a WPI laptop – you are welcome to take your own. If you do, however choose to sign out a WPI laptop, you will need to complete the form and turn it in to the IGSD with the rest of your mandatory paperwork.

WPI POLICIES AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS AT OFF-CAMPUS SITES

Informal Hearing Procedure at Off-Campus Residential Program Sites

Students at off-campus residential program sites, accused of violating the WPI code of conduct or any other WPI policy as outlined in the annual Campus Planner and Resource Guide shall be accorded an informal on-site hearing before a WPI representative designated by the dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division. The following guidelines will be applicable.

(a) Students will be informed of the complaint pending and the time, date and location of the informal hearing, in writing, at least two (2) days prior to the hearing. This notice should include a full description of the incident, names of witnesses, if any, and a reference to the section(s) of the campus code allegedly violated.

(b) The informal hearing shall be conversational in nature and non-adversarial.

(c) Before the hearing, the student shall be given the opportunity to consult with an on-site advisor of their choice or a member of the WPI community.

(d) During the hearing, the WPI representative shall elaborate on the nature of the complaint and present any evidence or witnesses in support of that complaint.

(e) The accused student shall have an opportunity to respond to the complaint and present any evidence or witnesses in response to the complaint.

(f) The WPI representative will make a determination of the student's responsibility for the complaint based on the outcome of the informal hearing.

(g) If the student is found responsible, the WPI representative must contact the dean of students or her/his designee to review the student's past record, if any, before a sanction is determined. The WPI representative must then consult with the Dean of Students Office and the director of global operations in the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division to determine an appropriate sanction for the offense.

(h) All decisions shall be final and not subject to appeal on site. The decision may be appealed to the dean of Interdisciplinary Studies Division once the student has returned to the WPI campus. Appeals may be submitted in writing to the dean of the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division within five (5) days of the start of classes of the term following the off campus project experience. The appeal must be specific and contain a full description of the basis for the appeal. Grounds for an appeal must be based on one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Failure to follow the procedures outlined in the Campus Planner and Resource Guide;
- b. Inappropriate gravity of the sanction in relationship to the offense;
- c. That no reasonable person could conclude, on the basis of the evidence presented, that the accused was responsible.

The appeal will not be reviewed until after the start of the term following the off campus project experience when all parties involved have returned to the WPI campus.

(i) If the on-site WPI representative determines that continued presence at the project center by the student would constitute a danger to the safety of persons or property on the premises of the project center, a recommendation for interim suspension may be made to the vice president for student affairs or his/her designee.

Note: WPI's Academic Honesty Policy and the procedures described therein also apply to the off campus residential programs. The WPI representative must communicate with the dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division and Dean of Students Office before taking action.

WPI Housing

If you live in a WPI residence hall, it is your responsibility to notify Residential Services of your intended absence.

Mail Services

All students going off-campus must go to Central Mail to fill out the appropriate card to have their mailboxes closed and their mail forwarded. Failure to do so will result in mail staying in the student's mailbox for the entire term. All students must now be responsible for their own mailbox and mail by signing a forwarding card at Central Mail.

Youth Vote Overseas – Register to Vote in Midterm Elections of 2010

<https://yvo.overseasvotefoundation.org/overseas/home.htm> generates an official form once an overseas address is provided.

Protocol for PCs for Off-Campus Project Centers

Students who participate in the Global Perspective Program are offered the opportunity to borrow lap top personal computers from WPI. This is not an entitlement to students, but rather a privilege extended to students. It is expected that the following protocol will be followed and the proper responsibility will be assumed by the students taking advantage of this opportunity. WPI does not have an unlimited supply of laptop computers to loan to students. If student teams are unable or unwilling to comply with the dates specified by the Academic Technology Center (ATC), the ATC reserves the right to refuse to accommodate that request. One PC per project team for each site as available:

After you have turned in the completed ATC Laptop form to the IGSD, at least one member of your group (although we suggest the entire group so that everyone takes equal responsibility for the equipment) is required to go to the ATC and reserve a laptop BEFORE pick-up on the specified date.

Procedure

1. Each team will fill out an ATC Team Form (Appendix C). Kelly Donahue (from the IGSD) will send approved names to ATC. Every team member must meet all IGSD paperwork deadlines before names are sent to the ATC.
2. Person(s) responsible for PC will be required to register at the ATC and sign a statement accepting responsibility for the PC.
- 3.
4. Person(s) responsible for PC should have the tightest travel schedule. Arrangements can be made for one person to pick up the PC and another member of the team to return the PC but, BOTH people must register when the reservation is made with the ATC.
5. It is strongly recommended that everyone in the group sign the ATC's reservation form. The ATC will hold only signing parties financially responsible for damage beyond normal wear and tear and/or any fees incurred.

Reservations

1. Make your reservation early for your PC. You must go to the ATC to make your reservation with your WPI ID card. At the time of reservation you must be specific about the dates and times of pick-up and return of the equipment and about your hardware requirements. Be as specific as possible about what you will be using the PC for: (e.g. word processing, spreadsheets, data analysis, etc.) PCs are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Avoid last minute changes as they may not be able to be accommodated.
2. If two people are responsible (one for pick up, one for return) BOTH must go to the ATC to register before leaving campus. If arrangements have been made for a faculty member to return the PC, then the faculty member must send confirming email to Mary Beth Harrity (mharrity@wpi.edu) before the PC will be released.
3. Modems, ethernet cards and other miscellaneous hardware are in limited supply and must be requested at the time the reservation for the PC is made.
4. Upon request, the ATC can provide external floppy and/or zip drives that can be attached to the laptop.
5. Pick-up and return deadlines will be strictly enforced. If the laptop computer is not returned to the ATC on the agreed upon date, your group will be charged a \$50 per business day late fee.

Software

1. All PCs will be loaded with Windows, MS Office, Explorer and communications software. The ATC does not provide or load software other than this.
2. If students load their own software it must be removed prior to returning the PC to the ATC.
3. If you significantly alter the original configuration of the laptop (e.g. install a different operating system), your group will be charged a \$50 software re-installation fee.

Picking up the PC

1. You must have your WPI ID card in order to pick up the PC assigned to you.

Acceptable Use Policy Regarding Computers (WPI laptops, sponsor PC's, internet use)

At a minimum, you must adhere to the WPI Acceptable Use Policy (<http://www.WPI.EDU/Pubs/Policies/>) whether using WPI computer resources or your housing provider or sponsor's resources. Your housing provider or sponsor may have more restrictive computer and web use policies and those must be followed. It is your responsibility to determine what your housing provider or sponsor's policy is and to comply with it. Using a housing provider or sponsor's network(s) or computer(s) for recreational use (defined as non-project related use – on or off the web) is not permitted. Violators will be subject to disciplinary actions.

General Policies and Important Things to Remember

- There can be *no overnight guests* in any accommodations acquired and provided by WPI for use by the Project Center students.
- Charges for any damages to housing, WPI property on site, the property of our host institutions, or project sponsors will be charged to your WPI account. When responsibility for damages to housing cannot be assigned to an individual student, all students in the housing unit will be charged an equal share of the cost. An official hold will be placed on all records until all payment responsibilities are satisfied.
- If you are dismissed from a program for any reason, you will not receive a refund of any costs involved and will be subject to charges for any unrecoverable housing costs or program expenses advanced on your behalf.
- All policies governing acceptable behavior as printed in The Policies section of *The Campus Planner & Resource Guide* apply to participants at an off-campus program site. The authority for adjudicating alleged violations of the WPI Code of Conduct while at an off-campus program site lies with the on-site WPI representative in accordance with basic due process.
- You must always keep the resident faculty advisors informed of your whereabouts. If you plan to travel during the term, you must give your advisor a written itinerary.
- **The IGSD will notify your parents if you fail to return from a weekend excursion at the predetermined time. If you are delayed you MUST contact your resident faculty advisor to inform them that you are safe.**
- As a WPI student at an off-campus program site, you represent your institution and your country and will behave as an ambassador for both. Grounds for dismissal may also be found in behavior disruptive to the group as a whole, or offensive within the host culture: disruptive sexual behavior, or behavior deemed offensive to the host culture; or disruptive, violent, or destructive behavior in student housing.
- You may not take vacation days off from your project work, even if you have the permission of your project mentor. If you have an urgent family or academic or job related need to travel away from the project site on a project work day, consult with the faculty member in residence before making any travel plans.

Violations of any of these policies can result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal from the program.

What can you expect to pay “out of pocket” toward your IQP while off-campus?

Current WPI policy states that students are expected to contribute \$50 per person per 1/3 unit of IQP work toward any out of pocket expenses encountered. This means that each student is expected to pay \$150.00 towards the completion of the IQP before asking for reimbursement of any kind. If you have a project team of 4 students, then the total contribution before being reimbursed is \$600. If you anticipate that your expenses will exceed this expectation, then you must submit a budget for your project. The on-site faculty advisor and Center Director must approve this budget prior to submission of any expenses to the IGSD. (Commuting costs are not reimbursable.)

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AND COMPETENCIES

Passports

Who needs a passport?

A U.S. citizen needs a passport to depart or enter the United States and to depart and enter most foreign countries. U.S. Immigration requires you to prove your U.S. citizenship and identity when you reenter the United States.

If you are not a U.S citizen, contact the embassy or consulate of the country you are planning to travel to, as well as the U.S. Embassy in order to receive specific entry instructions. International students should consult with Mr. Tom Thomsen, Director of the International Students and Scholars Office, about these issues. His contact information is listed under the heading WPI Offices.

Beware of a passport that is about to expire. Certain countries will not permit you to enter and will not place a visa in your passport if the passport is valid for less 6 months. If your passport is expiring in less than the 6 months, you will need to get a new one. If you return to the United States with an expired passport, you are subject to a passport waiver fee of \$100, payable to U.S. Immigration at the port of entry.

It is your responsibility to acquire your passport. The IGSD does not administer this process for students.

How to get your passport

1. Go to Prime Color Photo located at 1094 Pleasant Street to have your passport photos taken. Show your WPI ID to get the special rate. You can also get passport photos taken at the U.S. Post Office, or other local stores such as CVS.
2. Pick up a passport application form from the U.S. Post Office, Prime Color Photo or download from: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html
3. Turn in all required documentation to the nearest federal post office with the appropriate fee.

For Immediate Release

April 2, 2002

**STATEMENT BY PHILIP T. REEKER, DEPUTY SPOKESMAN
U.S. Passports Will No Longer be Issued Abroad**

All passports, except those required for urgent travel, will be issued in the United States using the new more secure photo-digitized imaging system.

Effective April 8, 2002, American citizens residing or traveling abroad, who require issuance of a U.S. passport, will be issued the latest, state-of-the-art passport. It incorporates a digitized image with other enhanced security features. Because this technology is not available at U.S. embassies and consulates, overseas passport issuance is being transferred to the National Passport Processing Center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Travel documents in the post-September 11 world have become even more important. The new passport has many features that make it one of the most secure travel documents produced anywhere in the world. Getting these more secure passports into circulation will help minimize the misuse of American passports by criminals, terrorists, and others.

This new procedure will increase processing time at U.S. embassies and consulates, but the Department is committed to ensuring that American citizens receive secure documents in a timely manner. American citizens overseas are encouraged to apply early for renewal of expiring passports.

U.S. embassies and consulates will continue to issue passports that are needed for urgent travel. However, such passports will be limited in validity, and cannot be extended. Bearers will be required to exchange, at no additional cost, their limited-validity passport for a full-validity digitized passport upon completion of their urgent travel.

Information on applying for a U.S. passport, passport application forms and requirements, and other travel-related information can be accessed through the Department of State's web site at: <http://travel.state.gov>.

Visas

A visa is an endorsement or stamp placed in your passport by a foreign government that permits you to visit that country for a specified purpose and a limited time. You should obtain all necessary visas before you leave the United States, because you will not be able to obtain visas for some countries once you have departed. Apply directly to the embassy or nearest consulate of each country you plan to visit. Passport agencies *cannot* help you obtain visas.

If you are doing your project in Thailand or Namibia, your faculty advisors and the IGSD will help you obtain your non-immigrant visas. In order to take advantage of this, you must be prepared to give the IGSD your passport, a completed visa application (available in the IGSD office) and a passport picture, by the date that your advisors determine. The IGSD will send all documentation with one cover letter to the appropriate embassy to expedite the visa process for your group. The single entry visa fee of has been built into your housing charge.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, it is your responsibility to determine what other documentation you will need to file to obtain your visa.

How to Take Money

You should take a sufficient amount of living/spending money with you. The IGSD recommends the following modes of carrying money.

Travelers Checks

Rather than carrying large amounts of cash, it is always safer to take most of your money in travelers' checks. Remember to record the serial number, denomination, and the date and location of the issuing bank or agency. Keep this information in a safe and separate place. In case your checks are lost or stolen, you can get replacements quickly with this information.

Credit Cards

Some credit cards can be used worldwide, even for cash advances. However, be sure to monitor your charges carefully, so as not to exceed your limit -- do not forget to account for the exchange rate! Leave all unnecessary cards at home. Record the numbers and expiration dates for the cards you take in a separate place. Always report the loss or theft of your credit cards immediately to the issuing companies and notify the local police.

ATM info:

Making withdrawals from an ATM is generally considered to be the easiest and least expensive way of accessing money while abroad. The biggest advantage is that regardless of the size of your withdrawal, you will receive the wholesale exchange rate which banks use. ATM networks like the Global ATM Alliance, Cirrus and PLUS are used widely around the globe, although you should be sure to verify that your network operates in the country to which you're going. The following websites provide links to ATM locator services for each network:

<http://www.mastercard.com/us/personal/en/cardholderservices/atmlocations/index.html>

<http://visa.via.infonow.net/locator/global/jsp/SearchPage.jsp>

http://www.scotiabank.com/cda/content/0,1608,CID8040_LIDen,00.html

Before you leave, you should contact your bank to let them know where you will be and for how long. Many banks view activity such as withdrawals in another country as an alert to possible fraudulent activity on your account. Telling them ahead of time, may prevent your accounts from being frozen -- a massive inconvenience when you're abroad.

Things to consider when using ATMS abroad include the following:

1. Be sure you know the numeric equivalent of your PIN if it contains letters as well as numbers. ATMs abroad may only provide numbers.
2. Some ATMs (especially in Europe) do not accept PINs longer than 4 numbers. You may wish to contact your bank to change your PIN if it is longer than four digits.

There are of course fees associated with using most ATMs, and some of these can be significantly higher than the fees you are used to paying the U.S. You should check with your bank (be sure to ask if they assess extra fees for international ATM use), and plan for these extra expenses in your budget.

