

## INTRODUCTION

Cristina Anzilotti, the Director of Sarah Lawrence College in Florence, and I are delighted that you are joining the program.

Living and studying in Florence will probably be one of the most rewarding and challenging experiences you will ever have. You will have to make adjustments to many things: being surrounded by a foreign language; modern traffic in a medieval city; a different sense of time, pace and efficiency; a different schedule of academic work; less heat and hot water; more regular eating habits. You will also have the privilege of becoming deeply familiar with the artistic treasure houses of Europe, of enjoying beautiful topography, varied climate, excellent food and wine and rewarding contacts with warm, friendly people. The first weeks may include some perplexing moments, but by the end, you will be proud of your accomplishments and will probably feel mildly irritated by the tourists who are invading your city.

By now, you are probably happily excited and happily confused about what to do—and when to do it—in order to end up in the right place at the right time. This handbook has been designed to help you with your preparations for Florence: you will find advice for settling in, academic policies and descriptions, and a lot of useful information that we've pulled together from a number of different sources. Be sure to bring this handbook with you!

It is hoped that this book will answer most questions you may have between now and your arrival in Florence. But if it does not, please feel free to contact me or Cristina Anzilotti, the Director of Sarah Lawrence College in Florence.

I hope you enjoy planning your year abroad.

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**FALL 2008**

Tuesday, September 9	Students arrive in Florence
Tue., Sept. 9 – Sun., Sept. 14	Orientation in Pescia
Mon., Sept. 15 – Sun., Sept. 21	Orientation in Florence
Monday, September 22	First Semester begins
Friday, December 19	End of First Semester
Sat., Dec. 20 – Sun., Jan. 18, 2009	Winter break

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**SPRING 2009**

Friday, January 16, 2009	Spring students arrive in Florence
Fri., Jan. 16 – Sun., Jan. 18	Spring students orientation
Monday, January 19	Second Semester begins
Sat., March 28 – Mon., Apr. 13	Spring break
Friday, May 15	End of Second Semester
Sunday, May 17*	Students must vacate housing

\*Does not apply to students studying at the University of Florence. Courses do not end until the middle of June. Students studying at the University of Florence will remain in their housing through mid-June.

(Please note that these dates are subject to change)

## **PRIOR TO ARRIVAL**

You will need to bring the following with you in a purse, backpack, or other carry-on luggage:

- 1) **Passport** - You must have a valid passport to enter Italy. You should make four photocopies to use for processing documents and in case you lose your original passport; carry these separately from the passport itself.
- 2) **Visa** - You must have a valid student visa to study in Italy. This visa is obtained at an Italian consulate in the United States either in person or by mail. We will provide you with all the documentation necessary to obtain this visa. After your arrival in Italy, you will need to obtain a *permesso di soggiorno*, a special permit issued to non-tourists. Our program director will assist you in obtaining this permit.
- 3) **Photographs** - Bring six extra passport-sized photographs with you. You will need them for your *permesso di soggiorno* and various other student cards.
- 4) **Money** - Do convert approximately \$100 into Euros before you depart to have on hand for taxi, food, etc.

### ***Packing***

When packing, remember that you will probably return with more things than you initially brought over. **PACK LIGHT**, and think about how tired and frustrated you will be if you have to lug heavy, unwieldy baggage around the airports and train stations.

Check weight limitations for luggage with your airline; you may be able to carry what you need with you on your flight. Otherwise, you should arrange for shipping (see below).

Never pack anything valuable in your checked baggage. Every experienced traveler has horror stories about lost luggage. If you have any irreplaceable items, bring them in your carry-on luggage. Don't bring expensive jewelry, etc., at all unless these items are adequately insured. If you are bringing a musical instrument, call your airline for full instructions about packing and checking it through.

Remember to be kind to yourself. Your trip will be a long one, the time change does strange things to you, and sleeping on a plane isn't always comfortable. Even without heavy bags, you will find that first day in Italy to be tough going with them, you'll regret it! Bring only essentials, and ask family or friends to send anything else you may need after you have settled in with your family.

