Italy

UC Center programs in Rome, Florence, Procida & Syracuse:
- Art, Food and Society
- Communication Studies in Rome
- Crossroads of Culture in the Mediterranean
- Field Studies in Volcanology
- Italian in Florence
- Made in Italy
- Sociology in Rome

Multi-Site Program:
- Mediterranean Politics, Food and Culture

UCEAP Advising Notes

If you’re looking to study at the University of Bologna, Bocconi or Padova click here to view the advising note for those programs.

Objective of the Advising Notes Document

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

The best sources of detailed program information are the UCEAP program pages for the Italy options.

Please note there are two “Advising Notes” documents for Italy. The other is for the “immersion” options at regular Italian universities (Bologna, Bocconi and Padova) where UCEAP students take the same courses that the Italian students take. If you would like to attend one of these universities, please review the advising note. I encourage students to consider one of these options if they’d like to get as immersed into Italian culture as possible.

**Advisor Contact Information**
The BSA Adviser for Italy is Amy Veramay (averamay@berkeley.edu).

**Program Options**

These programs were created by UC just for UC students from all ten UC campuses. No Italian (or Spanish) students will participate. They are taught in English, so no prior Italian (or Spanish) is expected. They are not connected to any university abroad, but are administered by a UCEAP Study Center in each city. For these reasons, it can be challenging to meet local college students and to get immersed in the local culture without considerable intentional effort.

Click the links below to view minimum requirements, language minimums_MAXIMUMs and other program specifics.

**UC Center Florence**

- **Italian in Florence** - mainly a language program plus one subject course taught in English.
- **Made in Italy** - crash course in Italian language plus subject courses related to Florence and Italy taught in English.

Students may study on these programs in Fall or Spring semester or during the Summer. Winter quarter is not an option for Berkeley students.

The amount of language and area studies courses varies among the summer, fall, and spring options, so please read the UCEAP program pages carefully for details about courses in each program as you must choose a program when you apply.

Check out the UCEAP Florence video.

**UC Center Rome**

- **Art, Food and Society** - Spring semester only. Winter quarter is not an option for Berkeley students.
- **Communication Studies in Rome** - New for 2021. Fall semester only.
- **Sociology in Rome** - New for 2021. Fall semester only.

Check out the UCEAP Rome video.
**UC Center Procida**

**Crossroads of Culture in the Mediterranean** - Summer only. This program is led by a UCSB professor on the small, but beautiful island of Procida off the coast of Naples. If space becomes an issue, priority will be given to students whose majors align with the program themes, other things being equal.

**UC Center Syracuse (Sicily)**

**Field Studies in Volcanology** - New for 2021. Summer only. Taught by researchers from the National Institute of Volcanology and Geophysics.

**Multi-site - Syracuse (Sicily), Barcelona, and Florence**

**Mediterranean Politics, Food & Culture** - Berkeley students must choose this sequence - Syracuse (Sicily), Barcelona, and Florence - of cities due to visa restrictions. Fall semester only.

**Advice on How to Choose from Among these Options**

A.) Academics

Before beginning your research on these options, please read our Academic Planning webpage that explains the process to find out if courses abroad might fulfill requirements for your degree. Check out the Major Advising page as well.

If you want to fulfill breadth requirements, Rome and Florence offer quite a few courses that have been pre-approved by L&S, CED, and CNR. See our College Advising page for further information about the process to ask for an evaluation of other courses that you’d like to take for breadth requirements, plus a link to the list of courses pre-approved by L&S, CED, and CNR for breadth requirements. For other colleges, contact the college adviser directly.

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

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

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

The programs’ courses are rigorous – including the language courses - as this is a UC program offering UC-quality courses. You will learn a lot, but you will indeed have to study, and all these programs have a strict attendance policy.