Finally, be sure to keep your ATM card and your money in a safe place. When withdrawing cash from an ATM be sure to do so in a well lighted, safe location so that you decrease your profile as a potential target for theft.

Source: www.independenttraveler.com

Foreign Currency

Before departing, it is recommended that you purchase some foreign currency to use for buses, taxis, food, phones or tips when you first arrive. You can purchase several currencies at the airport, but be advised that they only carry major currencies and that exchange windows may be closed depending upon your time of departure. You may be able to purchase foreign currency at one of your local banks. Do not change all of the money you plan to take while still in the U.S. The exchange rate is always better in the host country.

Section 2 - Health & Safety

Safety

When traveling to an off-campus project site, there are a number of precautions you should follow in order to travel safely:

- Do not leave your bags or belongings unattended at any time. Security in airports and train stations are instructed to remove or destroy any unattended baggage. Do not agree to carry or look after packages or suitcases for individuals you do not know well. If someone approaches you to make such a request, tell security immediately. Make sure that no one puts anything in your luggage without your knowledge. Take all questions from airport personnel seriously and do not make jokes in response to security questions.
- Safeguard your passport! Your passport is the most valuable document you will carry abroad. It is your best form of identification and confirms your citizenship, you must guard it carefully. Do not lend it to anyone or use it as collateral for a loan of any sort. You will need it when you check into hotels, embassies or consulates, or when cashing travelers checks. Some countries require that you carry it with you at all times as a means of identification. When you carry your passport, hide it securely on your person. Do not leave it in a handbag, book-bag, backpack or in an exposed pocket.
- Never keep all of your documents and money in one place or suitcase. You should make a list of all of your important numbers - your passport information as well as credit cards, travelers' checks and airline ticket numbers. Leave a copy at home, and carry a copy with you, separate from your valuables.
- **Always keep the resident faculty advisors informed of your whereabouts. If you plan to travel during the term, you must give your advisor an itinerary in writing. All students need to be accounted for every weekend whether you are traveling or not, see Appendix D.**
- **The IGSD will notify the parents of students who fail to return from a weekend excursion at the predetermined time. If you are delayed you MUST contact your resident faculty advisor to inform them that you are safe.**
- Have sufficient funds or a credit card on hand to purchase emergency items such as train or airline tickets.
- Always be careful about traveling alone.
- **All WPI students who are participating in the Venice B08 Project Program are expected to behave in a manner so as to not put themselves at risk.**
- **All students have an obligation to look out for each other and themselves. This means that if one student observes another engaging in risky behavior, that student should report the behavior to either of the faculty advisors. The faculty advisor should then address the issue with the student at risk. Repeated behavior identified as risky can result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal from the program.**
- Be as inconspicuous in dress and demeanor as possible. If the host country nationals do not wear baseball caps and sneakers, you will stand out as a foreigner if you do.
- Do not flash money or documents in public places. Be discreet in displaying your passport.

AVOIDING TRAVEL RISKS

Prepared By:
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J.H. Albert International Insurance Advisors, Inc.
Two Chestnut Place
72 River Park
Needham Heights, MA 02494-2631

Planning and Preparing:

Do not display provocative luggage tags, overly patriotic displays or any other indications that you are from the United States;

Do not pack anything that could be construed as a weapon, including knives, nail files, razors or other sharp instruments;

Arrive at the airport at least three hours in advance of your flight.

Air and Ground Travel:

Dress casual and look like a traveler; do not dress like a “flamboyant” US patriot;

Spend little time in foreign airports or public transportation areas that carry a high risk of or invite terrorist attacks;

Avoid air, rail and local ground carriers from countries where terrorist groups are based or have grievances;

Avoid flights or trains with intermediate stops, especially stops in hostile countries, which would allow terrorists to board;

In the Country;

Avoid countries, areas of countries and regions, even for leisure travel on weekends, that are hostile or likely to be hostile to Americans;

Study and understand the customs and political environment of the country(s) you are visiting;

Be prudent in your choice of eating and drinking establishments;

Avoid political discussions, confrontation and arguments;

Do not reveal personal information to casual acquaintances;

Beware of overly friendly or flirtatious persons;

Always travel in groups of two or more people;

Should you find yourself present during a coup, uprising or riot, remain in a safe harbor, such as your hotel or residence, that is not apt to be a military target;

Carry the phone number and address of the American Embassy and local police – and a cell phone if possible;

Return to your apartment or living quarters at a reasonable, early hour every night.

Safety Tips from the U.S. Department of State

Crime in many parts of the world seems to be increasing.

Visitors should take common sense precautions:

- Safety begins when you pack. Leave expensive jewelry behind. Dress conservatively; a flashy wardrobe or one that is too casual can mark you as a tourist. Use travelers' checks, not cash. Leave photocopies of your passport personal information page and your airline tickets with someone at home and carry an extra set with you.
- Use a money belt or a concealed money pouch for passports, cash and other valuables.
- In a car, keep doors locked, windows rolled up and valuables out of sight. A common trick is for a thief to reach through a car window and grab a watch from a persons' wrist or a purse or package from the seat while you are driving slowly or stopped in traffic.
- When you leave your car, try to find a guarded parking lot. Lock the car and keep valuables out of sight.
- When walking, avoid marginal areas of cities, dark alleys and crowds. Do not stop if you are approached on the street by strangers, including street vendors and beggars. Be aware that women and small children, as well as men, can be pickpockets or purse-snatchers. Keep your billfold in an inner front pocket, carry your purse tucked securely under your arm, and wear the shoulder-strap of your camera or bag across your chest. To guard against thieves on motorcycles, walk away from the curb, carrying your purse away from the street.
- Use official taxi stands rather than cruising taxis. Illegal taxis can be decoys for robbers.
- Whenever possible, do not travel alone. If you travel in isolated areas, go with a group or a reputable guide.
- Avoid travel at night.
- Money exchangers on the street pass off counterfeit U.S. dollars and local currency. Credit card fraud is growing.
- Do not take valuables to the mountains or on excursions.

Any U.S. citizen who is criminally assaulted should report the incident to the local police and to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

The U.S. department of State has produced a website specifically for students going abroad. This site provides student specific travel tips and advice, and we strongly encourage you to visit it: www.studentsabroad.state.gov.

Drugs and the Legal System

When you are in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws. Learn about local laws and regulations, preferably before you arrive on site, and obey them. Deal only with authorized outlets when exchanging money or buying items such as airline tickets and travelers checks. Adhere strictly to the local laws because the penalties you risk are severe.

About 3,000 Americans are arrested overseas each year. Of these, approximately one-third are held on drug-related charges. Despite repeated warnings, drug arrests and convictions are still a common occurrence. Many countries have stiff penalties for drug violations and strictly enforce drug laws. You are subject to foreign, not U.S. laws while overseas, and you will find, if arrested, that:

- because you are subject to local laws abroad, there is very little that a U.S. consul can do for you if you encounter legal difficulties
- few countries provide jury trial
- most countries do not accept bail
- prisons may lack even minimal comforts: bed, toilet, wash basin
- officials may not speak English
- nutrition is often inadequate
- physical abuse, confiscation of personal property and inhumane treatment are possible

In other words, it is not worth imprisonment or extradition to break local laws. Be mature. Remember that laws are established for reasons (and you don't need to agree with those reasons), and that you are a guest, and should behave as such.

WPI Code of Conduct

As articulated in the Drug and Alcohol Policy in the WPI Code of Conduct, students may not possess, use, or distribute illicit drugs or possess drug related paraphernalia. If there are any complaints or evidence of illicit drug use, your Faculty Advisor(s) and the Director of Global Operations in the IGSD will initiate and follow the steps outlined in the "Informal Hearing Procedure at Off-Campus Residential Program Sites" to fairly investigate and adjudicate the matter. Drug policy violations are taken very seriously and could result in sanctions up to and including dismissal from the program.

Health Issues: HIV and AIDS information

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a severe, often life-threatening, illness caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The incubation period for AIDS is very long and variable, ranging from a few months to many years. Some individuals infected with HIV have remained asymptomatic for more than a decade. Currently, there is no vaccine to protect against infection with HIV. Although there is no cure for AIDS, treatments for HIV infection and prophylaxis for many opportunistic diseases that characterize AIDS are available.

The universal precaution to prevent infection of either AIDS and/or HIV is to assume that everyone you meet has these diseases. While this may seem extreme, there is no way to judge from looking at someone whether or not they have been exposed to these illnesses or if, in fact, they are infected.

HIV infection and AIDS have been reported worldwide. The number of persons infected with HIV is estimated by WHO to be approaching the range of 18 million worldwide. Because HIV infection and AIDS are globally distributed, the risk to international travelers is determined less by their geographic destination than by their sexual and drug using behaviors.

Transmission and Prevention Information

The global epidemic of HIV infection and AIDS has raised several issues regarding HIV infection and international travel. The first is the need of information for international travelers regarding HIV transmission and how HIV infection can be prevented.

HIV infection is preventable. HIV is transmitted through sexual intercourse, needle or syringe sharing, by medical use of blood or blood components, and perinatally from an infected woman to her baby. HIV is not transmitted through casual contact; air, food, or water routes; contact with inanimate objects; or through mosquitoes or other arthropod vectors. The use of any public conveyance (e.g., airplane, automobile, boat, bus, train) by persons with AIDS or HIV infection does not pose a risk of infection for the crew or other passengers.

Increased risk for contracting AIDS and HIV

Travelers are at risk if they:

- have sexual intercourse (heterosexual or homosexual) with an infected person;
- use or allow the use of contaminated, unsterilized syringes or needles for any injections or other skin-piercing procedures including acupuncture, use of illicit drugs, steroid or vitamin injections, medical/dental procedures, **ear or body piercing, or tattooing**;
- use infected blood, blood components, or clotting factor concentrates. HIV infection by this route is a rare occurrence in those countries or cities where donated blood/plasma is screened for HIV antibody.

People should avoid sexual encounters with a person who is infected with HIV or whose HIV infection status is unknown. This includes avoiding sexual activity with intravenous drug users and persons with multiple sexual partners, such as male or female prostitutes. Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, prevent transmission of HIV. Persons who engage in vaginal, anal, or oral-genital intercourse with anyone who is infected with HIV or whose infection status is unknown should use a condom.

For the information made available by the Center for Disease Control, please go to the following web address

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh4-HIVAIDS.aspx>

WPI Offices

Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division
Project Center, 2nd Floor
T 508-831-5547
F 508-831-5485

- Prof. Rick Vaz, Dean
x 5344, vaz@wpi.edu
- Natalie A. Mello
Director of Global Operations
x 5852, nmello@wpi.edu

Academic Advising & Disability Services
Daniels Hall
T 508-831-5381
F 508-831-5486

- Dale Snyder, Director
X5281, dsnyder@wpi.edu

Accounting Office
Boynton Hall, 2nd Floor
T 508-831-5754
F 508-831-5064

- Constance LaBounty
Accounting Clerk
x 5203, labounty@wpi.edu

Central Mailing Services
Campus Center, 1st Floor
T 508-831-5523
F 508-831-5753

- Celia McLaren, Supervisor
x 5683, cmclaren@wpi.edu

Financial Aid
Boynton Hall, Lower Level
T 508-831-5469
F 508-831-5039

- Monica Blondin, Director
x 5469, mmlucey@wpi.edu

International Students and Scholars Office
28 Trowbridge Road
T 508-831-6030
F 508-831-6032

- Mr. Tom Thomsen, Director
x6030, hartvig@wpi.edu

Academic Technology Center
Fuller Labs, 1st Floor
T 508-831-5220
F 508-831-5881

- Mary Beth Harrity, Director
X5223, mharrity@wpi.edu

Registrar's Office
Boynton Hall, 1st Floor
T 508-831-5211
F 508-831-5931

- Heather Jackson
Registrar
x 5211, hjackson@wpi.edu
- Marjorie Roncone
x 5457, mroncone@wpi.edu

Residential Services
Ellsworth Residence, Institute Road
T 508-831-5175
F 508-831-5870

- Naomi Carton, Director
x 5175, letendre@wpi.edu

Student Development and Counseling Center
157 West Street
T 508-831-5540
F 508-831-5139

- Charles Morse, Director
x 5540, cmorse@wpi.edu

Student Life Office
Campus Center, Main Level
T 508-831-5520
F 508-831-5581

- Philip Clay, Dean of Students
X 5507, pclay@wpi.edu

Internet Addresses

The following are web addresses that you may find helpful, particularly before you leave for your site.

Health & Safety Sites

Center for Disease Control (CDC)
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>

American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH)
<http://www.astmh.org>

Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE)
<http://www.ciee.org>

Travel Safe: AIDS and International Travel
http://www.ciee.org/health_safety/health/AIDS_intl_travel.aspx

Lonely Planet
http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services/flights/single_return.cfm

The Travel Clinic
<http://www.drwisetravel.com/index.html>

Travel Health Online
<https://www.tripprep.com/scripts/main/default.asp>

U.S. State Department
<http://travel.state.gov>

Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT)
<http://www.asirt.org/>

StudyAbroad.com Handbook
<http://www.studentsabroad.com/contents.asp>

NAFSA: Association of International Educators
<http://www.nafsa.org/>

Travel Sites

U.S. State Department
http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/index.html

Travel Warnings and Consular Information Sheets
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html

Links to U.S. Embassies and Consulates Worldwide
http://travel.state.gov/visa/questions/questions_1253.html

Services and Information for American Citizens Abroad
<http://travel.state.gov/travel/abroad.html>

Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad
http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/drugs/drugs_1237.html

Women's Sites

Journeywoman
<http://www.journeywoman.com>

Disability Sites

Access-Able
<http://www.access-able.com/tips/>

Air Travel Tips and Resources
<http://www.miusa>

Advice from the CDC: General Travel Precautions

The following web address should be accessed for health information specific to where you will be traveling: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>. We strongly encourage all students to review these guidelines, advice and suggestions carefully. If vaccines are recommended then you should consult with your own personal health care professional (who has knowledge of your medical history) to determine what the best course of action is for you. The IGSD cannot provide medical advice. Any opinions expressed by students, advisors, or center directors with regard to medical issues are only opinions and should not be taken as authoritative.

The preventive measures you need to take while traveling depend on the areas you visit and the length of time you stay. All travelers should take the following precautions, no matter the destination:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Because motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury among travelers, walk and drive defensively.
- Avoid travel at night if possible and always use seat belts.
- Always use latex condoms to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Don't eat or drink dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Never eat undercooked ground beef and poultry, raw eggs, and un-pasteurized dairy products. Raw shellfish is particularly dangerous to persons who have liver disease or compromised immune systems.
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, make water safer by BOTH filtering through an "absolute 1-micron or less" filter AND adding iodine tablets to the filtered water. "Absolute 1-micron filters" are found in camping/outdoor supply stores.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.
- If you visit an area where there is risk for malaria, take your malaria prevention medication before, during, and after travel, as directed. (See your doctor for a prescription.)
- Protect yourself from insects by remaining in well-screened areas, using repellents (applied sparingly at 4-hour intervals), and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants from dusk through dawn.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.