### ***Shipping***

You will be tempted to ship some of your things to arrive in Florence before you arrive yourself. Unfortunately, it is not possible to do this. There is very limited space available at the program center to store even small parcels, and nothing may arrive at your home stay before you do.

Instead, arrange, just before departing the States, to have items shipped to you in care of the program office, to arrive after the first week of orientation. Whatever is shipped must be declared for customs purposes as “personal belongings/used clothes”. It makes the most sense to ship items that you won’t need for a while i.e.: bulky winter clothes.

The following shipping services to consider are:

U.S. Postal Service/Air Parcel Post  
1-800-275-8777

DHL Worldwide Express  
1-800-225-5345

Overseas Brokers Inc.  
Great Neck, NY 11021  
1-516-773-6100

Federal Express  
Fedex.com  
1-800-463-3339

United Parcel Service  
UPS.com  
1-800-742-5877

Consult each company for specific size limits, costs, packing, and payment requirements and any restrictions (**Since 9/11 there are greater restrictions on what may be shipped overseas**).

Generally, if you are shipping anything, remember to ask the company what customs taxes (**usually very high**) you may have to pay to retrieve your luggage at your point of destination, as well as when you can expect delivery of your items. Surface mail may take up to three months!

If you are shipping a large box, you will find it expensive, and your Italian home-stay host(s) may look askance at such a large item, which you will end up storing in your room and which may limit your private space. Our advice is not to do it; even if you are

used to being surrounded by a number of possessions, you will not need half as much as you may think while you're in Italy.

Medicines and/or vitamins should travel with you since Italian authorities require a doctor's prescription and high customs taxes in order to release them.

Overall, be sure to allow plenty of time for your shipment to arrive and be processed through customs. Don't ship anything you will need during the first four weeks of the program calendar.

## **TRAVEL AND ARRIVAL**

All students are responsible for their own flight arrangements. STA Travel is a student travel service, which can often find affordable fares to which many travel agencies don't seem to have access. Information on flights, as well as the ISIC (International Student Identity Card) can be found at [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com). They can also be reached at 1-800-781-4040. Another student travel site is [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com) (1-800-272-9676). Using the student travel sites we have mentioned include the added benefit of usually allowing you to change your return dates with little or no penalty. However, you should always check before booking as to any possible penalties for changing your ticket.

Upon your arrival in Florence, go by taxi directly to the Sarah Lawrence office, which is centrally located near the church of Santa Croce at **10 Borgo Santa Croce**. Cristina Anzilotti and her staff will be there to greet you. The cost for the trip from the airport to the office should be approximately **25/30 Euro (\$ 37.50/45)**.

Try as much as possible to fly into Florence as this will be most convenient. If you are flying into Pisa, you should take the train or the bus to Florence. For the train turn left coming out of the baggage claim area and walk to the end of the terminal building. Once you're outside, you should see the train station. Trains leave regularly throughout the day, from 9:00am until 6:00pm. Tickets can be purchased inside the terminal at the information desk. **Take the train to Firenze, Santa Maria Novella.** The ticket should be approximately **5 Euro**. Remember to stamp your ticket before getting on board. There are yellow stamping machines located at every track. **It is not enough to purchase a ticket, please make sure it is stamped before boarding the train.** The ride will take approximately an hour. Once you arrive at Florence (Santa Maria Novella), take a taxi to the program office.

Since most of the trains take you from Pisa Airport to Pisa Centrale (where you will probably have to change train and track), many travelers use the direct bus from Pisa to Florence (Terravision lines), which leaves right outside the airport. A timetable and bus tickets (approx 8 Euro) are available right as you exit the luggage claim.

Full-year and fall semester students will have a week of orientation outside the city in Pescia, and will depart in the **early evening of Tuesday, September 9** on a bus, leaving

most of their luggage in the program office. Spring students will have a shorter orientation in Lucca and they will move into their home-stay after three days.