B.) Internships
Internships for academic credit can often be arranged in the Rome and Florence semester programs, but not in summer (not enough time). See the Academics section of the specific program site for further details. An internship in Rome or Florence is over and above the other required course work. In addition to the summer programs, an internship is not possible in the Mediterranean Politics, Food, and Culture (MPFC) fall program.

C.) Language Study

These programs have no language prerequisite, but differ in how much language is offered/required during the program. Some programs offer no language courses, while others offer intensive Italian language options. Some programs require about one semester’s worth of language coursework during the program. Before choosing any of these programs, please be sure you understand how much language you will be studying by reviewing the individual UCEAP program pages.

A few students with no prior knowledge of Italian felt that they were at a disadvantage in their beginning Italian classes. Other UCEAP students in their class either knew a little Italian somehow or were familiar with another Romance language due to high school Spanish or French classes or due to growing up in a Spanish-speaking family. The same thing happens in beginning Italian classes at Cal, so this situation is not unique to the UCEAP program. If you have no background whatsoever in Italian or any other Romance language, you might want to buy the Italian text used at Cal and do some self-study before departure. Once in Italy, you may have to study more than students who do have such a background, so please keep that in mind. Language classes in all Italy options must be taken for letter grades that will transfer back to your UC transcript. Overall, most students enjoy their Italian language classes because the instructors make learning fun.

D.) Housing

All programs have unique housing options available that range from program arranged apartment, dorm or homestay. Check out the UCEAP program pages to review what types of housing are available for each specific program. Homestays (where available) are recommended for students who wish to immerse themselves as much as possible in Italian culture.

E.) One city or more?

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

F.) Competitiveness of these Options

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

The Mediterranean Politics, Food, and Culture program was impacted in 2019 (did not run in 2020). Each campus has been allocated only 15 spaces for this program for summer 2021. If more applications are received for the spaces we have been allotted by UCEAP, the selection criteria that will be used include GPA and academic record; whether applicants intend to take courses related to their major; class standing; Statement of Purpose. Priority will be given to students who successfully convey
an understanding of the program and can articulate thoughtfully why this program in particular is a good fit for them and how the program will benefit them academically, professionally, and personally.

The four week Crossroads of Culture in the Mediterranean program in Procida is new to UCEAP, but it has run as a UC Santa Barbara faculty-led summer program in the past and was quite popular. Each campus has been allocated only two spaces for this program for summer 2021. Other things being equal, priority will be given to students whose majors align with the program themes.

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

Unless there is a reason why you can study abroad only in the summer, I would encourage you to study abroad for a semester for four reasons. 1. The summer program in Rome lasts only 6 weeks and costs ~$10,000. The semester lasts 15 weeks and costs ~$18,500. Airfare is included in those budgets. So more than twice as long, but not twice as expensive. 2. Financial aid works normally for a semester, so if you receive full financial aid at Cal, you will receive financial aid to cover the entire UCEAP budget, even if it is higher than Cal. Summer is not considered a regular term, so the financial aid that is available does not always cover the full budget. It varies by student. Email our study abroad financial at travelaid@berkeley.edu. They can tell you what you are likely to receive for a summer or semester based on your current financial aid data in CalCentral. 3. If you study abroad in summer, you can't get a job to earn money. 4. The longer you can be in Italy, the better your Italian will become, and the more you will learn about the culture. So keep all this in mind as you deliberate about the best timing to study in Italy. Feel free to discuss this with the Italy adviser.

H.) **Type of city**

**Florence** is a beautiful medium-sized city (population ~400,000) famous for its history and great art treasures. Despite its moderate size, what it offers is so vast and remarkable that boredom is unlikely to occur. It can be somewhat difficult to interact with the locals, however, as many Florentines prefer to speak English because of the crowds of tourists who visit almost year-round. The UC study center is not affiliated with any Italian university in Florence so meeting Italian college students can be challenging. Volunteer opportunities can get students engaged with local Italians, if they wish. Meeting other study abroad students is inevitable, however, as Florence is one of the most popular study abroad destinations in Italy, if not all of Europe. It is possible to escape the foreign influx, but it will require intention and effort on your part. Please consider whether a medium-sized city often full of tourists and study abroad students is the appropriate locale for you to fulfill your study abroad goals. [Here](#) is an article from the Los Angeles Times about Florence for you to review.

