

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 2011 Project Center

Prof. Fabio Carrera, Center Director
Venice B2011 Project Center

Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

© 2011, Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division, WPI

Table of Contents Venice B2011

Section 1 – WPI and IGSD Procedures	3
Introduction.....	3
Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practices for Health and Safety.....	4
Statement of Purpose	4
Mandatory Paperwork.....	7
Participant Statement of Agreement.....	7
Travel Information Form (Appendix A)	9
Health Update and Records Release Form (Appendix B).....	9
Voluntary Acknowledgment Form.....	10
WPI Policies and Services for Students at Off-Campus Sites	13
Section 2 - Health & Safety Information.....	19
Safety.....	19
Safety Tips from the U.S. Department of State.....	21
Drugs and the Legal System	22
Health Issues: HIV and AIDS information	23
Rental Car Issues	24
WPI Offices.....	26
Advice from the CDC: General Travel Precautions.....	28
Section 3 – Specific Site Information for Venice Project Center	34
Country Specific Information - Italy.....	52
Section 4 - Transition	58
Experiences in Transition	58
Prescription for Culture Shock	58
Appendix A - WPI Off-Campus Study Travel Information Form	61
Appendix B - Off-Campus Students' Health Update and Records Release Form	62
Appendix C - ATC Team Form.....	63
Appendix D - Onsite Travel Form.....	64

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 ensure 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 2011-2012 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 2011-2012 academic year, approximately 650 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.
- M. In the participant screening process, consider factors such as disciplinary history that may impact on the safety of the individual or the group.
- N. 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 county.

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 forms must be on file in the IGSD office before students leave WPI for their off-campus project experience. If any forms are missing, students are in jeopardy of not being allowed to participate at off-campus programs.

Paperwork deadline: All mandatory paperwork for Venice B2011 must be in the IGSD Office by **Thursday, September 22, 2011 before 3:00 p.m.**

Participant 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
Printed Name	student number	date of birth*	

**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.

Travel Information Form (Appendix A)

The IGSD must have a completed Travel Form and itinerary from you on file before you leave for their site. The IGSD keeps a copy of the form and itinerary and we send a copy with the faculty advisor. By doing this, the IGSD staff and the advisor(s) all will know when and where every student will arrive and will be alerted if there is a problem arises. Whenever possible, you will be met at a pre-agreed location depending on your itinerary.

You should understand that you are responsible for making your own travel arrangements, 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.

You and your family should also understand that while WPI encourages you to travel during your free time, the university can take no responsibility for your safety during independent travel. *You must inform your advisor of all travel plans and when you should be expected back on site.*

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

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.

You and your family 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 your responsibility to carry medical insurance that is valid at the off-campus site for the length of the stay. You must accept all financial responsibility for any medical treatment received while at the program site.

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 your responsibility to make sure that you are covered for the entire length of the program while you are off-campus.

Voluntary Acknowledgment Form

All participants are required to sign a Voluntary Acknowledgment Form, which will be 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.



ACE American Insurance Company
(A Stock Company)
Philadelphia, PA
(Herein called We, Us, Our)

Travel Assistance Program

ATTENTION

**In the event of a medical emergency
call Europ Assistance immediately
and reference plan code: 01AH585**

24-Hour Access

**1-800-243-6124 toll free in the USA or Canada
1-202-659-7803 collect outside of the USA**

Call when:

- You require a referral to a hospital or doctor
- You are hospitalized
- You need to be evacuated or repatriated
- You need to guarantee payment for medical expenses
- You experience local communication problems
- Your safety is threatened by the sudden occurrence of a political or military event

When you call Europ Assistance, please be prepared with the following information:

1. Name of caller, phone no., fax no., relationship to Covered Person;
2. Covered Person's name, age, sex and policy number;
3. A description of the Covered Person's condition;
4. Name, location, and telephone number of hospital;
5. Name and telephone numbers for the treating doctor; where and when the doctor can be reached;
6. Health insurance information, worker's compensation, or automobile insurance information if the Covered Person had an accident.

"Covered Person" means the person insured under the applicable ACE policy.

By requesting assistance you agree to assign to us your rights to recover from any of your responsible insurers any expenses we incurred.

ATTENTION Medical Personnel or Police

In the event of a medical emergency, Europ Assistance will provide the services on the card below. To verify eligibility call the multi-lingual call center 24 hours a day toll free at 1-800-243-6124 if

you're inside the USA or Canada; or if you're outside the USA call collect at 1-202-659-7803.

In addition to the insurance protection provided by your insurance plan, ACE USA has arranged with Europ Assistance USA to provide you with access to its travel assistance services around the world. These services include:

- **Medical Assistance** including referral to a doctor or medical specialist, medical monitoring when you are hospitalized, emergency medical evacuation to an adequate facility, medically necessary repatriation and return of mortal remains.
- **Personal Assistance** including pre-trip medical referral information and while you are on a trip: emergency medication, embassy and consular information, lost document assistance, emergency message transmission, emergency cash advance, emergency referral to a lawyer, translator or interpreter access, medical benefits verification and medical claims assistance.
- **Travel Assistance** including emergency travel arrangements, arrangements for the return of your traveling companion or dependents and vehicle return.
- **Security Assistance** including a crisis hotline and on the ground security assistance to help address safety concerns or to secure immediate assistance while traveling as well as access to a secure, web-based system for tracking global threats and health or location based risk intelligence.