Please note that housing is **not** available before the official opening of the program. Students who arrive in Florence before the program begins may want to stay at one of the following hotels (an average room charge is also provided). Please book early!

**Albergo Firenze**  
Via del Corso/Piazza Donati, 4  
Tel: 011-39-055-214-203 or 011-39-055- 268-301  
([www.hotelfirenze-fi.it](http://www.hotelfirenze-fi.it))

**Bed & Breakfast De'Benci**  
Via de'Benci, 19  
Tel: 011-39-055-2345227  
([www.debencisuite.com](http://www.debencisuite.com))

**Hotel Bodoni**  
Via Martiri del Popolo, 27  
Tel: 01139-055-240-741  
(single: -€57, double: €90)

**Piccolo Hotel** ([www.piccolohotelfirenze.com](http://www.piccolohotelfirenze.com))  
Via S. Gallo, 51  
Tel: 011-39-055-475-5 19  
([www.piccolohotelfirenze.com](http://www.piccolohotelfirenze.com))

**Hotel Cestelli**  
Borgo SS. Apostoli, 25  
Tel: 011-39-055-214-213  
([www.hotelcestelli.com](http://www.hotelcestelli.com))

**Bed & Breakfast "A Teatro"**  
Via Verdi, 12  
Tel: 011-39-055-263-8242  
([www.a-teatro.com](http://www.a-teatro.com))

**Hotel Balestri**  
Piazza Mentana, 7  
Tel: 011-39-055-214743  
([www.hotel-balestri.it](http://www.hotel-balestri.it))

**B & B "Le Stanze di Santa Croce"**  
Via delle Pinzochere, 6  
Tel: 011-39-347-2593010  
([www.lestanzedisantacroce.com](http://www.lestanzedisantacroce.com))

### ***Orientation for Fall and Full-Year Students***

Your orientation period will last for two weeks. The first week will be spent in Pescia, a small town located about 60 kilometers west of Florence. When all students have arrived in the program office on the first day, a bus will transport you to this intimate, medieval town. Italian classes begin during this time, meeting daily for three hours, and the schedule is full of excursions, lectures, special meals, and other activities designed to introduce you gently to your new country. You will have a chance to get to know each other and your program director away from the frantic pace of Florence.

At the end of your stay in Pescia, you will return to Florence, and take up residence with your home-stay host. Orientation continues for another week, with more intensive language study, tours in and around the city, meetings with program faculty, and social events. You'll learn a lot about the city and how to negotiate it. Your tuition fee covers virtually all of your orientation expenses.

### ***Orientation for Spring Students***

Because of the short time available for an orientation period in early January, students spend a three day week-end in Lucca to get to know each other and get used to the "Italian way". Once in Florence the academic orientation will last approximately one week and it will be filled with activities, excursions, lectures, social events, and Italian classes.

## ACADEMICS

### *Program Overview*

That *education should not be separate from life* is one of Sarah Lawrence's foremost philosophies. Indeed, learning and living often become one for the Sarah Lawrence students in Florence. They frequently discover that 'education' means more than just academic encounters with professors. The students not only live and experience another culture and way of life, but also learn to cope with day-to-day existence that is different from that which they have known most of their lives.

All students take 2 elective courses plus a required course in Italian. The linguistic level of students who have studied Italian will be determined by an examination during orientation. The two elective courses, one of which must be a Humanities seminar, will be taught completely in English the first semester but by the middle of the second semester, the courses will be conducted in Italian. The professors work with small groups of students and will see students individually in tutorials. This system of tutorials (or 'conferences') is familiar to all Sarah Lawrence students, but will probably be a new experience for those from other colleges (see 'What is a Tutorial'). **Sarah Lawrence students should anticipate conference work of a different nature from what they may have had in Bronxville.** The professor is very aware of the students' progress and work and evaluates the student on the basis of his or her work and class participation.