To Avoid Getting Sick

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Don't drink beverages with ice.
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague).
- Don't swim in fresh water. Salt water is usually safer.

What You Need To Bring with You

- Long-sleeved shirt and long pants to wear while outside whenever possible, to prevent illnesses carried by insects (e.g., malaria, dengue, filariasis, and Japanese encephalitis).
- Insect repellent containing DEET (diethylmethylnoluamide), in 30%–35% strength for adults and 6%–10% for children.
- Over-the-counter antidiarrheal medicine to take if you have diarrhea.
- Iodine tablets and water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See Do's above for more detailed information about water filters.
- Sunblock, sunglasses, hat.
- Prescription medications: make sure you have enough to last during your trip, as well as a copy of the prescription(s).

After You Return Home

- If you have visited an area where there is risk for malaria, continue taking your malaria medication weekly for 4 weeks after you leave the area.
- If you become ill after travel—even as long as a year after your trip—tell your doctor the areas you have visited.

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationItaly.aspx>

Section 3 – Specific Site Information for Venice Project Center

Paperwork Deadline

All paperwork for Venice B10 must be in the IGSD office **by Wednesday, October 6, 2010, by 3:00 p.m.**

Illness

In case of illness, please notify the advisors immediately. In case of the flu or the like, over-the-counter medicine can be purchased at local pharmacies. VPC staff can help procure the necessary pharmaceuticals. In case a prescription is needed, you will have to be visited by a doctor who will prescribe the medicines, which will also be purchased at a pharmacy.

Guardia Medica

If you need to be visited by a doctor during non-business hours (8pm-8am) or on weekends (2pm on Friday to 8am on Monday), there is always a doctor on duty called the *guardia medica*. To reach the doctor, call (041) 529-4060. Usually the *Guardia Medica* will come to your apartment for a house call.

Pharmacies

In Italy, pharmacies are regulated in such a way to be evenly distributed in the city. No matter where you live, there will be a pharmacy nearby. Hours are posted outside each pharmacy. In general, pharmacies are open from 8:00 am to 7:30 pm on weekdays.

Farmacia di Turno

Every night and every weekend, there are several *Farmacia di turno* whose turn it is to stay open for emergencies from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. and all day and night on weekends. Find the current *Farmacia di Turno* nearest you at http://www.farmavenezia.it/pubblica/farmacie_di_turno/12_venezia.htm. You can also find out which pharmacy is open by going to the nearest one and looking at the sign posted outside that will say "FARMACIE di TURNO:" followed by the name and address of the those whose turn it is to be open. Schedules can also be found in the local daily newspapers.

Medical Information

Hospitals

Venice has two main hospitals, the *Ospedale Civile* in Venice and *Ospedale al Mare* on the Lido. The former is the more important of the two. Each hospital has an emergency room, *Pronto Soccorso*. If you need emergency care and can move on your own, make your way to the Emergency Room at the nearest hospital in Venice or on the Lido.

Serious Emergencies

For major emergencies, call for an ambulance and be ready to provide your address. Knock on neighbors' doors and get immediate attention from anyone around who can see the situation and help you get help in Italian. Call the advisors at the first opportunity. The Medical Emergency number is 118, but you may also dial 113 for any sort of emergency. In case of Fire dial 115.

Psychologist:

Dr. Giuliana Grando - Dorsoduro 3650 - Venice - tel 041723164 - fax 0415229548 (speaks English).

Dentist:

Dr. Alvise Lucerna - Cannaregio 4001/B- Venice - tel 041 5221717 (near VPC - speaks "some" english)

Arrival & Departure Dates

Arrival in Venice: Sunday, October 24 2010

Everyone is expected to arrive in Venice on October 24, between 9am and 5pm.

Do not plan to arrive earlier or later than October 24th.

Departure from Venice: Saturday, December 18, 2010

Everyone is expected to leave Venice on December 19th, at any time.

Do not plan to leave earlier or later than December 18th.

Calling Home

Calling home from a foreign country can be a difficult and frustrating experience. Phones may not be familiar and the costs of calling overseas with local currency may be very high. For these reasons, it is highly recommended that you carry some sort of calling card.

To keep your calls to the US cheaper, you should purchase a telephone card (AT&T, MCI, Sprint, etc.) that you can use to call the US from Italy. All you really need is the card number, not the card itself, if you prefer to leave it in a safe place in the US. Card calls will cost nothing in Italy and the charges will show up on your phone bill in the US.

Once in Italy, you will be able to purchase very inexpensive calling cards at the local Tobacconist stores, which may turn out to be the least expensive option of all, except for skype (see below) provided you have free internet.

Nowadays, you can also use Internet Phone services like Skype (<http://www.skype.com/>) to call for free over an internet connection.

Mail

Venice Project Center Mailing Address
C/O Forma Urbis
P.O. Box 589
Venice, 30100
Italy

Personal mail or packages should not be sent to the above address. Project related mail or packages should also not be sent there unless cleared in advance with Prof. Carrera.

You can use your apartment's address for personal mail. Apartment addresses are listed later in this handbook. Make sure your name is posted by the mailbox once you arrive in Venice. Airmail takes about 10 days to and from the States. Tell your folks and friends not to send you mail in Venice after the end of November.

Stamps (*francobolli* in Italian) can be purchased at post offices or at the tobacconist shops (as long as you know what stamps you need). The main post office in Venice is in Campo S. Bartolomeo, on the San Marco side of the Rialto Bridge, not far from the VPC office. There are smaller Post Offices throughout the city.

Living Arrangements

Student Apartments – To be determined

Venice Project Center office

NAME	MAILING ADDRESS	TEL	FAX	NOTES
Venice Project Center	P.O. Box 589 VENEZIA - 30100	041-523-3209 (ans. machine)	041-241-9344	See Directions on next page

Apartment Directions

The following pages contain complete information about each apartment.

The Venice Project Center

ADDRESS

San polo 1932/A
30125 Venezia
Fondamenta de le Tette

MAILING ADDRESS

c/o Forma Urbis S.a.s. P.O. Box 590
VENICE, 30100 – ITALY

TELEPHONE:

(011)(39) 041 523-3209

FAX:

(011)(39) 041 241-9344

VPC STAFF:

Alberto Gallo (albixg@gmail.com)

Andrea Tassinari (thebudger@gmail.com)

STAFF CELL #'s:

Alberto Gallo = +39 335-623-9391

Andrea Tassinari = +39 349-744-8105

HOW TO GET THERE (the most common way):

Take Boat Line 1 to CA' D'ORO boat stop. Take a right at the end of the street and walk along the STRADA NUOVA (very wide street). Take the last narrow street before the square (Campo Ss. Apostoli). The street is called "Calle Dragan", but you may miss the sign. The street you want is between a restaurant (*Trattoria da Gianni*) and a sporting goods store (*Andreatta*). If you reach the square (*Campo Ss. Apostoli*), you've gone too far. Follow path on map (Figure 1). The office is half-way down the short street on the right-hand side. Look for number 4400. Knock on the door.

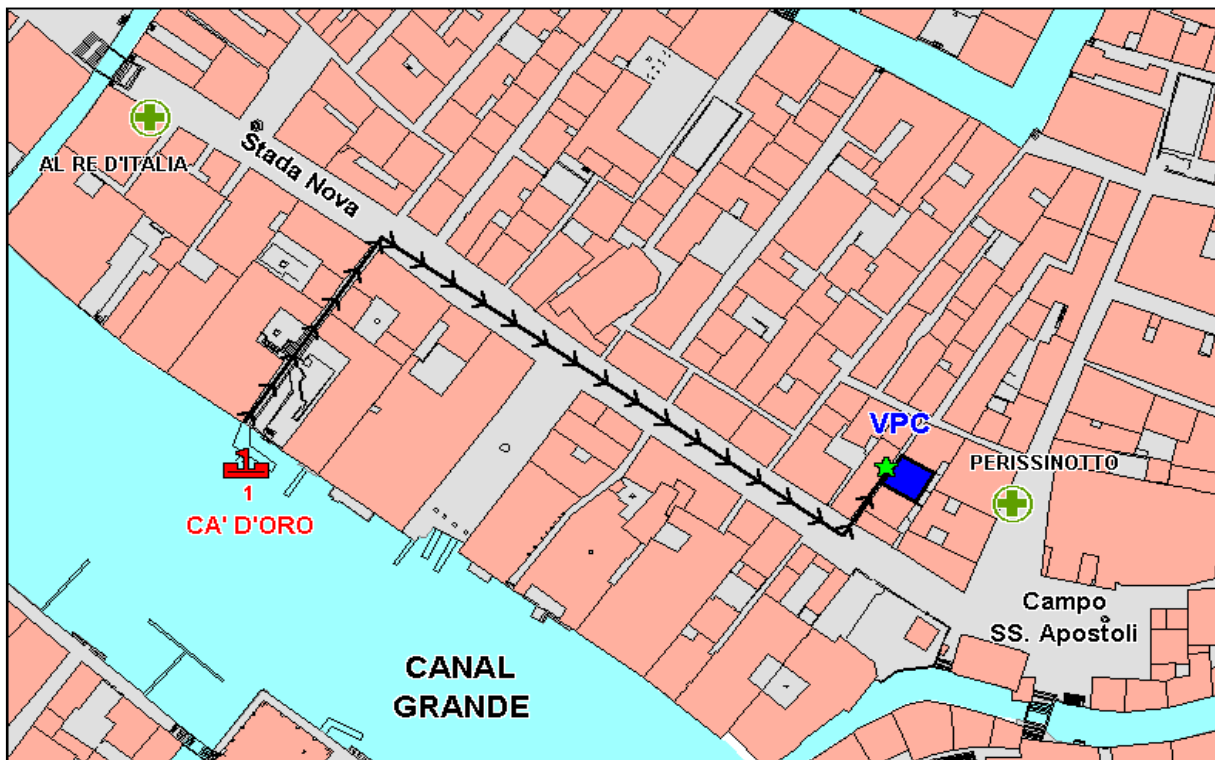


Figure 1. Directions to the Venice Project Center from Ca'd'Oro boat stop.

HOW TO GET to VPC from FONDAMENTE NUOVE boat stop:

Take Boat Line 41, 42, 51, 52 or ALILAGUNA BLUE to Fondamente Nuove boat stop. Follow path on map below (Figure 2). The route shown is the one with fewest bridges, in case you have luggage. There are easier paths with more bridges...

NOTES

The office will be on the left, if you follow the arrows. Look for number 4400 on top of the door.

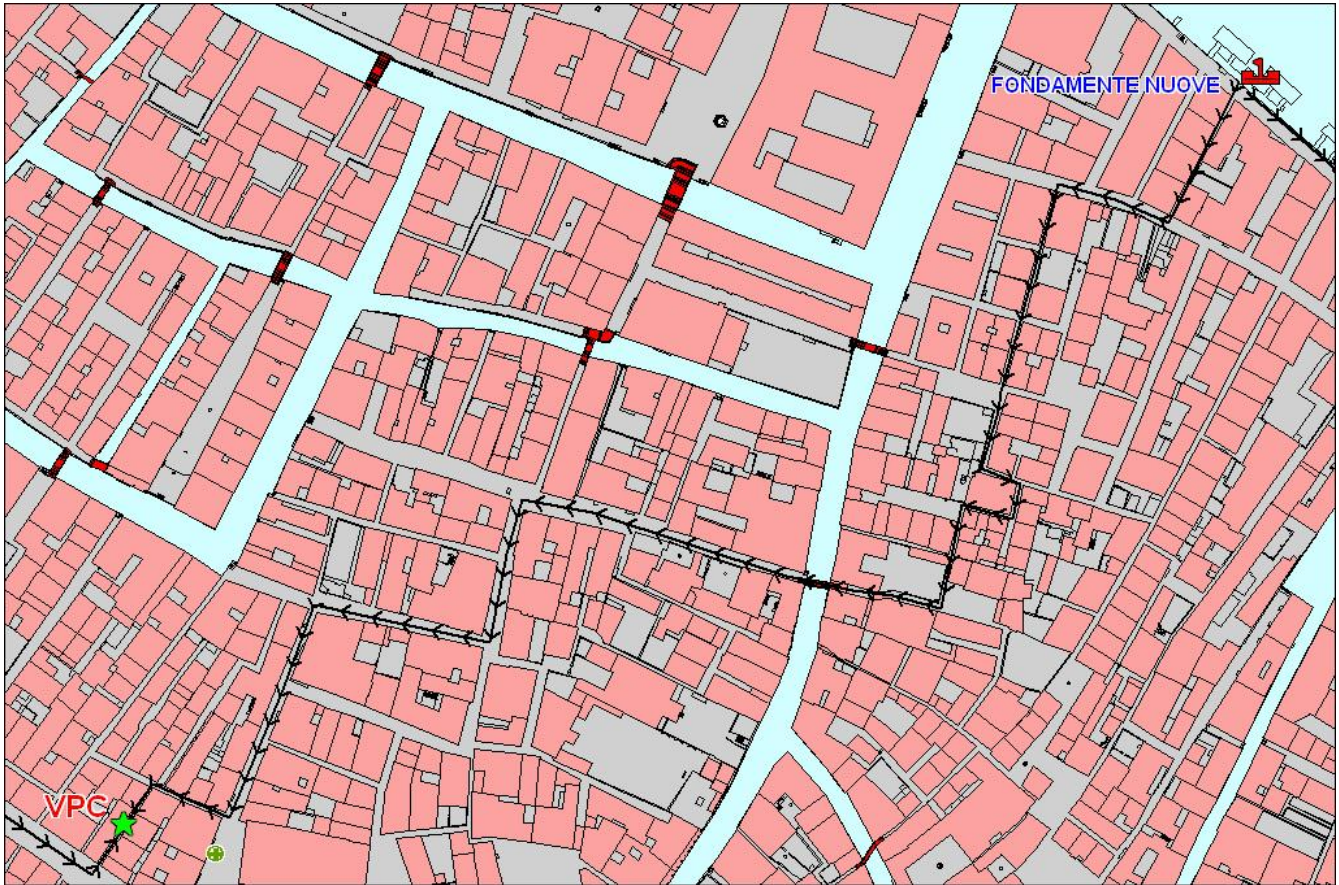


Figure 2. Directions to the Venice Project Center from Fondamente Nuove.