This information provides you with a brief outline of the services available to you. These services are not insured benefits. Reimbursement for any service expenses is limited to the terms and conditions of the policy under which you are insured. You may be required to pay for services not covered. A third party vendor may provide services to you. Europ Assistance makes every effort to refer you to appropriate medical and other service providers. It is not responsible for the quality or results of service provided by independent providers.

In all cases, the medical provider, facility, legal counsel or other professional service provider suggested by Europ Assistance are not employees or agents of Europ Assistance and the choice of provider is yours alone. Europ Assistance assumes no liability for the services provided to you under this arrangement, nor is it liable for any negligence or other wrongful acts or omissions of any of the legal or health care professionals providing services to you. Travel assistance services are not available if your coverage under the policy is not in effect.

ACE TRAVEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

For medical referrals, evacuation, repatriation or other services please call:

ACE Travel Assistance Program
1-800-243-6124 (Inside the USA)
1-202-659-7803 (Outside the USA Call Collect)
OPS@europassistance-usa.com

Visit www.ACETravelAssistance.com for access to global threat assessments and location based intelligence.

Username: aceah
Password: security



Plan Number: 01AH585
Employer: Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Policy Number: ADD N04947782
Assistance Provider: Europ Assistance USA

Europ Assistance provides emergency medical and travel services and pre-trip information services. Please call when:

- You require a referral to a hospital or doctor
- You are hospitalized
- You need to be evacuated or repatriated
- You need to guarantee payment for medical expenses
- You experience local communication problems
- Your safety is threatened by the sudden occurrence of a political or military event

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 *Student 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.** The student 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 his/her 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 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 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 *Student 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 student 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 designee.

Administrative Agreement at Off-Campus Program Sites

Students at off-campus residential program sites who accept responsibility for the complaint against them may choose, with the agreement of the university and/or plaintiff, to waive their right to the informal hearing procedure and instead accept a sanction imposed by the university.

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.

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 to the host culture: disruptive sexual behavior, 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. You can 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 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 not a U.S. citizen, it is your responsibility to determine what other documentation you will need to file to obtain your visa. Please do so in consultation with IGSD. Do not submit your visa application before checking in with IGSD to ensure that you're submitting the appropriate application.

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 in 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 Information

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 student 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 B2011 Project Center 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 must then address the issue with the student at risk. Repeated behavior identified as risky will be cause to be sent home.**
- 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:

William L. Granahan CIC,LIA,CMC, Senior Consultant

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://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh4-HIVAIDS.aspx>

RENTAL CAR ISSUES

WPI students working on an academic project while on-site are strongly discouraged from renting a car during their time in the program. Known risks include road safety, familiarity with road conditions, and the condition of the vehicles available for rent the possibility of standing out as a tourist/foreigner. If students choose to rent a car, they do so at their own risk.

Safety If You Rent a Car¹

When you rent a car, don't go for the exotic; choose a type commonly available locally. Where possible, ask that markings that identify it as a rental car be removed. Make certain it is in good repair. If available, choose a car with universal door locks and power windows, features that give the driver better control of access to the car. An air conditioner, when available, is also a safety feature, allowing you to drive with windows closed. Thieves can and do snatch purses through open windows of moving cars.

- Keep car doors locked at all times. Wear seat belts.
- As much as possible, avoid driving at night.
- Don't leave valuables in the car. If you must carry things with you, keep them out of sight locked in the trunk.
- Don't park your car on the street overnight. If the hotel or municipality does not have a parking garage or other secure area, select a well-lit area.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Don't get out of the car if there are suspicious looking individuals nearby. Drive away.

Patterns of Crime against Motorists

In many places frequented by tourists, including areas of southern Europe, victimization of motorists has been refined to an art. Where it is a problem, U.S. embassies are aware of it and consular officers try to work with local authorities to warn the public about the dangers. In some locations, these efforts at public awareness have paid off, reducing the frequency of incidents. You may also wish to ask your rental car agency for advice on avoiding robbery while visiting tourist destinations. Carjackers and thieves operate at gas stations, parking lots, in city traffic and along the highway. Be suspicious of anyone who hails you or tries to get your attention when you are in or near your car. Criminals use ingenious ploys. They may masquerade as good Samaritans, offering help for tires that they claim are flat or that they have made flat. Or they may flag down a motorist, ask for assistance, and then steal the rescuer's luggage or car. Usually they work in groups, one person carrying on the pretense while the others rob you. Other criminals get your attention with abuse, either trying to drive you off the road, or causing an "accident" by rear-ending you or creating a "fender bender."