If the student has the required level of proficiency, during the second semester, one of the two Sarah Lawrence elective classes can be replaced by a course at the University of Florence. The class will be complemented by tutorials usually organized on an individual basis. The tutorial ensures that the course materials is well assimilated and provides supplementary monitoring and close work supervision.

Sarah Lawrence wishes to encourage participation in the Italian academic system, as it offers the student an excellent opportunity to experience a radically different philosophy of education. The availability of such courses will be discussed with the Director of the program at the beginning of the second semester. Before exploring this option, students should remember that their Italian must be quite advanced if they wish to take these courses successfully for program credit. Furthermore, students should prepare to be evaluated solely by an oral examination at the end of the University of Florence semester.

**The academic life of universities in Italy will be unlike anything you've ever experienced. Be prepared for a learning experience that's different and challenging.**

### *Sarah Lawrence Classes*

All Sarah Lawrence language classes and seminars are held in Palazzo Spinelli, a renaissance palazzo in the historic center of Florence. Language courses are offered at various levels and students will begin their language study during the orientation period.

Art history, cinema, history and anthropology and literature represent the basis of the Sarah Lawrence seminars. The list of seminars given out at the general meeting should be considered the final list; other courses may be added if there is sufficient student interest, and the offerings will vary from year to year.

The general structure of the Sarah Lawrence classes is as follows:

\*A two-hour language class four times a week + a tutorial (half-hour every other week).

\*A two-hour seminar twice a week + tutorial (half-hour every other week).

### ***What Is a Tutorial?***

Tutorials are scheduled individual meetings between the professor of a course and his or her students. In Sarah Lawrence seminars, the tutorials take place strictly on a one-on-one basis every other week for one half-hour. For the University course, tutorials may be with one or two other students.

The purpose of a tutorial is twofold. First, it enhances a student's understanding of the course. The professor can be sure that the material is understood, and that it is situated in a general context that is both rich and accurate. The professor can guide the students in research necessary for class work and provide them with information on constructing arguments, organizing thought, and presenting knowledge in both written and spoken form. While these last elements are also essential in the U.S., the professor can give true insight into the ways in which Italian requirements may differ from what students are used to at home.

Second, the tutorial may encourage independent research similar to a conference at Sarah Lawrence College. However, most professors are particularly concerned with the points outlined above, and they may feel there is less time to base the tutorial solely on research. (This will be especially true for the University course.)

Students who are already familiar with a tutorial system in their home institutions should not underestimate the impact of the linguistic element, and should expect the difference to be proportional to their level of Italian.

### ***Visual Arts***

Study is available in art restoration and the following studio arts areas: drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and black and white photography. ***Art on Paper*** involves techniques of drawing, painting, and printmaking and is taken at the renowned Florentine studio "Il Bisonte". Photography students study at Studio Marangoni, a distinguished center for contemporary photography while sculpture students have the opportunity to work in the studio with a Florentine sculptor. No tutorials are organized for these courses.

The Art Restoration course is taught at the palazzo and includes visits to restoration laboratories in Florence This seminar will meet for a total of 5 hours a week. The number

and length of weekly class meetings for the studio courses will vary considerably from course to course.

### ***Music***

Music courses are organized differently from those in the visual arts. A single course is actually composed of three smaller elements, which we call components. A typical music program would include courses in theory, music history, and individual instruction in an instrument or in voice. These three components together constitute one of your three courses. It is not possible to take just one or two components alone and receive credit for them.

Please note that the selection of classes can only be finalized after auditioning. You will receive more information about the audition process during orientation. All auditions are conducted in September.

### ***Academic Work***

Students will generally have to write two to three papers each term for each class, for a total of 20 to 25 pages. Although papers are spread as evenly as possible throughout the semester, the workload can often be heavy. This is even truer for some of the classes taken at the University of Florence.