APARTMENTS MAP

The names on the map correspond to those listed in the tables in the following pages.



Figure 1: Apartments B 2009

APARTMENTS ASSIGNMENTS

APARTMENT	TEL	STUDENTS
CA' CORTE	+39 348-526-7071	
L'ARCO	+39 348-334-3864	
	+39 348-334-3865	
GHETTO	+39 348-523-0583	
MORI	+39 348-526-8621	

APARTMENTS DETAILS

The names on the map above correspond to those listed in the table below (Name).

NAME	BEDS	MAILING ADDRESS	TEL	NOTES
CA' CORTE	6	Cannaregio 6248 Corte Cortese VENICE, ITALY 30121	+39 348-526-7071	Building with 3 mini apartments at different floors. Each apartment has 2 single bedrooms, 1 bathroom, living-room with kitchen, washer and TV.
L'ARCO	13	Castello 3520 Calle de l'Arco VENICE, ITALY 30124	+39 348-334-3864 (suites 4, 5 and 6) +39 348-334-3865 (suites 1 and 2)	Historical palace with a wonderful open-air entrance hall, an elegant staircase, a very nice terrace and 5 suites. Three suites have 2 single bedrooms each. One studio has 4 single bedrooms and one has 3 single bedrooms. 1 bathroom, 1 big living-room with a stove for each suite. Washer machine at ground floor.
GHETTO	4	Cannaregio 1135 Gheto Novo VENICE, ITALY 30121	+39 348-523-0583	Second floor, 1 bedroom with a king-size bed, 1 bedroom with 2 single beds, 1 bathroom, a living-room with large sofa-bed, kitchen, washer, and TV.
CA' MORI	4	Cannaregio 3527 VENICE, ITALY 30121	+39 348-526-8621	Building with 2 apartments at the same floor (2). Each apartment has one bedroom with 2 single beds, 1 bathroom, living room with kitchen, washer and TV.

VENICE PROJECT CENTER OFFICE

NAME	MAILING ADDRESS	TEL	FAX	NOTES
Venice Project Center	P.O. Box 590 VENEZIA - 30100	041-523-3209 (ans. machine)	041-241-9344	See directions

APARTMENT DIRECTIONS

The following pages contain complete information about each apartment.

1. CA' CORTE

MAILING ADDRESS

Cannaregio 6248
Corte Cortese
30121 - VENEZIA
Tel.: +39 348-526-7071

STUDENTS (6):

DESCRIPTION

Building with 3 mini apartments at different floors. Each apartment has 2 single bedrooms, 1 bathroom, living-room with kitchen, washer and TV.

HOW TO GET THERE:

Take Boat Line 41 or 42 to the Fondamente Nuove boat stop. Take the Fondamente Nove street, and cross the Panada bridge (*Ponte Panada*). After 40 meters turn on right at the first street (*Ramo Calle Larga*). At the end of the street, turn left and immediately turn right onto *Calle del Squero*. Go straight on for 100 meters and then turn on right in *Corte Cortese*. In front of *Corte Cortese*, you will see a black iron door. At the middle of this little street, you will find your apartment.



Figura 2: Ca' Corte Apartment Directions

2. L'ARCO

MAILING ADDRESS

Castello 3520
Calle de l'Arco
Venice, ITALY 30124
Tel.: +39 348-334-3864 (suites 4, 5 and 6)
+39 348-334-3865 (suites 1 and 2)

STUDENTS (13):

DESCRIPTION:

Historical palace with a wonderful open-air entrance hall, an elegant staircase, a very nice terrace and 5 suites. Washer machine at ground floor.

SUITE	FLOOR	BEDS	NOTES
Suite 6	1	2	1 bedroom with two single beds, 1 bathroom, kitchen and TV
Suite 5	1	2	1 bedroom with two single beds (1 bigger) with kitchen, 1 bathroom and TV
Suite 4	1	2	1 bedroom with two single beds, 1 bathroom, kitchen and TV
Suite 1	2	3	1 bedroom with three single beds, 1 bathroom, big living room with kitchen and fireplace
Suite 2	2	4	1 bedroom with three single beds (1 bigger), 1 bedroom with 1 single bed, 1 bathroom, big living room with kitchen

EXAMPLE PICTURES:



HOW TO GET THERE:

Take Boat Line 1, 42, 52 or 82 to the San Zaccaria boat stop. Following *Riva degli Schiavoni*, cross 3 bridges. After the third bridge straight on for 60 meters and turn on the left at the first street (*Calle del Dose*). You will arrive in *Campo de la Bragora*. Cross the Campo diagonally and turn left onto *Salizada Sant'Antonin*. Before the left turn, between a bakery shop and a jewelry store, turn right onto *Calle dell'Arco*. Go straight on the street for 50 meters and you will arrive at the main entrance of your building.

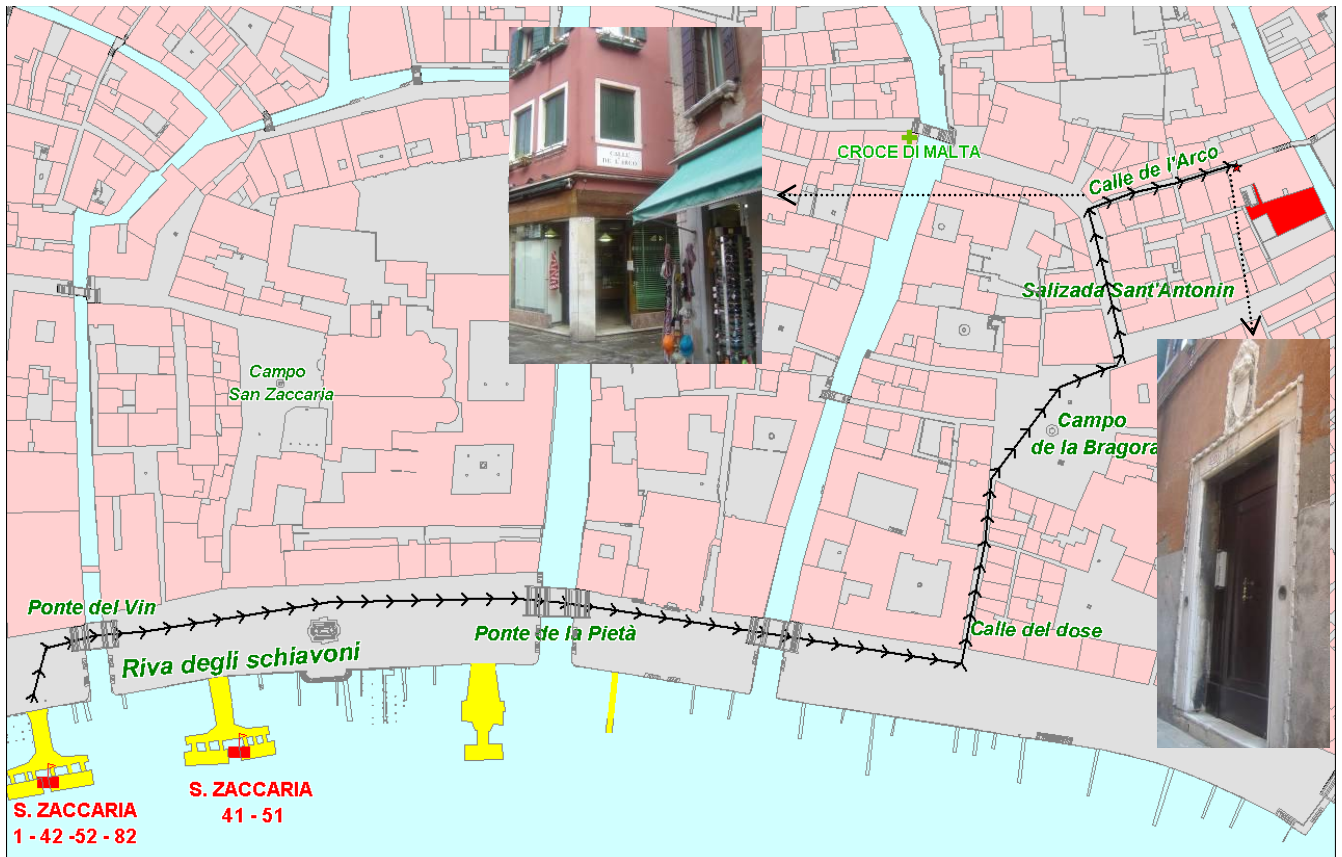


Figure 3: Arco Apartment Directions

3. GHETTO

MAILING ADDRESS

Cannaregio 1135
Gheto Novo
VENICE, ITALY 30121
Tel. +39 348-523-0583

STUDENTS (4):

DESCRIPTION:

Second floor, 1 bedroom with a king-size bed, 1 bedroom with 2 single beds, 1 bathroom, a living-room with large sofa-bed, kitchen, washer, and TV.

HOW TO GET THERE:

Take Boat Line 51 or 52 to **GUGLIE-GHETTO**. Head left and then immediately right at the entrance to the historical Ghetto of Venice. Walk along the calle for 50m and you will find the entrance of the building. It is on the left, at the door with number 1135.



Figure 4: Ghetto Apartment Directions.

Keys

You will each have a set of keys to your apartment. The keys are marked and if anyone does NOT return his/her set, the cost of lock replacement will be charged to you. DON'T LOSE THE KEYS!

Police Declaration

In Italy, all temporary renters of apartments are supposed to be reported to the police. However, since these procedures are so cumbersome, we will put you through the ordeal only if necessary. Otherwise, all of you would have to spend several days in line at the police station in Marghera (on the mainland) in order to get an appointment which may very well be scheduled for the month of January, when you'll be already gone. What we propose to do instead is be ready to do this just when needed. The only time this may be needed is if you get in trouble with the Police, which we hope won't happen.

Apartment Problems

All students should inspect their apartments right away. All apartment problems should be reported to Barbara Carrera immediately at 335-530-9271 or (041) 520-1834.

Damages and other Charges

Any damage, excessive utility charges or extra cleaning bills will be charged to you directly by the WPI accounting office. Your grades will be withheld until you have cleared any outstanding charges. The issue of damages will be resolved in a group meeting BEFORE departure. In case of irresolvable differences of opinion, ALL apartment members will be liable for the unresolved damages or bills.

Telephone

If you have a GSM cell phone (that uses a SIM card), bring it to Venice – all students will be issued with a local Italian SIM card that they can recharge with euros to make local and international calls. If you do not have a GSM phone, you can buy one for around 40 euros in Venice. All calls, even local ones, incur a charge. When your card has no more money on it, you can buy "recharge cards" at Tobacconist shops.

We will also issue a cell phone that must be kept on in each apartment at all times, and you can use this phone to make calls (if you recharge the card with the amount you use).

REMEMBER: Local calls are charged as well!

Local Calls

ALL calls within Italy MUST use the area code, EVEN IF LOCAL. So every call to a Venice number, even from within Venice must be prefixed with (041).

All apartment occupants will be charged for an equal fraction of the phone calls that cannot be accounted for.

Public Telephones

A local telephone call in Italy costs about 10 Euro cents. Most phones no longer accept change, but only accept "telephone cards" which can be purchased at the newsstands or at tobacconist shops. When calling the US with an AT&T card, you need to insert the appropriate number of Euros before you can dial the appropriate AT&T (or MCI, Sprint, etc.) number.

Cellular Telephones

Prof. Carrera, Alberto Gallo and Andrea Tassinari are equipped with cellular phones through which they can be reached at any time, if nobody is in the VPC office. Calls to cellular phones cost a little more than land-line calls. You MUST dial the prefix (usually 335) for these calls.

Answering Machines

The VPC has an answering machine on which you are invited to leave a message, in case you cannot get in touch with anyone directly.

Email

You can use email to communicate with Prof. Carrera and Prof. Gibson, as well as staff in the VPC office. Some apartments may be equipped with DSL service (don't count on it though!), and we will also issue cell phone modem (PCI) cards to each apartment. Once again, use of the modem/DSL, even for project-related reasons, will add to your phone bill, since you must use airtime to connect to the Internet. The students must pay all modem/DSL charges before leaving. It is recommended that you keep track of your internet use.

Guests

Since faculty advisors cannot police your apartments, you are responsible to self-regulate the access to your apartments. You should never loan your key to anyone other than one of your apartment mates. There are NO overnight guests allowed in any apartments rented on your behalf by WPI. Violation of this policy will result in expulsion from the program.

Pets

Consistent with WPI's Residence Hall policy there are no pets allowed in project center housing. Violation of this policy can result in your termination from a residential project center.

Complaints from Neighbors and Landlords

It is very likely that your neighbors are middle-aged or elderly people who need to get a good night's rest to go to work early in the morning. If you are inconsiderate and make excessive noise late at night, complaints will start immediately, which may lead to your expulsion from the apartment. The faculty advisors and VPC staff will not tolerate any such complaint and will act accordingly.

KEEP YOUR WINDOWS AND APARTMENT DOORS CLOSED AFTER 10pm!!! This will greatly reduce the amount of noise heard outside your apartment.

It pays to be nice to your neighbors. Some flowers or any other "present" made to your most hostile neighbors have been shown to make cohabitation much smoother and more civilized.

Apartment cleanup

As tenants in the apartments procured for your use, you are responsible for their maintenance, cleanliness and well-being. Before leaving the apartment on December 19, students should make sure that the apartments are clean and in good order. In particular, make sure that all obvious signs of neglect or filth are removed from sight. First impressions are important and rental agencies can get very picky if they perceive the place as having been abused.

You must clean the apartment as well as possible. If your apartment is not left as clean as when you moved in, you will be assessed an additional cleaning fee.

- Sweep & mop all floors, especially the bathrooms and kitchen.
- Thoroughly clean: Bathroom, toilet & seat, bidet, shower, bathroom sink and kitchen sink.
- Remove all trash. There should not be a single item left behind that was not there when you moved in.
- Fix any minor damages that you may have caused. Plaster, nails, and screws are very cheap and could save you a lot of money if you made some small repairs yourselves.

- Wash all linens and towels that came with the house in the washing machine and thoroughly wash them, dry them and fold them, placing them back in the closets where they were when you arrived.
- Make sure you wash all bed sheets and pillowcases as well.
- Put the shower curtain in the wash as well, making sure the temperature won't melt it. Re-hang it afterwards.
- Clean all dishes, pots, pans, flatware and glasses thoroughly and put them away.
- Empty out the refrigerator. Throw out or give away all food. Leave the refrigerator completely empty and wipe down the inside with a wet sponge.
- In general, try to leave the place in the same, or better, condition in which you found the apartment.