In some urban areas, thieves don't waste time on ploys, they simply smash car windows at traffic lights, grab your valuables or your car and get away. In cities around the world, "defensive driving" has come to mean more than avoiding auto accidents; it means keeping an eye out for potentially criminal pedestrians, cyclists and scooter riders.

Annual Global Road Crash Statistics²

- Nearly 1.3 million people die in road crashes each year, on average 3,287 deaths a day.
- An additional 20-50 million are injured or disabled.
- More than half of all road traffic deaths occur among young adults ages 15-44.
- Road traffic crashes rank as the 9th leading cause of death and account for 2.2% of all deaths globally.
- Road crashes are the leading cause of death among young people ages 15-29, and the second leading cause of death worldwide among young people ages 5-14.
- Each year nearly 400,000 people under 25 die on the world's roads, on average over 1,000 a day.
- Over 90% of all road fatalities occur in low and middle-income countries, which have less than half of the world's vehicles.

¹ This information was taken from the U.S. State Department's website.

² This information was taken from the Association for Safe International Road Travel's (ASIRT) website: www.asirt.org
Going Global at WPI Handbook Use and adaptation welcome, but please acknowledge WPI and
10/13/2011 [Natalie Mello](#) and tell us of your use.

- Road crashes cost USD \$518 billion globally, costing individual countries from 1-2% of their annual GDP.
- Road crashes cost low and middle-income countries USD \$65 billion annually, exceeding the total amount received in developmental assistance.
- Unless action is taken, road traffic injuries are predicted to become the fifth leading cause of death by 2030.

Annual United States Road Crash Statistics

- Over 37,000 people die in road crashes each year
- An additional 2.35 million are injured or disabled
- Over 1,600 children under 15 years of age die each year
- Nearly 8,000 people are killed in crashes involving drivers ages 16-20
- Road crashes cost the U.S. \$230.6 billion per year, or an average of \$820 per person
- Road crashes are the single greatest annual cause of death of healthy U.S. citizens traveling abroad

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
- Anne Ogilvie, Director of Global Operations
X5852, atogilvie@wpi.edu
- Leanne Johnson
Assistant Director Global Perspective Program
x 6089, ljohnson@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

- Lynn Beauregard, Bursar
x 5741, lbeauregard@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.asp

Lonely Planet

http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services/flights/singapore_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 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.org/>

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 (diethylmethyltoluamide), 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.

CDC Health Information for Travelers to Italy, including Holy See

Travel Notices in Effect

- [2011 Measles Update](#) June 23, 2011
- [Guidelines and Recommendations: Interim Guidance about Avian Influenza \(H5N1\) for U.S. Citizens Living Abroad](#) January 13, 2011
- [Human Infection with Avian Influenza A \(H5N1\) Virus: Advice for Travelers](#) November 04, 2008

Safety and Security Abroad

- [Registration of Traveler Emergency Contact and Itinerary Information](#) January 13, 2011
- [Transportation Security Administration](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)

Preparing for Your Trip to Italy

Before visiting Italy, you may need to get the following vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases and other diseases you might be at risk for at your destination: (Note: Your doctor or health-care provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history, areas of the country you will be visiting, and planned activities.)

To have the most benefit, see a health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect.

Even if you have less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see a health-care provider for needed vaccines, medications, and information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling.

If your travel plans will take you to more than one country during a single trip, be sure to let your health-care provider know so that you can receive the appropriate vaccinations and information for all of your destinations. Long-term travelers, such as those who plan to work or study abroad, may also need additional vaccinations as required by their employer or school.

Be sure your routine vaccinations are up-to-date. Check the links below to see which vaccinations adults and children should get.

Routine vaccines, as they are often called, such as for influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), and diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) are given at all stages of life; see the [childhood and adolescent immunization schedule](#) and [routine adult immunization schedule](#).

Routine vaccines are recommended even if you do not travel. Although childhood diseases, such as measles, rarely occur in the United States, they are still common in many parts of the world. A traveler who is not vaccinated would be at risk for infection.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Vaccine recommendations are based on the best available risk information. Please note that the level of risk for vaccine-preventable diseases can change at any time.

Vaccination or Disease	Recommendations or Requirements for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases
------------------------	--

<u>Routine</u>	Recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots such as, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc.
<u>Hepatitis B</u>	Recommended for all unvaccinated persons who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment, such as for an accident, even in developed countries, and for all adults requesting protection from HBV infection.

Rabies vaccination is only recommended for travelers involved in any activities that might bring them into direct contact with bats, carnivores, and other mammals. These travelers include wildlife professionals, researchers, veterinarians, or adventure travelers visiting areas where bats, carnivores, and other mammals are commonly found.

Items to Bring With You

Medicines you may need:

- **The prescription medicines you take every day.** Make sure you have enough to last during your trip. Keep them in their original prescription bottles and always in your carry-on luggage. Be sure to follow security guidelines, if the medicines are liquids.