**Papers have to be submitted on time. Italian professors may be extremely strict on this question and will not accept last-minute excuses.**

### ***Academic Credit***

15 Sarah Lawrence credits, the equivalent of a full Sarah Lawrence College semester, are awarded for the successful completion of all three courses at the end of each semester. All students receive written evaluations that include a letter grade from their professors (and/or from their studio class professors) at the end of each semester. All students will also be required to write course evaluations and hand in worksheets (records of readings and writings done in each course) at the end of each semester. Ideally, the worksheet gives the student and the professor a sense of intellectual progression and growth accomplished during the term. Students studying music or taking a class at the University of Florence will receive one grade per course at the end of the year.

**Please note that repeated absences and failure to do the coursework may result in lower grades or total loss of credit.**

**Incompletes:** No incompletes are granted in the Florence program. In exceptional cases, if final papers cannot be submitted on time, the matter must be discussed in advance, first with the director of the program and later with the professor. The Director must be consulted first, as the Bronxville office must grant permission for any extension.

**All student evaluations and grades are reviewed by the Committee on Student Work at Sarah Lawrence College. Any concerns raised in these evaluations or if the grade falls below a (C), will result in the student receiving a letter from the Dean of Studies at Sarah Lawrence College. This letter will also be shared with the student's don and their parents. In the case of a guest student, the letter will be shared with their parents and the study abroad advisor at the home institution.**

**Guest students:** You will normally receive full credit from your home institution based on a full Sarah Lawrence load of 15 credits per semester. Prior to departure, however, you should discuss this question at length with your adviser and verify what requirements you may have to fulfill and in what areas your home institution may not grant you credit. You are responsible for planning your academic work in Florence based on these requirements and/or restrictions.

### ***Computers***

SLC in Florence has 2 Macintosh computers and 2 PCs for students to use from the hours of 9:00 am until 6:00 pm. Since the SLC center now has wireless internet, **we recommend you bring your own laptop** but make sure you do so as carry-on luggage.

### **A Few Points to Keep in Mind**

- Guest students should consult with their own faculty/administrative advisers to make sure that their planned course of study in Florence will meet with the academic requirements of their own institutions. Students who have to fulfill specific requirements during their time in Florence should clearly indicate their requirements to the Bronxville office immediately. Failure to do so may result in the impossibility of fulfilling the requirements.
- All students should keep in touch during the semester with their adviser, counselor, or don. The home institution should approve any change in a pre-approved course of study.
- Keep your home institution's Study-Abroad Office informed of your activities, interests, and concerns.
- Course evaluations and worksheets must be handed in for each course each semester. All students must submit this material. No exceptions can be granted.
- Be sure that you are aware of the program calendar, as well as any other important dates. Please apprise your parents and friends as well. You will be expected to arrive by the date specified for the first meeting and to attend all classes and academic appointments regardless of their proximity to an impending vacation. If you are joining us in the spring, bear the calendar in mind when purchasing your plane ticket and do not arrive during the winter break, as the office will be closed.
- **Failure to submit all your papers at the end of each term without prior permission from the Director may result in a permanent loss of credit.**

### *Libraries*

There is a small library on the premises that is open Monday through Friday, 9:00am - 6:00pm. Public libraries in Florence are generally open Monday through Friday, 9:00am - 7:00pm, Saturday from 9:00am until 1:00pm **and** closed on Sunday. Keep in mind that if your work requires research, it will have to be done during the day, which may differ from your usual study habits. The office in Florence will provide more details regarding library holdings and schedules during orientation.

### **LIVING**

The following pages contain a range of information to prepare you for a life in Florence. You will find financial information; advising on housing and meals; information on where to go for health, illness, and a miscellany of data on clothing, weather, etc. Some sections will be given more detail and attention when you arrive in Florence, but this should get you started.

### *Financial Matters*

**Prior to your departure:** Should you receive financial help from your college, see the financial aid office prior to your departure and make sure you know what amount of money you are getting, from which fund(s), in how many installments, and when these installments will arrive.