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

**Procida** is a beautiful, but tiny island (2 square miles) so I would encourage you not to choose this option unless the courses are truly of interest.

**Syracuse** is a 2,700-year-old city on the island of Sicily with a population of 125,000. While located on an island, you can still reach the mainland of Italy by car, train or ferry.
Other Important Notes

Financial Aid and Scholarships for Study Abroad

View Berkeley financial aid details and many scholarship opportunities on our [webpage](#). Deadlines to apply for scholarships are earlier than you may think, so do your research now!

Some scholarships that are good for students going to Italy:

- Duttenhaver Scholarships for UCEAP year-long programs
- UC Berkeley’s Institute of International Studies Merit Scholarships – non-need-based scholarships of up to $2,000 each to support undergraduate research (can be done abroad) in any area of international studies (deadline is usually in November)
- Some specific scholarships for students studying in Italy are:
  - The [National Italian-American Foundation (NIAF)](#) offers $2,500-$12,000 grants. Deadline = March 1.
  - The [UCB Classics Department](#) offers various prizes and awards for travel and study in Italy and certain other appropriate countries.
  - A UCEAP scholarship has been established for Berkeley students by the Lucheta family, creator of Torani syrups. There is no application to fill out. Recipients will be chosen based on financial aid criteria and notified of selection.

Taking Italian Language Classes P/NP

Italian language classes may be taken P/NP, but with your application you must upload a written note from your instructor or the Italian Department stating what your letter grade would have been. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for this without prompting from the Italy adviser or BSA office. An email from the instructor to the BSA Italy adviser suffices.

Grad Students

Some UCEAP programs are open to graduate students. Since this varies from program to program, please check out the individual program page you are interested in on the UCEAP website. Check out our [Graduate Students webpage](#) for some information to help you get started.

DSP Students

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

LGBTQI Students

Here are a few resources you may wish to explore if you identify as a member of the LGBTQI community:

- [How to Pick Where to Study Abroad as an LGBTQIA+ Student](#)
- [SAI Programs - 5 Things to know About LGBTQIA Culture in Italy](#)
- [State Department resources for LGBTI Travelers](#)
Medical Marijuana

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

UCEAP Alumni/ae and Reciprocal Exchange Students as Resources

UCEAP alums and students studying at Cal from our partner universities in Italy are some of your best resources for information about the program. If you would like to be put in touch with alums or reciprocity students, simply send the BSA Adviser an email addressed to the alums or reciprocity students (e.g., “Dear alums, or Dear Reciprocity Students, I have some questions about the program or your university...”) and the message will be forwarded to them.

Critical Passport Details

Your passport must be valid for 3 months beyond the end date of the UCEAP program.

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

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

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

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

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

Exception to the above: No visa is required for Italy programs shorter than 90 days. If you want to do a summer program plus a Fall program, however, you must apply for each separately, and apply for a visa for the Fall option which will be difficult or impossible without a duplicate passport. If you are considering a summer and a fall back-to-back combination, you must consult with the BSA advisers BEFORE applying in order to obtain their permission.
Also, if you are thinking of participating in two back-to-back semester options, it would be wise not to choose Italy as your second program abroad due to the visa application process; better to go to Italy first, and then to a country with an easier visa application process second. (Exception: if you study somewhere in Spring, then in Italy in Summer, that could work because no visa is required for Italy Summer.) Please remember: applications for back-to-back applications must be approved by both BSA advisers BEFORE you start them!

**Travel Advisory #2 – Travel During the Program**

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

*Mille grazie! Buona fortuna!*