Note: Some drugs available by prescription in the US are illegal in other countries. Check the US Department of State Consular Information Sheets for the country(s) you intend to visit or the embassy or consulate for that country(s). If your medication is not allowed in the country you will be visiting, ask your health-care provider to write a letter on office stationery stating the medication has been prescribed for you.

Other items you may need:

See suggested over-the-counter medications and first aid items for a travelers' health kit.

Note: Check the Air Travel section of the Transportation Security Administration website for the latest information about airport screening procedures and prohibited items.

Other Diseases Found in Western Europe

Risk can vary between countries within this region and also within a country; the quality of in-country surveillance also varies.

The following are disease risks that might affect travelers; this is not a complete list of diseases that can be present. Environmental conditions may also change, and up to date information about risk by regions within a country may also not always be available.

Tickborne encephalitis (TBE) occurs in warmer months of the southern part of the nontropical forested regions of Europe.

Leishmaniasis (cutaneous and visceral) is found, especially in countries bordering the Mediterranean, with the highest number of cases from Spain, where it is an important opportunistic infection in HIV-infected persons.

Variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob cases have been reported primarily from the United Kingdom, although a few cases have been reported from other countries in Western Europe. Large outbreaks of trichinosis have occurred; outbreaks in France have been linked to horse meat.

Measles outbreaks occurred in several European countries in 2006.

Risk of hepatitis A is low, although sporadic outbreaks have occurred in developed countries.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus H5N1 has been documented in wild birds or other avian species in several of the countries in Europe. For a current list of countries reporting outbreaks of H5N1 among poultry and/or wild birds, [view updates from the World Organization for Animal Health \(OIE\)](#).

Staying Healthy During Your Trip

Prevent Insect Bites

Diseases, like [tickborne encephalitis](#) (TBE) and [leishmaniasis](#) are spread through tick and sandfly bites respectively. One of the best protections is to prevent such bites by:

- Using insect repellent with 30%-50% DEET. Picaridin, available in 7% and 15% concentrations, needs to be applied more frequently.
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts which should be tucked in, long pants, and hats to cover exposed skin. When you visit areas with ticks and fleas, wear boots, not sandals, and tuck pants into socks.

For detailed information about insect repellent use, see [Insect and Arthropod Protection](#).

Prevent Animal Bites and Scratches

Direct contact with animals can spread diseases like rabies or cause serious injury or illness. It is important to prevent animal bites and scratches.

- Be sure you are up to date with tetanus vaccination.
- Do not touch or feed any animals, including dogs and cats. Even animals that look like healthy pets can have rabies or other diseases.
- Help children stay safe by supervising them carefully around all animals.
- If you are bitten or scratched, wash the wound well with soap and water and **go to a doctor right away**.
- After your trip, be sure to tell your doctor or state health department if you were bitten or scratched during travel.

For more information about rabies and travel, see the [Rabies chapter](#) of the [Yellow Book](#) or [CDC's Rabies homepage](#). For more information about how to protect yourself from other risks related to animals, see [Animal-Associated Hazards](#).

Be Careful about Food and Water

Diseases from food and water are the leading cause of illness in travelers. Follow these tips for safe eating and drinking:

- Avoid unpasteurized dairy products.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially before eating. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel (with at least 60% alcohol).

Diseases from food and water often cause vomiting and diarrhea.

Avoid Injuries

Car crashes are a leading cause of [injury](#) among travelers. Protect yourself from these injuries by:

- Not drinking and driving.
- Wearing your seat belt and using car seats or booster seats in the backseat for children.
- Following local traffic laws.
- Wearing helmets when you ride bikes, motorcycles, and motor bikes.
- Hiring a local driver, when possible.

- Avoiding night driving.

Other Health Tips

- To avoid infections such as HIV and viral hepatitis do not share needles for tattoos, body piercing, or injections.
- To reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases always use latex condoms.

After You Return Home

If you are not feeling well, you should see your doctor and mention that you have recently traveled. Also tell your doctor if you were bitten or scratched by an animal while traveling.

Important Note: This document is not a complete medical guide for travelers to this region. Consult with your doctor for specific information related to your needs and your medical history; recommendations may differ for pregnant women, young children, and persons who have chronic medical conditions.

Section 3 – Specific Site Information for Venice Project Center

Paperwork Deadline

All paperwork for Venice B11 must be in the IGSD office **by Thursday, September 22, 2011 by 3:00 p.m.**

Housing Address:

Cannaregio 6248
Corte Cortese
30121 VENEZIA

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 23, 2011
Everyone is expected to arrive in Venice on October 24, between 9am and 5pm.
Do not plan to arrive earlier or later than October 23rd.

Departure from Venice: Saturday, December 17, 2011
Everyone is expected to leave Venice on December 17th, at any time.
Do not plan to leave earlier or later than December 17th.