Final Inspection & Utilities Accounting

Since everyone will be leaving on the 19th, the Final Apartment Inspections with the rental agents and all students will be arranged on or around December 18th.

You will be assigned a specific time when this inspection will occur for your apartment.

Damages

During the inspections, the following items will be checked for damages:

- The general state of the apartment. Make sure it is clean!
- Individual items such as the beds, linens, sinks, toilets, dishes, etc.
- Each room will be inspected for damages, neglect or abuse
- Outside spaces, such as terraces, will be inspected
- Appliances & fixtures will be checked to make sure they still work
- Everything will be given the once-over

Problems will be discussed immediately and a solution agreed upon. The Rental Agency has a slight edge in any discussion since they hold SECURITY funds for these matters. If any charges are blamed on the students, these will be charged by the WPI accounting office either to the responsible student, if identified or, otherwise, to all the apartment occupants in equal shares.

Utilities

Utility counts will be taken from all meters: water, electric, gas and phone. The gas, water and electric bills will be calculated from these readings and you will only be charged for above-normal usage. Documentation will be made available to all interested parties only if disputes for additional charges should arise. You should limit your use of heat and electricity throughout the term. Turn down the thermostat and turn off the lights when you are out of the apartment.

All phone charges will be calculated on the spot and all charges must be paid at that time. Any unaccounted for calls will have to be divided up among all students, at least initially. Anyone who does not agree to be charged for someone else's calls will have to file a complaint for a refund, but will still have to immediately settle his/her share at this time.

Don't forget that email or any use of the modems/DSL will be reflected in the phone bill for which each student is responsible. No email or Internet charges are covered by WPI, not even for project-related utilization.

Additional Charges

If damages to the apartment or its furnishings are discovered by the Agency after the students leave, the damage will be documented and the apartment occupants will be charged for such damages back in the US through the WPI Accounting Office.

Some bills do not arrive until two to three months after the term is over, so you could be charged (with documentation) as late as February for any "hidden problem" you may have left behind.

Shopping

Apartments are located near shops. Most food stores are closed on Sunday and on Wednesday afternoon. The regular hours are: 8:30-1:00 and 15:30-19:30. BILLA is a market that is open on Sunday and is located on the Strada Nuova, not far from the VPC. There are other shops with better prices and quality, but BILLA is a convenient, one-stop market.

Other shopping places will be discussed during the first meeting in the VPC.

Packing Suggestions

General Suggestions

Pack light! You'll regret every extra pound of luggage that you carry with you. You'll have a washing machine in your apartment, so all you need is about 1 week's worth of clothes. It is expensive to mail stuff from or to the US, so plan carefully. You may have to cart the luggage around for weeks before or after the project. Bring at least a small traveling bag or pack for weekend travel.

Clothing

October may be still mild, but the weather will get colder as the term progresses. While the temperature may never get as cold as in Worcester, the humidity may make it feel just as cold, so bring clothing you would wear in Worcester in Term B. You'll need some shirts with collars and appropriate work clothes to wear to meetings. For final presentations you'll also need a tie and professional attire.

You can buy most things in Venice! In case you forget anything, you can always buy stuff in Venice or elsewhere in Europe, so you may choose to bring none of the formal clothes – for example – because you plan to buy some fine Italian clothes while there. This is also true for house wares (sheets, towels, etc.). The only things you won't find in Venice are WPI shirts.

You should bring a pair of loafers or boat shoes, in addition to sneakers, which are good for semi-formal meetings. You can also use them for final presentations.

You may want to bring a rainproof jacket and small umbrella and rainproof shoes or boots.

Try to bring flexible, mix and match clothing that you can wear in different situations in various combinations, so it "looks" like you have an extensive wardrobe, even though you'll only bring one suitcase.

Bring WPI clothing! Bring t-shirts, sweats etc. with WPI letters on them. They're great for photo opportunities and are a vehicle to publicize what the VPC and WPI are all about.

Linens and bedding

Although most apartments might have these items, you should bring your own, if nothing else because you'll know where they've been... One set of sheets for a single/twin bed is all you need, plus one towel and one pillowcase. All kitchen utensils, dishes, glasses, etc. are already in the apartments, of course.

Venice - Consular Information Sheet

Italy, Holy See (Vatican City) and San Marino
Country Specific Information

July 16, 2009

COUNTRY DESCRIPTION: Italy is a developed democracy with a modern economy. The Holy See is a sovereign entity that serves as the ecclesiastical, governmental and administrative capital of the Roman Catholic Church, physically located within the State of the Vatican City inside Rome, with a unique, non-traditional economy. San Marino is a developed, constitutional democratic republic, also independent of Italy, with a modern economy. Tourist facilities are widely available.

Read the Department of State [Background Notes on Italy](#), the [Holy See](#), and [San Marino](#) for additional information.

REGISTRATION: U.S. citizens living or traveling in Italy are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate at the [Department of State travel registration page](#), so that they can obtain updated information on local travel and security. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. Registration is important; it allows the State Department to assist U.S. citizens in an emergency.

ENTRY/EXIT REQUIREMENTS: Italy is a party to the Schengen agreement. As such, U.S. citizens may enter Italy for up to 90 days for tourist or business purposes without a visa. The passport should be valid for at least three months beyond the period of stay. For further details about travel into and within Schengen countries, please see our [Schengen Fact sheet](#).

For all other purposes, a visa is required and must be obtained from the Italian Embassy or Consulates before entering Italy. For further information concerning visas and entry requirements for Italy, travelers may contact the [Embassy of Italy](#) at 3000 Whitehaven Street NW, Washington, DC 20008, via telephone at (202) 612-4400, or Italian Consulates General in Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Newark, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, or San Francisco, accessible through the [Italian Embassy website](#).

Americans staying or traveling within Italy for less than three (3) months are considered non-residents. This includes persons on vacation, those taking professional trips, students registered at an authorized school, or persons performing research or independent study.

As of May 2007, under Italian law, all non-residents are required to complete a dichiarazione di presenza (declaration of presence). Tourists arriving from a non-Schengen-country (e.g. the United States) should obtain a stamp in their passport at the airport on the day of arrival. This stamp is considered the equivalent of the declaration of presence. Tourists arriving from a Schengen-country (e.g. France) must request the declaration of presence form from a local police office (commissariato di zona), police headquarters (questura) or their place of stay (e.g. hotel, hostel, campgrounds) and submit the form to the police or to their place of stay within eight business days of arrival. It is important that applicants keep a copy of the receipt issued by the Italian authorities. Failure to complete a declaration of presence is punishable by expulsion from Italy. Additional information may be obtained (in Italian only) from the [Portale Immigrazione](#) and the [Polizia di Stato](#).

Americans staying in Italy for more than three (3) months are considered residents and must obtain a permesso di soggiorno (permit of stay). This includes Americans who will work or transact business and persons who want to simply live in Italy. An application "kit" for the permesso di soggiorno may be requested from one of 14,000 national post offices (Poste Italiane). The kit must then be returned to one of 5,332 designated Post Office acceptance locations. It is important that applicants keep a copy of the receipt issued by the post office. Additional information may be obtained from the [Italian immigration website](#). Within 20 days of receiving the permit to stay in Italy, Americans must go to the local Vital Statistics Bureau (Anagrafe of the Comune) to apply for residency. It generally takes one to two months to receive the certificate of residence (Certificato di Residenza).

The U.S. Department of State is unaware of any HIV/AIDS entry restrictions for visitors to or foreign residents of Italy.

Information about [dual nationality](#) or the prevention of [international child abduction](#) can be found on our web site. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information](#) sheet.

THREATS TO SAFETY AND SECURITY: Several major earthquake fault lines cross Italy. Principal Italian cities, with the exception of Naples, do not lie near these faults. However, smaller tourist towns, such as Assisi, do lie near faults, and have experienced earthquakes. General information about disaster preparedness is available online from the [U.S. Federal Management Agency](#) (FEMA). Detailed information on Italy's earthquake fault lines is available from the [U.S. Geological Survey](#) (USGS).

Italy also has several active volcanoes generating geothermal events. Mt. Etna, on the eastern tip of the island of Sicily, has been erupting intermittently since 2000. Mt. Vesuvius, located near Naples, is currently capped and not active. Activity at Mt. Vesuvius is monitored by an active seismic network and sensor system, and no recent seismic activity has been recorded. Two of Italy's smaller islands, Stromboli and Vulcano in the Aeolian Island chain north of Sicily, also have active volcanoes with lava flows. Detailed information on volcano activity in Italy is available from the USGS .

There have been occasional episodes of politically motivated violence in Italy, most often connected to Italian internal developments or social issues. Italian authorities have found bombs outside public buildings, received bomb threats, and were subjects of letter bombs. Firebombs or Molotov cocktails have been thrown at buildings or offices in the middle of the night. These incidents have all been attributed to organized crime or anarchist movements. Americans were not targeted or injured in these instances.

Demonstrations may have an anti-American character. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful have the potential to turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. U.S. citizens traveling or residing in Italy should take common sense precautions and follow news reports carefully in order to avoid demonstrations and to be aware of heightened security and potential delays when they occur. American citizens are encouraged to read the Embassy's [Demonstration Notices](#).

Italy remains largely free of terrorist incidents. However, like other countries in the Schengen area, Italy's open borders with its Western European neighbors allow the possibility of terrorist groups entering/exiting the country with anonymity.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State's, [Bureau of Consular Affairs' website](#). It contains current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#).

Up-to-date information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S., or for callers outside the U.S. and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The Department of State urges American citizens to take responsibility for their own personal security while traveling overseas. For general information about appropriate measures travelers can take to protect themselves in an overseas environment, see the Department of State's extensive tips and advice on [traveling safely abroad](#).

CRIME: Italy has a moderate rate of violent crime, some of which is directed towards tourists, principally for motives of theft. Some travelers are victims of rape and beatings. There are incidents of drinks laced with drugs being used by criminals to rob, and in some cases, assault tourists. Many of these incidents occur in the vicinity of Rome's Termini train station and at major tourist centers such as Campo de Fiori and Piazza Navona, as well as in Florence and Naples. Criminals using this tactic "befriend" a traveler at a train station, bus stop, restaurant, café or bar in tourist areas, then eventually offer a drink laced with a sleeping drug. When the tourist falls asleep, criminals steal the traveler's valuables. There are also instances where the victim is assaulted, either physically or sexually.

Americans are urged to exercise caution at train stations and airports, and when frequenting nightclubs, bars and outdoor cafes, particularly at night, because criminals may make initial contact with potential victims in such settings. Individuals under the effect of alcohol may become victims of crime, including robbery, physical and sexual assault, due to their impaired ability to judge situations and make decisions. This is particularly a problem for younger Americans visiting Italy, where the age limit on the sale of alcoholic beverages is lower than in the United States. If you are a victim of such a crime, please file a police report and contact the U.S. Embassy or nearest consulate. There are also in-country organizations, which provide counseling, medical, and legal assistance to certain crime victims.

Petty crimes such as pick-pocketing, theft from parked cars, and purse snatching are serious problems, especially in large cities. Pick-pockets sometimes dress like businessmen. Tourists should not be lulled into a false sense of security by believing that well-dressed individuals are not potential pick-pockets or thieves. Most reported thefts occur at crowded tourist sites, on public buses or trains, or at the major railway stations: Rome's Termini; Milan's Centrale; Florence's Santa Maria Novella; and Naples' Centrale and Piazza Garibaldi. Travelers should also be alert to theft in Milan's Malpensa Airport, particularly at car rental agencies. Clients of Internet cafes in major cities are also targeted. Tourists who have tried to resist petty thieves on motor scooters have suffered broken arms and collarbones.

Thieves in Italy often work in groups or pairs. Pairs of accomplices or groups of children are known to divert tourists' attention so that another can pick-pocket them. In one particular routine, one thief throws trash, waste or ketchup at the victim; a second thief assists the victim in cleaning up the mess; and the third discreetly takes the victim's belongings. Criminals on crowded public transportation slit the bottoms of purses or bags with a razor blade or sharp knife removing the contents. Theft of small items such as radios, luggage, cameras, briefcases, and even cigarettes from parked cars is a major problem.

Carjackings and thefts are reported by occupants of vehicles waiting in traffic or stopped at traffic lights. Thefts from occupants of taxis and rental vehicles that are stopped in traffic are a particular problem in Catania, Sicily. Vehicles parked near beaches during the summer are broken into and robbed of valuables. Robbers take items from cars at gas stations often by smashing car windows.

Use particular caution driving at night on highways, when there may be a greater incidence of robbery attempts. There are occasional reports of break-ins of rental cars driven by Americans during stops at highway service areas.

On trains, a commonly reported crime involves one or more persons who pretend to befriend a traveler and offer drugged food or drink. Also, thieves are known to impersonate police officers to gain the confidence of tourists. The thief shows the prospective victim a circular plastic sign with the words "police" or "international police." If this happens, the tourist should insist on seeing the officer's identification card (documento), as impersonators tend not to carry forged documents. Tourists should immediately report thefts or other crimes to the local police.

The U.S. Secret Service in Rome is assisting Italian Law Enforcement authorities in investigating an increase in the appearance of ATM skimming devices. These devices are attached to legitimate bank ATMs, usually located in tourist areas, and capture the account information stored electronically on the card's magnetic strip. The devices consist of a card reader installed over the legitimate reader and a pin-hole video camera mounted above the keypad that records the customer's PIN. ATMs with skimming devices installed may also allow normal transactions to occur. The victim's information is sold, traded on-line, or encoded on another card such as a hotel key card to access the compromised account. Here are some helpful hints to protect yourself and to identify skimming devices:

- 1) Use ATMs located in well-lit public areas, or secured inside the bank/business
- 2) Cover the keypad with one hand as you enter your PIN
- 3) Look for gaps, tampered appearance, or other irregularities between the metal faceplate of the ATM and the card reader
- 4) Avoid card readers that are not flush with the face of the ATM
- 5) Closely monitor your account statements for unauthorized transactions

Organized criminal groups operate throughout Italy, but are more prevalent in the south. They occasionally resort to violence to intimidate or to settle disputes. Though the activities of such groups are not generally targeted at tourists, visitors should be aware that innocent by-standers could be injured.

In many countries around the world, counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available. Transactions involving such products may be illegal under local law. In addition, bringing them back to the United States may result in forfeitures and/or fines. The [Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Division in the U.S. Department of Justice](#) has more information on this serious problem.

According to Italian Law (Law 80 of May 14, 2005), anyone caught buying counterfeit goods (for example, DVD's, CD's, watches, purses, bags, belts, sunglasses, etc.) is subject to a fine of no less than EUR 1,000. Police in major Italian cities enforce this law to varying degrees. Travelers are advised to purchase products only from stores and other licensed retailers to avoid unknowingly buying counterfeit and illegal merchandise.

