Preparing for Study Abroad

- Know what is happening in the news in your host city by reading the local newspaper at: Corriere della Sera: [http://www.corriere.it/](http://www.corriere.it/)  
  Gazzetta di Parma: [http://www.gazzettadiparma.it/](http://www.gazzettadiparma.it/)  
- Engaging with and adapting to a different culture is an inherent component of study abroad. You may find the following websites useful to learn about intercultural communication before you leave home: [http://www.pacific.edu/sis/culture/](http://www.pacific.edu/sis/culture/) and [http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/enrichment/culturematters/index.html](http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/enrichment/culturematters/index.html)
- Customs and traditions in your host country are different from those at home. To learn a little about the local customs and traditions you may want to visit the following website: [http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/italy-country-profile.html](http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/italy-country-profile.html)
- You and your parents should refer to the Office of International Programs website ([www.bc.edu/international](http://www.bc.edu/international)) and specifically to the Study Abroad Handbook for more information regarding the abroad experience.
- Prior to your departure you will meet with your International Study Advisor at an orientation to help you further prepare for your study abroad experience.

On-Site Contact Information

- The On-Site Coordinator is Caterina Dacci and the Assistant On-Site Coordinator is Elisabetta Dacci. Both are available to assist you in all aspects starting with adjusting to life in Parma, getting settled into your housing assignment, registering for courses at the Istituto Dante Alighieri and other transitional issues/concerns/questions. Both are available 24 hours a day to assist you with emergency/crisis situations. You should contact Caterina in the event of an emergency.

  Caterina Dacci  
  Via G Dacci, 5  
  43100, Parma  
  Italy  
  Cell phone: 39 347 90 94 964  
  Email: daccicat@tin.it
Travel Information

- You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements.
- Transfer from Airport: You need to arrive in Florence. The On-Site Coordinator will meet you in the hotel in Florence. A Welcome Letter and more specific information will be sent to all of you at a later date.
  Plan to arrive in Florence to start the Art History course. A taxi from the airport in Florence will cost you approximately 20 Euros to get to the city center.
  If you arrive in another city such as Milan: you can take the shuttle bus from the airport in Milan to the Milano Centrale Train station and then take the train to the train station in Florence- Santa Maria Novella. If you arrive in Rome: take the train from the airport in Rome to the Roma Centrale Train station and then take the train to Florence- Santa Maria Novella. At the train station in Rome and at the one in Milan, you can go to the Information Office (they usually speak English) and they will be able to help you purchase your ticket to Florence.
- Italian train schedules can be viewed at www.trenitalia.it A taxi from the main train station in Florence (Santa Maria Novella) to the hotel will cost you approximately 10 Euros. Bring Euros with you so that you can pay the taxi driver. The taxi driver will not accept US currency.
- Passport/Visa information: In order to study in Italy, you must have a passport (valid at least 6 months beyond your estimated return date) and a student visa. You may apply for a passport at any major US post office, but you must apply for your visa at either the Boston Consulate or the consulate nearest your permanent residence. Please visit the Italian consulate’s website www.consboston.esteri.it for the most up to date information regarding the student visa application process. You will need your official acceptance letter in order to apply for your visa.
- Immunizations- No immunizations are required to enter Italy.

Academics
Program dates and Academic calendar:

FALL 12

September 16  Arrival in Florence
Sept.17  Art History starts
Sept.18 Intensive Italian starts
Sept. 30 Art History ends
October 3  Arrival in Parma
October 4-5 Orientation
October 8  Classes start
Nov. 1-4 All saints Holidays
Nov 22-25 Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec. 8 Holiday
Dec. 19 last day of school
Dec.20  End of the program

Accommodation Dates: September 16 December 20
Spring 2013 TBD

Arrival in Florence   Mid January
End of Program    Mid June

- You will select your courses from the list that you will receive during the program orientation session. More information to follow.
- Course approval information will be found at: http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/courseapproval.html
- Information about transcripts and grades is available at: http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/transcripts.html