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

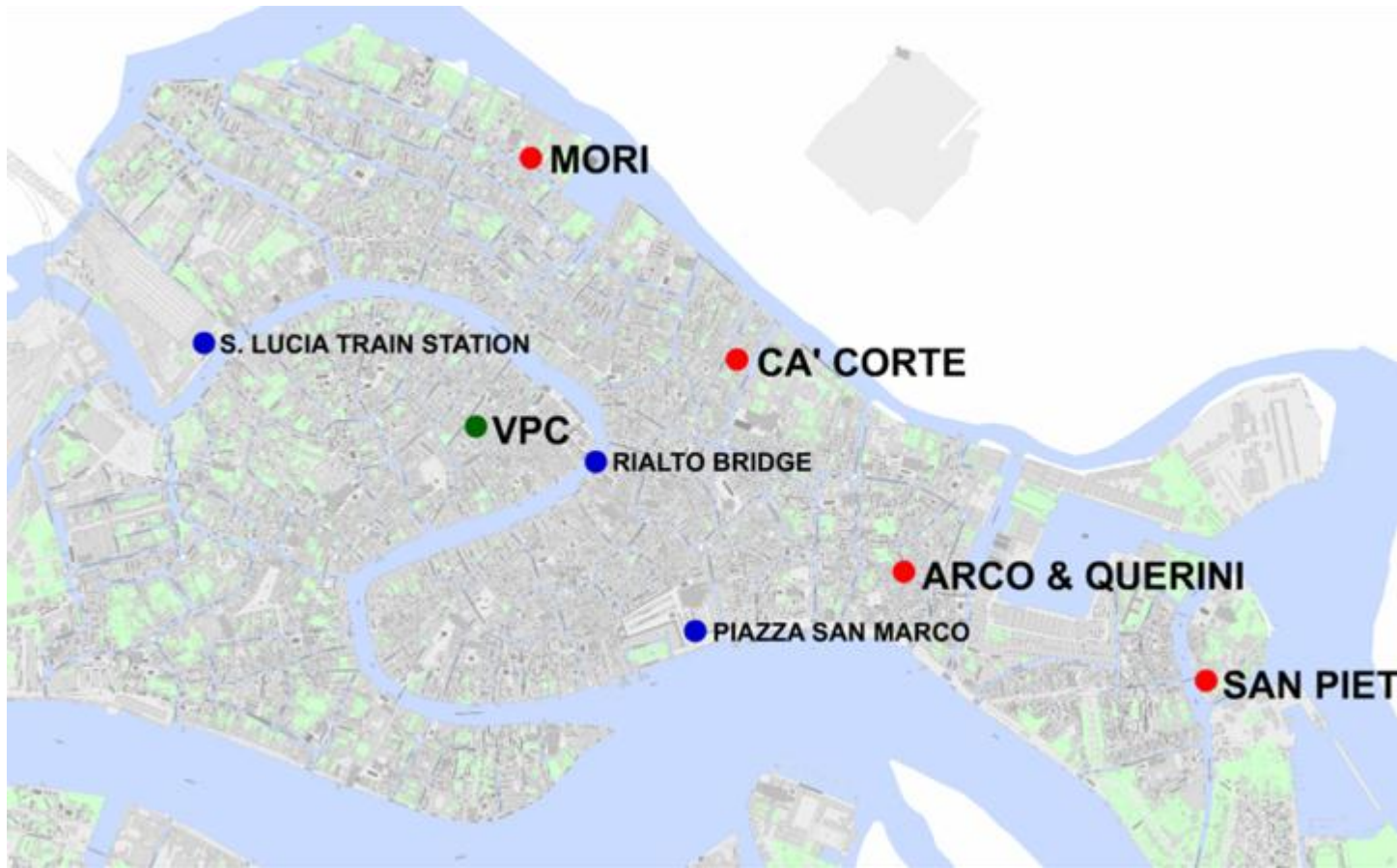
Venice Project Center Mailing Address
C/O Forma Urbis
P.O. Box 589
Venice, 30100
Italy

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.

The letters on the map correspond to those listed in the tables below. Note that ARCO represents both Arco and Ca'Querini. Click on the name in the first column of each table for details about each apartment.



A map of all of the 2010 apartments (plus the VPC)

Name	Mailing Address	Telephone	Fax
Venice Project Center (VPC)	S. Polo 1932/A Venezia, 30125	+39-041-523-3209 (answering machine)	+39-041-241-9344

Apartment	Telephone	Address	Occupants
Ca' Corte	+39 348-526-7071	Cannaregio 6248 Corte Cortese 30121 VENEZIA	2: Martinez Luna, Scully 3: Pierson, Tassinari 4: Corriveau Di Toro
Arco	+39 348-334-3863	Castello 3519 Calle de l'Arco 30122 VENEZIA	Avila, Mukhanov, Sokk
Ca'Querini	1 - 2) +39 348-	Castello 3520	1: Amilcar, Carey, Lee,