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VICTIMS OF CRIME : If you are the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate (see end of this sheet or see the [Department of State list of embassies and consulates](#)). This includes the loss or theft of a U.S. passport. The embassy/consulate staff can, for example, help you find appropriate medical care, contact family members or friends and explain how funds could be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if needed.

The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Italy is: 113.

Please see our [information on victims of crime](#), including possible victim compensation programs in the United States. Please see also [information regarding assistance for victims of crime in Italy](#).

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While in a foreign country, a U.S. citizen is subject to that country's laws and regulations, which sometimes differ significantly from those in the United States and may not afford the protections available to the individual under U.S. law. Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime, [prosecutable in the United States](#) .

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: [Strikes and other work stoppages](#) occur frequently in the transportation sector (national airlines, airports, trains, and bus lines). Most are announced in advance and are of short duration. Reconfirmation of domestic and international flight reservations is highly recommended.

U. S citizens using public transportation while in Italy are reminded they must adhere to local transportation laws and regulations. Travelers must purchase train tickets and validate them by punching them in validating machines usually located near the entrance of train tracks prior to boarding. Failure to follow this procedure may result in an on-the-spot fine by an inspector on the train. Travelers must purchase bus tickets prior to boarding and validate them immediately after boarding. Tickets may be purchased at tobacco stores or kiosks. Failure to follow this procedure may result in an immediate fine imposed by an inspector on the bus. If the violator does not pay the fine on the spot, it will automatically double and will be forwarded to the violator's home address.

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: Medical facilities are available, but may be limited outside urban areas. Public hospitals, though generally free of charge for emergency services, sometimes do not maintain the same standards as hospitals in the United States, so travelers are encouraged to obtain insurance that would cover a stay in a private Italian hospital or clinic. It is almost impossible to obtain an itemized hospital bill from public hospitals, as required by many U.S. insurance companies, because the Italian National Health Service charges one inclusive rate (care services, bed and board).

In parts of southern Italy, the lack of adequate trash disposal and incineration sites has led to periodic accumulations of garbage in urban and rural areas. In some cases, residents have burned garbage, resulting in toxic emissions that can aggravate respiratory problems.

The U.S. Navy initiated a public health evaluation in the Naples area in 2008. After finding levels of bacterial and chemical contamination of potential health concern, particularly in samples of area well water, the Navy recommended all personnel living off-base in the Naples area use only bottled water for drinking, cooking, ice-making, and brushing teeth. For more information on safe food and water precautions, see the CDC website.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747) or via the [CDC website](#). For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the infectious diseases section of the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) website](#). The WHO website also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#) .

MEDICAL INSURANCE: The Department of State strongly urges U.S. citizens to consult their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad. Important questions are whether the policy applies overseas and whether it covers emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. For more information, please see our [medical insurance overseas page](#)

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in a foreign country, U.S. citizens may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. Streets in historic city centers are often narrow, winding and congested. Motor scooters are very popular and drivers often see themselves as exempt from conventions that apply to automobiles. Travelers who rent scooters should be particularly cautious. Pedestrians and drivers should be constantly alert to the possibility of scooters' sudden presence. Most vehicle-related deaths and injuries involve pedestrians or cyclists who are involved in collisions with scooters or other vehicles. U.S. citizens should remain vigilant and alert while walking or cycling near traffic. Pedestrians should be careful, as sidewalks can be extremely congested and uneven. Drivers of bicycles, motorcycles, and other vehicles routinely ignore traffic signals and traffic flows and park and drive on sidewalks. For safety, pedestrians should look carefully in both directions before crossing streets, even when using a marked crosswalk with a green avanti ("walk") light illuminated.

Traffic lights are limited, often disobeyed, and a different convention of right-of-way is observed. Italy has over 5,600 kilometers (3,480 mi.) of Autostrada, or superhighways. Commercial and individual vehicles travel and pass on these well-maintained roads at very high speeds. Accidents occur in which contributing factors include excessive speed, alcohol/drug use, and/or sleepiness of long-distance drivers. Italy has one of the highest rates of car accident deaths in the European Union.

In rural areas, a wide range of speed on highways makes for hazardous driving. Roads are generally narrow and often have no guardrails. Travelers in northern Italy, especially in winter, should be aware of fog and poor visibility, responsible for multiple-car accidents each year. Most Italian automobiles are equipped with special fog lights. Roadside assistance in Italy is excellent on the well-maintained toll roads, but limited on secondary roads. Use of safety belts and child restraining devices is mandatory and headlights should be on at all times outside of urban areas.

U.S. citizens driving in Italy are reminded that they must adhere to the local driving laws and regulations. Vehicle traffic in some historic downtown areas of cities and towns throughout Italy is limited by a system of permits (called "ZTL" and functioning the same way as an EasyPass system in the United States might on the freeway). Cameras record the license plates of cars driving in parts of the city that require a permit. Although most of the automated verification stations are clearly marked, if a driver passes one it is impossible to know at the time that a violation occurred or has been recorded. Violators are not pulled over or stopped, and there is no personal contact with a police officer. Whenever possible, the fines imposed for these violations are forwarded to the driver's home in the United States to request payment. The fines are cumulative for each time a driver passes a control point. A similar system of automated traffic control cameras is in place in many parts of the highway system and is used to ticket speeding violations.

U.S. citizens driving in Italy should also note that, according to Italian regulation, if a resident of a non-European Union country (e.g. the United States) violates a traffic law, the violator must pay the fine at the time the violation occurs to the police officer issuing the ticket. If the citizen does not or cannot pay the fine at the time, Italian regulation allows the police officer to confiscate the offender's vehicle (even if the vehicle is a rental vehicle).

For specific information concerning Italian driving permits, vehicle inspection, road tax and mandatory insurance, contact the [Italian Government Tourist Board \(ENIT\)](#) : tel: 212-245-5618 or the A.C.I. (Automobile Club d'Italia) at Via Marsala 14A, 00185 Rome, tel: 39-06-4998-2496. For information on obtaining international drivers licenses, contact AAA or the American Automobile Touring Alliance. Please refer to our [Road Safety](#) page for more information. Visit the website of the [country's national tourist office](#), and [national authority responsible for road safety](#) .

AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT: The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) assessed the Government of Italy's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of Italy's air carrier operations. Further information may be found on the [FAA safety assessment page](#) .

CHILDREN'S ISSUES:Please see our Office of Children's Issues web pages on [intercountry adoption](#) and [international parental child abduction](#).

EMBASSY AND CONSULATE LOCATIONS/

REGISTRATION: U.S. citizens living or traveling in Italy are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate at the [Department of State travel registration page](#), so that they can obtain updated information on local travel and security. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. Registration is important; it allows the State Department to assist U.S. citizens in an emergency. Local embassy information is available below and at the [Department of State list of embassies and consulates](#) .

[The U.S. Embassy](#) is located at Via V. Veneto 119/A, tel.: 39-06-46741 and fax: 39-06-4674-2217.

The U.S. Consulates General in Italy are located in: Florence: Lungarno Amerigo Vespucci 38, tel: 39-055-266-951, consular fax: 399-055-215-550;

Milan: Via Principe Amedeo 2/10, tel: 39-02-290-351, and fax: 39-02-290-35-273;

Naples: Piazza della Repubblica, tel: 39-081-583-8111, and consular fax: 39-081-583-8275.

There are U.S. Consular Agents located in: Genoa: Via Dante 2, tel: 39-010-584-492, and fax: 39-010-553-3033;

Palermo: Via Vaccarini 1, tel: 39-091-305-857, and fax: 39-091-625-6026;

Venice: Viale Galileo Galilei, 30, tel: 39-041-541-5944, and fax: 39-041-541-6654.

* * *

This replaces the Consular Information Sheet dated January 21, 2009, to update the sections on Entry/Exit Requirements, Safety and Security, Crime, Information for [Victims of Crime](#), and Traffic Safety and Road Conditions.

BACKGROUND NOTES -

Official Name: **Italian Republic**



PROFILE

Geography

Area: 301,225 sq. km. (116,303 sq. mi.); about the size of Georgia and Florida combined.

Cities: *Capital*--Rome (pop. 2.8 million, 3.7 million metro). *Other cities*--Milan (1.3 million, 3.9 million metro), Naples (975,000, 3 million metro), Turin (900,000, 2.1 million metro).

Terrain: Mostly rugged and mountainous.

Climate: Generally mild Mediterranean; cold northern winters.

People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*--Italian(s).

Population (November 2009 est.): 60.3 million.

Annual population growth rate (2008 est.): 0.07%, mostly due to immigration.

Ethnic groups: Primarily Italian, but there are small groups of German-, French-, Slovene-, and Albanian-Italians.

Religion: Roman Catholic (majority).

Language: Italian (official).

Education: *Years compulsory*--16. *Literacy*--98%.

Health: *Infant mortality rate*--3.7/1,000 live births. *Life expectancy*--78.8 years for men; 84.1 years for women.

Work force (24.97 million, 2009): *Services*--67%; *industry and commerce*--29%; *agriculture*--4%.

Unemployment rate is 7.8%.

Government

Type: Republic since June 2, 1946.

Constitution: January 1, 1948.

Branches: *Executive*--president (chief of state), Council of Ministers (cabinet) headed by the president of the council (prime minister). *Legislative*--bicameral parliament: 630-member Chamber of Deputies, 315-member Senate (plus a varying number of "life" Senators). *Judicial*--independent constitutional court and lower magistracy.

Subdivisions: 94 provinces, 20 regions.

Political parties: People of Liberty, Democratic Party, Northern League, Italy of Values, Union of the Center, Movement for Autonomy.

Suffrage: Vote for House is universal over 18; vote for Senate is universal over 25.

Economy

GDP (purchasing power parity, 2009): \$1.8 trillion.

GDP per capita (purchasing power parity, 2009): \$29,500.

GDP growth: -5.0% (2009); -1.0% (2008); 1.5% (2007); 1.8% (2006); 0.5% (2005); 1.5% (2004), 0.0% (2003 est.); 0.5% (2002); 1.8% (2001).

Natural resources: Fish and natural gas.

Agriculture: *Products*--wheat, rice, grapes, olives, citrus fruits, potatoes, sugar beets, soybeans, beef, dairy products.

Industry: *Types*--tourism, machinery, iron and steel, chemicals, food processing, textiles, motor vehicles, clothing, footwear, ceramics.

Trade: *Exports* (2009)--\$402.9 billion f.o.b.: mechanical products, textiles and apparel, transportation equipment, metal products, chemical products, food and agricultural products.

Partners (2008)--Germany 12.8%, France 11.8%, Spain 6.5%, U.S. 6.3%, U.K. 5.3%. *Imports* (2009)--\$408.6 billion f.o.b.: machinery and transport equipment, foodstuffs, ferrous and nonferrous metals, wool, cotton, energy products. *Partners* (2008)--Germany 16.0%, France 8.6%, China 6.3%, Netherlands 5.4%, Russia 4.3%, Spain 3.9%, Belgium 3.8%.

PEOPLE AND HISTORY

Italy is largely homogeneous linguistically and religiously but is diverse culturally, economically, and politically. Italy has the fifth-highest population density in Europe--about 200 persons per square kilometer (about 500 per sq. mi.). Minority groups are small, the largest being the German-speaking people of Bolzano Province and the Slovenes around Trieste. There are also small communities of Albanian, Greek, Ladino, and French origin. Immigration has increased in recent years, however, while the Italian population is declining overall due to low birth rates. Although Roman Catholicism is the majority religion--85% of native-born citizens are nominally Catholic--all religious faiths are provided equal freedom before the law by the constitution.

Greeks settled in the southern tip of the Italian Peninsula in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.; Etruscans, Romans, and others inhabited the central and northern mainland. The peninsula subsequently was unified under the Roman Republic. The neighboring islands came under Roman control by the third century B.C.; by the first century A.D., the Roman Empire effectively dominated the Mediterranean world. After the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West in the fifth century A.D., the peninsula and islands were subjected to a series of invasions, and political unity was lost. Italy became an oft-changing succession of small states, principalities, and kingdoms, which fought among themselves and were subject to ambitions of foreign powers. Popes of Rome ruled central Italy; rivalries between the popes and the Holy

Roman Emperors, who claimed Italy as their domain, often made the peninsula a battleground. The commercial prosperity of northern and central Italian cities, beginning in the 11th century, combined with the influence of the Renaissance, mitigated somewhat the effects of these medieval political rivalries. Although Italy declined after the 16th century, the Renaissance had strengthened the idea of a single Italian nationality. By the early 19th century, a nationalist movement developed and led to the reunification of Italy--except for Rome--in the 1860s. In 1861, Victor Emmanuel II of the House of Savoy was proclaimed King of Italy. Rome was incorporated in 1870. From 1870 until 1922, Italy was a constitutional monarchy with a parliament elected under limited suffrage.

20th-Century History

During World War I, Italy renounced its standing alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary and, in 1915, entered the war on the side of the Allies. Under the postwar settlement, Italy received some former Austrian territory along the northeast frontier. In 1922, Benito Mussolini came to power and, over the next few years, eliminated political parties, curtailed personal liberties, and installed a fascist dictatorship termed the Corporate State. The king, with little or no effective

power, remained titular head of state.

Italy allied with Germany and declared war on the United Kingdom and France in 1940. In 1941, Italy--with the other Axis powers, Germany and Japan--declared war on the United States and the Soviet Union. Following the Allied invasion of Sicily in 1943, the King dismissed Mussolini and appointed Marshal Pietro Badoglio as Premier. The Badoglio government declared war on Germany, which quickly occupied most of the country and freed Mussolini, who led a brief-lived regime in the north. An anti-fascist popular resistance movement grew during the last two years of the war, harassing German forces before they were driven out in April 1945. A 1946 plebiscite ended the monarchy, and a constituent assembly was elected to draw up plans for the republic.

Under the 1947 peace treaty, minor adjustments were made in Italy's frontier with France, the eastern border area was transferred to Yugoslavia, and the area around the city of Trieste was designated a free territory. In 1954, the free territory, which had remained under the administration of U.S.-U.K. forces (Zone A, including the city of Trieste) and Yugoslav forces (Zone B), was divided between Italy and Yugoslavia, principally along the zonal boundary. This arrangement was made permanent by the Italian-Yugoslav Treaty of Osimo, ratified in 1977 (currently being discussed by Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia). Under the 1947 peace treaty, Italy relinquished its overseas territories and certain Mediterranean islands.