Housing

- While you are in Florence for the Art History course, you will live in shared rooms in a downtown Florence hotel. All hotel rooms have a private bathroom, TV, air conditioning and a telephone. You will be in double or triple rooms, and have breakfast and dinner at the hotel. Room and board during the early start program in Florence are covered by your BC tuition.
- In Parma, you will either live with a local family or in an apartment shared with other students. Housing placements will be made by the on-site coordinator; she will let you know about your specific housing placement before you arrive in Parma. The apartments are completely furnished; some also have laundry facilities, a study room (with a computer with internet access), a television, and DVD player. If you wish to bring your own laptop computer, there is a wireless device in the house. Each apartment will have a shared cell phone (you can also decide to buy your own for approximately $80 after arrival). The apartments are usually located approximately 10-20 minutes by bus from the city center; a supermarket and some shops are within 3 minutes walking distance.
- Additional information about the estimated cost of housing may be found at: http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/Updated_Budget_2010-.pdf
- If you are living in a shared apartment meals are not included. You will be responsible for your own meals. The kitchens in the apartments are fully furnished. If you are living with an Italian family, you will have a partial meal plan. More specifics will be given to you upon your arrival in Parma.
- Local Transportation: Parma is a walking/bicycle riding friendly city. Buses run throughout the city from 6:30am to 8pm. After 8pm you can call the pronto bus. The pronto bus is a night service which needs to be reserved and takes you to your destination. This service is available until 2am. You can also ride your bike or share a taxi late night.
- Cultural Activities: Even though you are not affiliated with the University of Parma you will still be a member of ASSI, a student association to welcome foreign students in Parma which organizes weekly activities, field trips and parties.
- A highlight of the program is the weekly cooking course taught in an Italian family’s home. This is a non-credit course.
- As a requirement of this study abroad program, you will participate in the Tandem project which is a language exchange between a foreign student and an Italian student with the purpose of improving each other’s language. In addition, the BC on-site
coordinator organizes monthly activities for you. Typical BC excursions include a weekend in Torino for culture and wine tasting, Venice Carnival, and a day trip to Verona.

Wellness, Health and Safety

- Make sure that you have had any required or recommended vaccinations for your travel destinations by consulting the Centers for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov.
- HTH Worldwide Insurance Services is an emergency health and emergency services provider. All registered BC students are covered by our blanket policy while living and traveling outside of the United States. For more information, visit the following website: http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html
- You are advised to visit the U.S. State Department website: http://www.state.gov/ for important travel information including travel advisories.
- Adjusting to a new culture and environment can be stressful. You will have a smoother transition by making sure that you prepare to remain healthy. Following are some websites that provide important information and advice about how to have a healthy and safe experience abroad:
  - http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-services/articles/cultureshock-stages.html
- Be sure to visit the OIP website for additional information about Health and Safety: http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html
- Alcohol and Drugs
  In many cultures, alcohol consumption is an acceptable part of the culture and people are taught to drink in moderation at home. Many countries have a lower drinking age than the U.S. while other countries have drinking and drug abuse laws that may be more severe. You are subject to the laws of your host country, so if you choose to drink alcohol abroad, always drink responsibly and be knowledgeable about your host country’s laws by visiting: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#drug_offenses
- BC emergency contact information:
  - OIP: 617-552-3827 (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm)
  - BCPD: 617-552-4444

Finances

- The OIP website provides information about estimated expenses for study abroad: http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/Updated_Budget_2010-.pdf
- Scholarships and Financial Aid information can be found at: http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/financesawards.html
- Banking information- in the past students will use their US bank, ATM card. Check with your local bank for international fees, etc.

Returning to BC
Complete a Program Evaluation. Upon completion of your program OIP will e-mail the link to the evaluation
Mentor an exchange student from Parma, Italy by contacting oipexchange@bc.edu
Volunteer for Discovery Night, Pre-departure Orientation, Re-entry seminar by contacting your International Study Advisor at oipadvise@bc.edu
It is not uncommon when you return from studying abroad to experience “reverse” culture shock. The following may help you transition back to home:
http://www.cie.uci.edu/prepare/shock.shtml
http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/handbook/handbook5.html#shock

References

• Suggested readings – I strongly recommend that you carefully review all materials you receive with your acceptance letter.
• Useful websites:
  Istituto Dante Alighieri: http://www.dantealighieri.org/parma_it/scuola/index.php
  Parma City Website: www.parmaitaly.com & http://turismo.comune.parma.it
• Student and parent guides at http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/index.html

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