	334-3865 4-5-6) +39 346- 526-4245	Calle de l'Arco 30124 VENEZIA	Setalsingh 2: Ascare, Bourgeois, Mazzucotelli, Syrgak-Kyzy 4: Meissen, O'Brien C.H. 5: De Zulueta, Fletcher
S. Pietro	+39 348-523-0583	Castello 32 S. Pietro di Castello 30121 VENEZIA	Prof. Cocola and family
Ca'Mori	(1) +39 348-526- 7288 (2) +39 348-193- 3278	Cannaregio 3527 Fondamenta de la Madonna de l'Orto 30121 VENEZIA	1: Bellingham, O'Biern Chris 2: Davis, Saari

[Wikimecum Navigation](#)

[Early preparation](#) · [Travel and arrival information](#): · [Directions to the VPC](#) · [Packing suggestions](#) · [Money matters](#)
[In Venice](#): · [Communications](#) · [Health](#) · [Apartments](#) · [How to](#) · [Recommended](#)
[Projects](#): · [Grading](#) · [Report](#) · [Graphics](#) · [Presentations](#) · [Finishing up](#)

The Venice Project Center

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.

Background Notes - Italy

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 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 (January 2011 est.): 60.6 million.

Annual population growth rate (2010 est.): 0.04%, 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*--79.1 years for men; 84.3 years for women.

Work force (25.01 million, 2010): *Services*--67%; *industry and commerce*--29%; *agriculture*--4%.

Unemployment rate is 8.5%.

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 Senators "for life"). *Judicial*--independent constitutional court and lower magistracy.

Subdivisions: 94 provinces, 20 regions.

Political parties: People of Liberty, Democratic Party, Northern League, Future and Liberty, 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, 2010): \$1.77 trillion.

GDP per capita (purchasing power parity, 2010): \$29,400.

GDP growth: 1.3% (2010); -5.2% (2009); -1.3% (2008); 1.5% (2007); 2.0% (2006); 0.7% (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* (2010)--\$447.2 billion f.o.b.: mechanical products, textiles and apparel, transportation equipment, metal products, chemical products, food and agricultural products. *Partners* (2009)--Germany 12.7%, France 11.6%, U.S. 5.9%, Spain 5.7%, U.K. 5.1%. *Imports* (2010)--\$483 billion c.i.f.: machinery and transport equipment, foodstuffs, ferrous and nonferrous metals, wool, cotton, energy products. *Partners* (2008)--Germany 16.7%, France 8.9%, China 6.5%, Netherlands 5.7%, Spain 4.4%, Russia 4.1%, Belgium 4.0%.

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 2 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 7 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 5 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 La Russa

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. In April 2010, Gianfranco Fini, cofounder of the People of Liberty, and a number of adherents broke from it and established a new opposition party

called Future and Liberty, weakening Berlusconi's coalition, which continued nevertheless to govern.

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 mass center-right party, led by Berlusconi, is Italy's largest party and one of the largest in Europe.

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 seventh-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--4.6% and 119% of GDP for 2010, respectively. Italy joined the European Monetary Union (EMU) 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 the debt. The worsening economic situation undermined this aim, and the deficit grew well above the 3% ceiling in 2009 and 2010, to 5.4% and 4.5% respectively. The government plans to bring the deficit down to 3.9% in 2011 and below 3% in 2012. Modest GDP growth is likely to jeopardize this effort.

Italy's economic growth averaged only 0.8% in the period 2001-2008. GDP contracted as the Euro zone and world economies slowed, decreasing 1.3% in 2008 and 5.2% in 2009 largely due to the global economic crisis and its impact on exports and domestic demand. GDP recovered only part of the ground lost, growing 1.3% in 2010. In 2011 Italy's GDP is expected to grow below the EMU countries' average.

Italy's closest trade ties are with the other countries of the European Union, with whom it conducts about 58.1% of its total trade (2009 data). Italy's largest European Union trade partners, in order of market share, are Germany (12.7%), France (11.6%), Spain (5.7%), and the United Kingdom (5.1%). 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' 16th-largest trading partner in 2010, with total bilateral trade of \$42.7 billion comprised of exports to Italy totaling \$14.2 billion and imports from Italy worth \$28.5 billion. The U.S.'s \$14.3 billion deficit with Italy in 2010 was largely in line with the \$14.2 billion deficit registered in 2009. Machinery and aircraft are becoming important U.S. exports to Italy. U.S. foreign direct investment in Italy at the end of 2009 exceeded \$28.7 billion.