The Roman Catholic Church's status in Italy has been determined, since its temporal powers ended in 1870, by a series of accords with the Italian Government. Under the Lateran Pacts of 1929, which were confirmed by the present constitution, Vatican City is recognized by Italy as an independent, sovereign entity. While preserving that recognition, in 1984, Italy and the Vatican updated several provisions of the 1929 accords. Included was the end of Roman Catholicism as Italy's formal state religion.

Italy's Cultural Contributions

Europe's Renaissance period began in Italy during the 14th and 15th centuries. Literary achievements--such as the poetry of Petrarch, Tasso, and Ariosto and the prose of Boccaccio, Machiavelli, and Castiglione--exerted a tremendous and lasting influence on the subsequent development of Western civilization, as did the painting, sculpture, and architecture contributed by giants such as da Vinci, Raphael, Botticelli, Fra Angelico, and Michelangelo.

The musical influence of Italian composers Monteverdi, Palestrina, and Vivaldi proved epochal; in the 19th century, Italian romantic opera flourished under composers Gioacchino Rossini, Giuseppe Verdi, and Giacomo Puccini. Contemporary Italian artists, writers, filmmakers, architects, composers, and designers contribute significantly to Western culture.

GOVERNMENT

Italy has been a democratic republic since June 2, 1946, when the monarchy was abolished by popular referendum. The constitution was promulgated on January 1, 1948.

The Italian state is centralized. The prefect of each of the provinces is appointed by and answerable to the central government. In addition to the provinces, the constitution provides for 20 regions with limited governing powers. Five regions--Sardinia, Sicily, Trentino-Alto Adige, Valle d'Aosta, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia--function with special autonomy statutes. The other 15 regions were established in 1970 and vote for regional "councils." The establishment of regional governments throughout Italy has brought some decentralization to the national governmental machinery, and recent governments have devolved further powers to the regions. Many regional governments, particularly in the north of Italy, are seeking additional powers.

The 1948 constitution established a bicameral parliament (Chamber of Deputies and Senate), a

separate judiciary, and an executive branch composed of a Council of Ministers (cabinet), headed by the president of the council (prime minister). The president of the republic is elected for seven years by the parliament sitting jointly with a small number of regional delegates. The president nominates the prime minister, who chooses the other ministers. The Council of Ministers--in practice composed mostly of members of parliament--must retain the confidence of both houses.

The houses of parliament are popularly and directly elected by a proportional representation system. Under 2005 legislation, the Chamber of Deputies has 630 members (12 of whom are elected by Italians abroad). In addition to 315 elected members (six of whom are elected by Italians abroad), the Senate includes former presidents and several other persons appointed for life according to special constitutional provisions. Both houses are elected for a maximum of five years, but either may be dissolved before the expiration of its normal term. Legislative bills may originate in either house and must be passed by a majority in both.

The Italian judicial system is based on Roman law modified by the Napoleonic code and subsequent statutes. There is only partial judicial review of legislation in the American sense. A constitutional court, which passes on the constitutionality of laws, is a post-World War II innovation. Its powers and the volume and frequency of its decisions are not as extensive as those of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Principal Government Officials

President--Giorgio Napolitano

Prime Minister--Silvio Berlusconi

Foreign Minister--Franco Frattini

Minister of Defense--Ignazio LaRussa

Minister of Finance--Giulio Tremonti

Minister of Justice--Angelino Alfano

Minister of the Interior--Roberto Maroni

Ambassador to the United States--Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata

Italy maintains an [embassy](#) in the United States at 3000 Whitehaven Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel. 202-612-4400).

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Until recently, there had been frequent government turnovers (more than 60 and counting) since 1945. The dominance of the Christian Democratic (DC) party during much of the postwar period lent continuity and comparative stability to Italy's political situation.

From 1992 to 1997, Italy faced significant challenges as voters--disenchanted with past political paralysis, massive government debt, extensive corruption, and organized crime's considerable influence--demanded political, economic, and ethical reforms. In 1993 referendums, voters approved substantial changes, including moving from a proportional to a largely majoritarian electoral system and the abolishment of some ministries. However in 2005, parliament passed a new electoral law based on full proportional assignment of seats.

Major political parties, beset by scandal and loss of voter confidence, underwent far-reaching changes. New political forces and new alignments of power emerged in March 1994 national elections. The election saw a major turnover in the new parliament, with 452 out of 630 deputies and 213 out of 315 senators elected for the first time. The 1994 elections also swept media magnate Silvio Berlusconi--and his Freedom Pole coalition--into office as Prime Minister. Berlusconi, however, was forced to step down in January 1995 when one member of his coalition withdrew support. The Berlusconi government was succeeded by a technical government headed by Prime Minister Lamberto Dini, which fell in early 1996. New elections in 1996 brought a center-

left coalition to government for the first time after World War II.

A series of center-left coalitions dominated Italy's political landscape between 1996 and 2001. In April 1996, national elections led to the victory of a center-left coalition (the Olive Tree) under the leadership of Romano Prodi. Prodi's government became the second-longest to stay in power before he narrowly lost a vote of confidence (by three votes) in October 1998. A new government was formed by Democratic Party of the Left leader and former-communist Massimo D'Alema. In April 2000, following a poor showing by his coalition in regional elections, D'Alema resigned. The succeeding center-left government, including most of the same parties, was headed by Giuliano Amato, who had previously served as Prime Minister in 1992-93.

National elections, held on May 13, 2001, returned Berlusconi to power at the head of the five-party center-right Freedom House coalition, comprising the prime minister's own party, Forza Italia, the National Alliance, the Northern League, the Christian Democratic Center, and the United Christian Democrats. This Berlusconi government served its entire term.

In national elections held April 9-10, 2006, Romano Prodi's center-left Union coalition won a narrow victory over Berlusconi's Freedom House coalition. The Union coalition included the Democratic Party (born of the November 2007 fusion of the Democrats of the Left and the Daisy Party), UDEUR (Union of Democrats for Europe), Rose in the Fist (made up by Italian Social Democrats and Italian Radical Party), Communist Renewal, the Italian Communist Party, Italy of Values, and the Greens.

In May 2006, the parliament elected Giorgio Napolitano as the Republic's President. President Napolitano formerly served as a lifetime senator, Minister of the Interior, and a member of the European Parliament as a member of center-left parties. President Napolitano's term ends in May 2013. The Senate, lower house, and regional representatives will vote to elect his successor.

In January 2008, the Prodi government fell when small coalition partner UDEUR withdrew support. In February, the President dissolved parliament and Silvio Berlusconi returned to power after defeating former Rome Mayor Walter Veltroni by a comfortable margin in elections on April 13-14, 2008. Berlusconi's winning coalition was composed of the People of Liberty (a union of Forza Italia and National Alliance), the Northern League, and the Movement for Autonomy. Berlusconi was sworn in as Prime Minister on May 8. Veltroni resigned as leader of the opposition in February 2009. His deputy, Dario Franceschini, was elected new Democratic Party (PD) leader until party primary elections held in October 2009, when Pierluigi Bersani was elected PD national secretary.

Political Parties

Italy's dramatic self-renewal transformed the political landscape between 1992 and 1997. Scandal investigations touched thousands of politicians, administrators, and businessmen; the shift from a proportional to majoritarian voting system also altered the political landscape.

Party changes were sweeping. The Christian Democratic Party dissolved; the Italian People's Party and the Christian Democratic Center emerged. Other major parties, such as the Socialists, saw support plummet. A new populist and free-market oriented movement, Forza Italia, gained wide support among moderate voters. The National Alliance broke from the neofascist Italian Social Movement. A trend toward two large coalitions--one on the center-left and the other on the center-right--emerged from the April 1995 regional elections. For the 1996 national elections, the center-left parties created the Olive Tree coalition while the center right united again under the Freedom Pole. The May 2001 elections ushered into power a refashioned center-right coalition dominated by Berlusconi's party, Forza Italia. The April 2006 elections returned the center-left to power under the eight-party Union coalition, a successor to the Olive Tree.

In October 2007, the Democrats of the Left and the Daisy parties officially merged to form the Democratic Party. Veltroni was chosen as party leader and was the center-left's candidate in the April 2008 elections. Silvio Berlusconi launched an alliance between his Forza Italia party and Gianfranco Fini's National Alliance. The parties ran together under the People of Liberty symbol in April 2008. The election greatly simplified parliament, dramatically reducing the numbers of parties, and for the first time since World War II, leaving communist parties out of parliament. People of Liberty (37.4%) won the largest share of the vote and took power in coalition with a strengthened Northern League (8.3%) and the tiny Movement for Autonomy (1.1%). The Democratic Party scored 33.2% and ran in alliance with Italy of Values (4.4%), while the Union of the Center (5.6%) ran alone.

In March 2009, Forza Italia and National Alliance changed the People of Liberty identification from an alliance to a party. The new mass center-right party is Italy's largest party and one of the largest in Europe. Party leaders define the party as post-ideological, charismatic, and pragmatic. It is led by Berlusconi.

ECONOMY

The Italian economy has changed dramatically since the end of World War II. From an agriculturally based economy, it has developed into an industrial state ranked as the world's sixth-largest market economy. Italy belongs to the Group of Eight (G-8) industrialized nations; it is a member of the European Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Italy has few natural resources. With much land unsuited for farming, Italy is a net food importer. There are no substantial deposits of iron, coal, or oil. Proven natural gas reserves, mainly in the Po Valley and offshore in the Adriatic, constitute the country's most important mineral resource. Most raw materials needed for manufacturing and more than 80% of the country's energy sources are imported. Italy's economic strength is in the processing and the manufacturing of goods, primarily in small and medium-sized family-owned firms. Its major industries are precision machinery, motor vehicles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, electric goods, and fashion and clothing.

Italy continues to grapple with budget deficits and high public debt--2.6% and 105.9% of GDP for 2008, respectively. Italy joined the European Monetary Union in 1998 by signing the Stability and Growth Pact, and as a condition of this Euro zone membership, Italy must keep its budget deficit beneath a 3% ceiling. The Italian Government has found it difficult to bring the budget deficit down to a level that would allow a rapid decrease of that debt. The worsening of the economic situation is expected to jeopardize this effort. The deficit is expected to grow well above the 3% ceiling in 2009 and 2010.

Italy's economic growth averaged only 0.8% in the period 2001-2008; 2008 GDP decreased 1.0%, largely due to the global economic crisis and its impact on exports and domestic demand. GDP contracted further as the Euro zone and world economies slowed; 2009 GDP decreased 5.0%.

Italy's closest trade ties are with the other countries of the European Union, with whom it conducts about 60.1% of its total trade (2007 data). Italy's largest European Union trade partners, in order of market share, are Germany (12.9%), France (11.4%), and the United Kingdom (5.8%). Italy continues to grapple with the effects of globalization, where certain countries (notably China) have eroded the Italian lower-end industrial product sector.

The Italian economy is also affected by a large underground economy--worth some 27% of Italy's GDP. This production is not subject, of course, to taxation and thus remains a source of lost revenue to the local and central government.

U.S.-Italy Economic Relations

The United States and Italy cooperate closely on major economic issues, including within the G-8. With a large population and a high per capita income, Italy was the United States' twelfth-largest trading partner in 2008, with total bilateral trade of \$51.6 billion comprised of exports to Italy totaling \$15.5 billion and imports from Italy worth \$36.1 billion. The U.S.'s \$20.7 billion deficit with Italy in 2008 was slightly below the \$20.9 billion deficit registered in 2007. Machinery and aircraft are becoming important U.S. exports to Italy. U.S. foreign direct investment in Italy at the end of 2007 exceeded \$28.4 billion.

Labor

Unemployment is a regional issue in Italy--low in the north, high in the south. The overall national rate is at its lowest level since 1992. Chronic problems of inadequate infrastructure, corruption, and organized crime act as disincentives to investment and job creation in the south. A significant underground economy absorbs substantial numbers of people, but they work for low wages and without standard social benefits and protections. Women and youth have significantly higher rates of unemployment than do men.

Unions claim to represent 40% of the work force. Most Italian unions are grouped in four major confederations: the General Italian Confederation of Labor (CGIL), the Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions (CISL), the Italian Union of Labor (UIL), and the General Union of Labor (UGL), which together claim 35% of the work force. These confederations formerly were associated with important political parties or currents, but they have evolved into fully autonomous, professional bodies. The CGIL, CISL, and UIL are affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and customarily coordinate their positions before confronting management or lobbying the government. The confederations have had an important consultative role on national social and economic issues.

Agriculture

Italy's agriculture is typical of the division between the agricultures of the northern and southern countries of the European Union. The northern part of Italy produces primarily grains, sugar beets, soybeans, meat, and dairy products, while the south specializes in fruits, vegetables, olive oil, wine, and durum wheat. Even though much of its mountainous terrain is unsuitable for farming, Italy has a large work force (1.4 million) employed in farming. Most farms are small, with the average size being only seven hectares.

For further economic and commercial information, please refer to the [Country Commercial Guide](#) for Italy.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Italy was a founding member of the European Community--now the European Union (EU). Italy was admitted to the United Nations in 1955 and is a member and strong supporter of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/World Trade Organization (GATT/WTO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Council of Europe. It chaired the CSCE (the forerunner of the OSCE) in 1994, the EU from July to December 1990, January to June 1996, and July to December 2003, and the G-8 in 2001 and in 2009. Italy served a two-year term on the UN Security Council in 2007-2008.

Italy firmly supports the United Nations and its international security activities. Italy led the UN mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and has actively participated in and deployed troops in support of UN peacekeeping missions in Somalia, Mozambique, and Timor-Leste. It has provided critical support for NATO and EU operations in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Albania, Georgia, and

Chad. Italy, under NATO's ISAF, maintains a Provincial Reconstruction Team in the western Afghanistan province of Herat, commands RC-West, and maintains a Carabinieri police training center. Italy supports reconstruction and development assistance to the Iraqi people through humanitarian workers and other officials, particularly in Dhi Qar Province, and is a leading contributor to the NATO Training Mission-Iraq, with approximately 100 military personnel and Carabinieri police trainers. Currently almost 9,000 Italian troops are deployed, including 2,100 in Kosovo, 2,350 in Lebanon as part of UNIFIL, and over 2,600 in Afghanistan.

The Italian Government seeks to obtain consensus with other European countries on various defense and security issues within the EU as well as NATO. European integration and the development of common defense and security policies will continue to be of primary interest to Italy.

U.S.-ITALY RELATIONS

The United States enjoys warm and friendly relations with Italy. Italy is a leading partner in counterterrorism efforts. The two are NATO allies and cooperate in the United Nations, in various regional organizations, and bilaterally for peace, prosperity, and security. Italy has worked closely with the United States and others on such issues as NATO and UN operations as well as on assistance to Russia and the New Independent States; Lebanon; the Middle East peace process; multilateral talks; Somalia and Mozambique peacekeeping; and combating drug trafficking, trafficking in women and children, and terrorism.