Labor

Unemployment is a regional issue in Italy--low in the north, high in the south. Italy's unemployment rate, 8.5% in 2010, has crept up as a decade of low growth and the slowing world economy have taken their toll. The U.S. Embassy and various economists expect the unemployment rate to remain high in 2011 and 2012. Traditional regional labor market disparities remain unchanged, with the southern third of the country posting a significantly higher unemployment rate compared to northern and central Italy. 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 2-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 70 military personnel and Carabinieri police trainers. Currently almost 8,000 Italian troops are deployed, including approximately 1,100 in Kosovo, almost 1,800 in Lebanon as part of UNIFIL, and approximately 4,000 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 11,500 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--Douglas Hengel

Economic Affairs--George White

Political Affairs--Liam Wasley

Consular Affairs--Philip Egger

Public Affairs--Benjamin Ziff

Commercial Affairs--Thomas Moore

Regional Security Affairs--James Bacigalupo

Agricultural Section--James Dever

Defense Attache--CAPT Clifford Olsen

Consular Posts

Consul General, Florence--Mary Ellen Countryman

Consul General, Milan--Carol Perez

Consul General, Naples--Donald Moore

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>

Country Specific Information - Italy

ENTRY / EXIT REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. CITIZENS: 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, you need a visa, which you must get from an Italian Embassy or Consulate before entering Italy. For further information concerning visas and entry requirements for Italy, you may contact the [Embassy of Italy](#) at 3000 Whitehaven Street NW, Washington, DC 20008, or 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](#).

Are you a non-resident? U.S. citizens staying or traveling within Italy for less than three 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.

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](#).

Are you a resident? U.S. citizens staying in Italy for more than three months are considered residents and must obtain a permesso di soggiorno (permit of stay). This includes U.S. citizens who will work or transact business and persons who want simply to live in Italy. An application "kit" for the permesso di soggiorno can 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, U.S. citizens 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 website. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information page](#).

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. An earthquake severely damaged the town of L'Aquila in 2009. General information about disaster preparedness is available online from the U.S. Federal Management Agency (FEMA). Detailed information on Italy's 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 Islands north of Sicily, also have active volcanoes with lava flows. Detailed information on volcano activity in Italy is available from the USGS.

Politically motivated violence in Italy is most often connected to Italian internal developments or social issues. Italian authorities and foreign diplomatic facilities have found bombs outside public buildings, received bomb threats, and were subjects of letter bombs. Buildings or offices are sometimes the targets of firebombs or Molotov cocktails, although generally at night; such incidents are instigated by organized crime or anarchist movements, and have not targeted or injured U.S. citizens.

Demonstrations may have an anti-American character, especially in areas hosting U.S. military bases. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful have the potential to turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. You should take common sense precautions and follow news reports carefully. Stay up to date by reading the Embassy's [Demonstration Notices](#).

Italian authorities have made several high-profile arrests involving members or affiliates of transnational terror groups. Like other countries in the Schengen area, Italy's open borders with its Western European neighbors allow for the possibility of terrorist groups entering/exiting the country with anonymity.

Stay up to date by:

- Bookmarking our [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), which contains the current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#).
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](#) as well.
- Calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free within the U.S. and Canada, or a regular toll line, 1-202-501-4444, from other countries.
- Take some time before travel to consider your personal security –Here are some useful tips for [traveling safely abroad](#).

CRIME: Italy has a moderate rate of crime. You should exercise extra caution at night and at train stations, airports, nightclubs, bars, and outdoor cafes. If you are drinking heavily, your ability to judge situations and make decisions may be impaired and this can make you a target for crime. Young drinkers are particularly vulnerable to robbery and physical and sexual assault.

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. You 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. You 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. Be careful with your bag or purse, as thieves on motor scooters are very quick and can snatch a purse off of your arm from a moving scooter. Resisting these thieves can be hazardous, as some tourists 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.

Some travelers in Rome, Florence, and Naples have reported incidents where criminals used drugs to assault or rob them. These incidents have been reported near Rome's Termini train station; at bars and cafes near Rome's Colosseum, Colle Oppio, Campo de Fiori, and Piazza Navona; and at bars or cafes in the center of Florence and Naples. Criminals using this tactic "befriend" you at a train station, restaurant, café, or bar, and then offer you a drink laced with a sleeping drug. When you fall asleep, criminals steal your valuables and may sexually assault you. Some victims of these assaults in Rome have required hospitalization.

Thieves are also known to have impersonated police officers in order to steal. The thief shows you a circular plastic sign with the words "police" or "international police" and then in perfect English asks to see your identification and your money. If this happens to you, you should insist on seeing the officer's identification card (documento), before handing over your wallet as impersonators tend not to carry forged documents. You should immediately report thefts or other crimes to the actual police.

Be alert to the possibility of carjackings and thefts while you are waiting in traffic or stopped at traffic lights. This has been a particular problem in Catania, Sicily. Use particular caution driving at night on highways, when thieves are more likely to strike. Americans have reported break-ins of their rental cars during stops at highway service areas; thieves smash car windows and steal everything inside. Theft of small items such as radios, luggage, cameras, briefcases, and even cigarettes from parked cars is prevalent. Vehicles parked near beaches during the summer can be broken into and robbed of valuables. Lock car doors whenever you park, and do not leave packages in your car in plain view.

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 against and identify skimming devices:

1. Use ATMs located in well-lighted public areas, or secured inside a 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 bystanders could be injured.

Don't buy counterfeit and pirated goods, even if they are widely available. Not only are the bootlegs illegal to bring back into the United States, if you purchase them you may also be breaking local law.

According to Italian Law (Law 80 of May 14, 2005), anyone caught buying counterfeit goods (for example, DVDs, CDs, 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. You are advised to purchase products only from stores and other licensed retailers to avoid unknowingly buying counterfeit and illegal merchandise.

VICTIMS OF CRIME: If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. We can:

- Replace a stolen passport.
- For violent crimes such as assault or rape, help you find appropriate medical care,
- Put you in contact with the appropriate police authorities, and contact family members or friends.
- Although the local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime, consular officers can help you understand the local criminal justice process and can direct you to local attorneys.

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 you are traveling in Italy, you are subject to its laws even if you are a U.S. citizen. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different than our own, and criminal penalties vary from country to country. There are also some things that might be legal in the country you visit, but still illegal in the United States; for instance, you can be prosecuted under U.S. law if you buy pirated goods. Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime [prosecutable in the United States](#). If you break local laws in Italy, your U.S. passport won't help you avoid arrest or prosecution. It's very important to know what's legal and what's not where you are going.

Based on the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, bilateral agreements with certain countries, and customary international law, if you are arrested in Italy, you have the option to request that the police, prison officials, or other authorities alert the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate of your arrest, and to have communications from you forwarded to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

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.

You must obey local transportation laws and regulations. You must purchase train and metro tickets and validate them by punching them in validating machines usually located near the entrance of train/metro tracks prior to boarding. Failure to follow this procedure may result in an on-the-spot fine by an inspector on the train. You 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.

You must obey 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 electronic toll 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.** [Notice from Italian authorities of a violation may take a year or longer to arrive.](#) 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.

Accessibility: While in Italy, travelers with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation different from what is found in the United States. Many find Italy’s narrow cobbled streets and storied monuments charming; they can, however, be a challenge for physically impaired travelers. Many Italian sidewalks lack ramps, some Italian streets lack sidewalks altogether, or for instance in the case of Venice, may feature staircases and narrow pedestrian bridges. While some major sights and hotels have put time and planning into ensuring accessibility, there are others that lack ramps, elevators, or handicap-accessible bathrooms. Advance planning can go a long way in making a difference in accommodation for disabled travelers. Inform airlines and hotels of your disabilities when making reservations as some time may be needed to prepare accommodation. Call ahead to restaurants, museums, and other facilities to find out if they are wheelchair-accessible. Most, but not all train stations in Italy have accommodations for those traveling in wheelchairs. With advance notice, personal assistance can be provided to a disabled person traveling through a particular station. More information is available at [Trenitalia’s website addressing disabled travelers](#). For those who wish to rent cars, hand-controlled vehicles are available in Italy from major car-rental companies. You should contact the car rental company well in advance of your trip in order to reserve the vehicle. Remember that Italy functions on 220 volt current. To recharge an electric wheelchair motor you may require a transformer to change the 220 current to 110 volts, as well as an adaptor to adjust the plug to fit Italian electric sockets.

Guide-dog owners must present [the documentation required by European Union Member States in order to enter Italy with a dog](#).

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 you 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, room 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 [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) website](#).

You can find good information on vaccinations and other health precautions, on the [CDC website](#). For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) website](#), which also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#).

MEDICAL INSURANCE: You can't assume your insurance will go with you when you travel. It's very important to find out BEFORE you leave. You need to ask your insurance company two questions:

- Does my policy apply when I'm out of the U.S.?
- Will it cover emergencies like a trip to a foreign hospital or a medical evacuation?

In many places, doctors and hospitals still expect payment in cash at the time of service. Your regular U.S. health insurance may not cover doctors' and hospital visits in other countries. If your policy doesn't go with you when you travel, it's a very good idea to take out another one for your trip. For more information, please see our [medical insurance overseas page](#).

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in Italy, you may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. Italy has one of the highest rates of car accident deaths in the European Union. Streets in Italian historic city centers are often narrow, winding, and congested. Motor scooters are very popular, and scooter drivers often see themselves as exempt from conventions that apply to automobiles. Pedestrians and drivers should be constantly alert to the possibility of a scooter's sudden presence. Most vehicle-related deaths and injuries involve pedestrians or cyclists who are involved in collisions with scooters or other vehicles. Be particularly cautious if you rent a scooter. You should remain vigilant and alert when 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 and 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. 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 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 [Italy's national tourist office](#) and [national authority responsible for road safety](#).

Section 4 - Transition

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

Going Global at WPI Handbook
10/13/2011

Use and adaptation welcome, but please acknowledge WPI and
[Natalie Mello](#) and tell us of your use.

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

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:		

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.

London Project Center Only

Bus transportation will be coordinated for students arriving at Heathrow before 7:45 am on Saturday. Students who arrive at Heathrow Airport before 7:45 a.m. will be taken by bus directly to IES. Bus drivers are not authorized to take passengers not on their list.

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: 10/20/2011

Return on or before: 12/20/2011

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 _____

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,