Under longstanding bilateral agreements flowing from NATO membership, Italy hosts important U.S. military forces at Vicenza and Livorno (army); Aviano (air force); and Sigonella, Gaeta, and Naples--home port for the U.S. Navy Sixth Fleet. The United States has about 13,000 military personnel stationed in Italy. Italy hosts the NATO Defense College in Rome.

Italy remains a strong and active transatlantic partner which, along with the United States, has sought to foster democratic ideals and international cooperation in areas of strife and civil conflict. Toward this end, the Italian Government has cooperated with the United States in the formulation of defense, security, and peacekeeping policies.

Principal U.S. Officials

Ambassador--[David Thorne](#)

Deputy Chief of Mission--Elizabeth Dibble

Economic Affairs--George White

Political Affairs--Barbara Leaf

Consular Affairs--Philip Egger

Public Affairs--Benjamin Ziff

Commercial Affairs--Thomas Moore

Regional Security Affairs--Nace Crawford

Agricultural Section--James Dever

Defense Attache--CAPT Michael James

Consular Posts

Consul General, Florence--Mary Ellen Countryman

Consul General, Milan--Carol Perez

Consul General, Naples--Patrick Truhn

The [U.S. Embassy](#) in Italy is located at Via Veneto 119, Rome (tel. (39)(06) 46741).

TRAVEL AND BUSINESS INFORMATION

The U.S. Department of State's Consular Information Program advises Americans traveling and residing abroad through Country Specific Information, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings.

Country Specific Information exists for all countries and includes information on entry and exit requirements, currency regulations, health conditions, safety and security, crime, political disturbances, and the addresses of the U.S. embassies and consulates abroad. **Travel Alerts** are issued to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term conditions overseas that pose significant risks to the security of American travelers. **Travel Warnings** are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid travel to a certain country because the situation is dangerous or unstable.

For the latest security information, Americans living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet web site at <http://www.travel.state.gov>, where the current [Worldwide Caution](#), [Travel Alerts](#), and [Travel Warnings](#) can be found.

[Consular Affairs Publications](#), which contain information on obtaining passports and planning a safe trip abroad, are also available at <http://www.travel.state.gov>. For additional information on international travel, see <http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel/International.shtml>.

The Department of State encourages all U.S. citizens traveling or residing abroad to register via the [State Department's travel registration](#) website or at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate abroad. Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency and will enable you to receive up-to-date information on security conditions.

Emergency information concerning Americans traveling abroad may be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada or the regular toll line 1-202-501-4444 for callers outside the U.S. and Canada.

The [National Passport Information Center](#) (NPIC) is the U.S. Department of State's single, centralized public contact center for U.S. passport information. Telephone: 1-877-4-USA-PPT (1-877-487-2778); TDD/TTY: 1-888-874-7793. Passport information is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. You may speak with a representative Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Eastern Time, excluding federal holidays.

Travelers can check the latest health information with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. A hotline at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) and a web site at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx> give the most recent health advisories, immunization recommendations or requirements, and advice on food and drinking water safety for regions and countries. The CDC publication "Health Information for International Travel" can be found at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/contentYellowBook.aspx>.

Further Electronic Information

Department of State Web Site. Available on the Internet at <http://www.state.gov>, the Department of State web site provides timely, global access to official U.S. foreign policy information, including [Background Notes](#) and [daily press briefings](#) along with the directory of [key officers](#) of Foreign Service posts and more. The Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) provides security information and regional news that impact U.S. companies working abroad through its website <http://www.osac.gov>

[Export.gov](#) provides a portal to all export-related assistance and market information offered by the federal government and provides trade leads, free export counseling, help with the export process, and more.

[STAT-USA/Internet](#), a service of the U.S. Department of Commerce, provides authoritative economic, business, and international trade information from the Federal government. The site includes current and historical trade-related releases, international market research, trade opportunities, and country analysis and provides access to the [National Trade Data Bank](#).

Section 4 – Transition Issues

Experiences in Transition

adapted from an article by Janet Bennett, Intercultural Communication Institute, Portland OR

Culture Surprise

Culture surprise are the reactions which occur shortly after arrival in a different culture when we see things that are different than we are used to. It usually occurs within the first few days after arrival as we become aware of superficial differences: modes of dress, signs in a different language, nonverbal behaviors.

Culture Stress

Culture stress manifests itself in the fatigue that occurs when we practice new behaviors in a different culture. This occurs as we respond to the behavior of the new culture and try to fit in by doing our own shopping, understanding comments made about us in the local language, learning to navigate public transportation and other attempts to adjust to the new culture.

Culture Shock

Culture shock is a state of loss and disorientation precipitated by a change in our environment that requires adjustment. It results from confronting values different from our own and from the loss of a familiar network and environment. It is a normal healthy reaction to the stress of living in a different culture. Everyone who has spent time living in another culture experiences some form of culture shock.

Symptoms of Culture Shock

Symptoms can be both physical and psychological, and can include: headaches, stomach aches, dizziness, rashes, nausea, irritability, insomnia or excessive sleepiness, depression, loneliness, withdrawal paranoia, anger, aggression, hatred, fear, crying, complaining, self-doubt, boredom, helplessness, confusion, and feelings of inadequacy. This list is not exhaustive.

Prescription for Culture Shock

adapted from an article by Bruce LaBrack, Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication

1. Understand the symptoms and recognize the signs of culture stress.
2. Realize that some degree of discomfort and stress is natural in a cross-cultural experience.
3. Recognize that your reactions are largely emotional and not easily subject to rational management.
4. Gather information *before* you go so at least the differences will be anticipated. Knowledge is power.
5. Look for the logical reasons behind host culture patterns. Discover why things are done the way they are.
6. Relax your grip on your normal culture and try to cheerfully adapt to new rules and roles.
7. Don't give in to the temptation to disparage what you do not like or understand. It probably won't change.
8. Identify a support network among peers, team members, other students and faculty advisor. Use this network, but do not rely on it exclusively.
9. Understand that this is a passing phase of what will be, in retrospect, a time of great learning and personal growth.
10. Give yourself quiet time, some private space, and don't be too hard on yourself.

In preparation to return home

“In a sense, it is the coming back, the return, which gives meaning to the going forth. We really don't know where we've been until we come back to where we were - only where we were may not be as it was because of who we've become, which, after all is why we left.” - Bernard, *Northern Exposure*

Reentry Challenges and Suggestions

adapted from articles by Dr. Bruce LaBrack, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific

There are lots of reasons to look forward to going home, but there are also a number of psychological, social and cultural aspects that prove difficult - often because they are unanticipated. Re-entry into your home culture can be both as challenging and frustrating as living overseas, mostly because our attitude toward going home is that it should be a simple matter of getting resettled, resuming earlier routines, and reestablishing your relationships. Research has shown that re-entry has its own set of special social and psychological adjustments which can be facilitated by being aware of the process and following some advice from those who have already returned.

Interviewing students who have been through the experience of off-campus study generated the following list of issues and suggestions. Their advice is to take the process seriously by being realistic and thinking about it and your possible reactions.

Prepare for the adjustment process and allow enough time

The more you think about what is to come, and know how returning home is both similar to and different from going away, the easier the transition will be. Anticipating is useful. The process of re-entry will take time, just like adjusting to the new culture did. Give yourself time to relax and reflect on what is going on around you, how you are reacting to it, and what you might like to change.

Overcoming boredom

After all the newness and stimulation of your time away, a return to family, friends, and old routines (however nice and comforting) can seem very dull. It is natural to miss the excitement and challenges which characterize project work off-campus, but it is up to you to find ways to overcome such negative reactions - remember a bored person is also boring.

“No one wants to hear”

One thing you can count on upon your return: no one will be as interested in hearing about your adventures as you will be in sharing those experiences. This is not a rejection of you or your achievements, but simply the fact that once others have heard the highlights, any further interest on their part is probably unlikely because they have no frame of reference for your experiences. Be realistic in your expectations of how fascinating your journey is going to be for everyone else. Be brief.

Cultivate sensitivity and interest

Showing an interest in what others have been doing while you have been gone is the surest way to reestablish your rapport. Much frustration can be avoided if you become as good a listener as a talker.

You can't explain

Even when given a chance to explain all the things you saw, felt and experienced while off-campus, it is likely to be at least a bit frustrating to relay them coherently. It is very difficult to convey this kind of experience to people who do not have similar frames of reference, no matter how sympathetic they are as listeners. You can tell people about your trip, but you may fail to make them understand exactly how or why you felt a particular way. It's okay.

Reverse homesickness

Just as you probably missed home for a time after leaving campus, it is just as natural to experience some “reverse” homesickness for the people, places and things that you grew accustomed to while away from WPI. Feelings of loss are an integral part of returning from an off-campus sojourn and must be anticipated and accepted as a natural result of study away.

Beware of comparisons

Making comparisons between cultures is natural, particularly after residence abroad; however, the tendency to be an “instant expert” is to be avoided at all costs.

Relationships have changed

It is inevitable that when you return you will notice that some relationships with friends and family will have changed. Just as you have altered some of your ideas and attitudes while away, the people at home are likely to have experienced some changes as well. These changes may be positive or negative, and may seem even trivial to you, but expecting no change is unrealistic. The best preparation is flexibility, openness, minimal preconceptions, and tempered optimism.

Feelings of alienation

Sometimes the reality of being back home is not as natural or enjoyable as the place you had imagined. When real daily life is more demanding than you remembered, it is natural to feel some alienation, see faults you never noticed before, or even become quite critical of everyone and everything for a time. Mental comparisons are fine, but keep them to yourself until you regain both your cultural balance and a balanced perspective.

Remain flexible

Keeping as many options open as possible is an essential aspect of a successful return home. Attempting to re-socialize totally into old patterns and networks can be difficult, but remaining isolated and aloof is counterproductive.

Loss/compartmentalization of experience

Being home, along with the pressures of schoolwork, family and friends, often combine to make returnees worried that somehow that will “lose” the experience; somehow becoming compartmentalized like souvenirs only occasionally taken out and looked at. You do not have to let that happen. Maintain your contacts. Talk to people who have experiences similar to yours. Practice your skills. Remember your hard work and the fun you had while off-campus. There are lots of people on campus who have gone through their own re-entry and have had experiences similar to yours. Seek out other returned students from other sites, and look into becoming involved with the Global Ambassadors.

APPENDIX A - WPI OFF-CAMPUS STUDY TRAVEL INFORMATION FORM

WPI Off-Campus Study Travel Information Form

You must attach a copy of your travel itinerary provided by your travel agent or airline, in addition to completing this form. No handwritten itineraries will be accepted.

All students intending to complete a project at a WPI project site are asked to provide the IGSD with information about their travel arrangements. This will notify the faculty advisor, on-site coordinator and IGSD staff of your expected arrival date and time and alert them if a problem arises. *For some sites* this information is needed in order to arrange to have students met at the airport.

You must bring your passport into the IGSD to be scanned, unless you are participating in a project program within the U.S.

Name:	Site:	Term:
Arrival Date on site:	Arriving from (city):	
Mode of travel (air, train, bus, car):		
If traveling by air:		
Airline:	Flight Number:	Airport Destination:
Departure time:	Arrival time:	
Scheduled return date:		
Airline:	Flight Number:	Airport Destination:
Departure time:	Arrival time:	
If you plan to travel independently either before or after the program, please tell us your tentative plans:		

London Project Center Only
Bus Transportation: **Yes** **No**

(PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU CHECK ONE OF THESE OPTIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION FROM HEATHROW AIRPORT TO IES)

APPENDIX B - OFF-CAMPUS STUDENTS' HEALTH UPDATE AND RECORDS RELEASE FORM

Name _____ Project Site _____ Term _____

All students traveling off-campus to participate in a WPI program are required to carry medical insurance that is valid at the program site for the entire length of the program. Please verify this with your insurance company and list the name of your carrier and your policy number.

Carrier _____ Policy Number: _____

Do you have any medical conditions that could affect you while off-campus of which you would like to make the IGSD aware? (i.e. epilepsy, diabetes, depressive episodes, etc.) Also, please list any changes in your health not noted on your medical records on file with WPI Health Services.

Are you allergic to any medications? If so, please list them.

List any prescription medicines you are currently taking.

When traveling off-campus it is a good idea to take a supply of your prescription medications sufficient to last for the length of the trip. Prescription medicines should always be kept in the original containers with the prescription label to avoid problems with customs. It is also important to take along a copy of the prescription from your physician, clearly written, in generic terms, and with an indication of the condition being treated.

In the event of an emergency, please contact:

1. Name _____ Relationship to Student _____

Address _____

email _____

Cell Phone #: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

2. Name _____ Relationship to Student _____

Address _____

email _____

Cell Phone #: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

I hereby authorize WPI health services to release my medical records to the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division in the event of a medical emergency while studying off-campus. *I hereby acknowledge that it is my responsibility to contact my health insurance provider to determine that I am covered while at an off-campus project site.*

Signature _____ Date _____

**APPENDIX C - ATC TEAM FORM
(One Per Team)**

After you have turned in this completed form to the IGSD, at least one member of your group (although we suggest the entire group come so that the entire group takes equal responsibility for the equipment) is required to go to the ATC and reserve a laptop BEFORE pick-up on the specified date.

Project Site: _____

Pickup person: _____

Return person: _____

names of
team members: _____

If you can not pick up and return this PC within the specified dates, then you will need to make alternative arrangements: the ATC can *not* accommodate you.

Dates:

Pick up on or after: 10/20/2010

Return on or before: 12/21/2010

Pick-up Person

Return Person

Student Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Address: _____

Student Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Phone #: _____

Student ID#: _____

Student ID#: _____

Student Email: _____

Student Email: _____

APPENDIX D - ONSITE TRAVEL FORM

Name	Cell phone number
Destination	
Date & time of departure	Date & time of return

Mode of Transportation – Roundtrip

Train Bus Air Car

Departing from the Site Information			
Time of Departure			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from (name of airport, station, terminal)			
<i>* Connection Information if applicable:</i>			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time

Returning to the Site Information			
Returning from:			
Time of Departure			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from (name of airport, station, terminal)			
<i>* Connection Information if applicable:</i>			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time

Lodging (please call advisor with any changes to your reservations)			
Name of hotel	Name of hotel		
Address	Address		
City and country	City and country		
Phone number	Phone number		

List other students who are traveling with you on this exact itinerary:

Check this box if you are staying on site in WPI provided housing for the entire weekend.

Student Signature	Date
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Every student or group of students must turn this form into an advisor before 12:00 noon every Friday – in other words, every student must be accounted for,