**Changing money:** The currency in Italy is the Euro. It is advisable to arrive in Florence with some Euro or to change some money (approximately \$100) in the airport. The current exchange rate is \$1.58 to 1 Euro.

**Banking:** We do **not** recommend setting up a bank account in Italy. It is more convenient to use your ATM card (better exchange rate) or travelers checks. **Please be aware that your ATM receipt will not include your available balance.** We recommend that you have access to your bank on-line for account information. I also recommend keeping approximately \$200 in travelers checks for 'emergencies.' **Please note that ATMs dispense euro and not dollars!**

**Credit cards:** Make sure, before your departure, that the credit cards you are planning to use are in fact international cards, and that you can use them in Italy. Clarify what services each card can provide and where you can get such a service: purchasing goods in a store, withdrawing money from ATM machines, etc. Find out if there are any additional fees or charges attached to using the card overseas. While credit cards are accepted in the most centrally located and frequented establishments, they are generally not accepted for small sums.

**\*\*Make sure to keep a photocopy or record of all your credit cards (including ATM cards), as well as Customer Service contact information, in case of loss or theft\*\***

**Tuition coverage:** Your tuition covers all academic expenses. Your room and board covers your lodging, breakfast (everyday) and dinner (6 days a week) each semester. You can obtain inexpensive lunches (sandwiches, pasta) around the city center. Refer to your Sarah Lawrence bill for policies on payment and refunds in the event you have to withdraw from the program.

### ***Housing***

After the week in Pescia (and the week-end in Lucca for spring students), all students will be housed as paying guests in Italian homes. Breakfast daily and dinner for six nights per week (Saturdays off) are included in the housing fee. You might be living with a single person or with a small family; there may also be an additional international student living in the house but you will always have your own room. You can be part of the home you live in as much or as little as you like. Clearly, mutual consideration for privacy, property, and propriety should govern the relationship at all times. Be aware that Italians spend much time and effort keeping their houses clean and in order, and you should do the same.

The purpose of the home-stay is to allow you to live and study at home in Italy as an Italian, and not as a tourist or an expatriate, or to replicate an American university dormitory. At the very least, the home-stay will enable you to learn the language quickly and effectively. At its best, you may even form warm bonds that will last throughout your life. You should feel free to discuss your living situation with the director at all times.

Housing is located throughout the city. Some apartments are close to the program, while others may be 20 to 30 minutes by bus or on foot. The most important aspect of where you are placed is not its proximity to the program office, but the suitability of the household. All placements are made carefully, and students are encouraged to be flexible and be prepared for a different way of life.

You may find yourself farther from the center of the city than you had hoped; you may have imagined yourself in a family with children for whom you could baby-sit; the host seems distant, or else asks you more questions about yourself than you like—no match can be perfect in every respect, and everyone will find a point of compromise. The important thing is to give this relationship—like any other—time. You will find the unexpected, special aspects about your housing: the signora is a wonderful cook; you feel welcomed after your bus ride home from the program; you have a view from your window of your new neighborhood that seems somehow personal.

Housing changes for any reason are made solely at the discretion of the director. Please do not hesitate to confer with her if you are having problems with any aspect of your living situation.

### *Telephone*

Students are encouraged to make and receive short calls at their home-stay. Mainly because all family members use the home telephone, and also because landline telephone rates are exceedingly more expensive in Italy than they are in the States, you are strongly encouraged to purchase a cellular phone for your stay. Everyone seems to have one in Italy and they are easy and relatively inexpensive to obtain. The staff in Florence will direct you to the best places to purchase a phone. **Most American cell phones do not work in Europe.** It is best to purchase a phone in Italy.

### *Health*

**Medical Insurance:** You must arrange your medical insurance coverage prior to your departure. Make sure that you and your family understand the terms of your policy before you leave the U.S. (the type of coverage you have, what you must do to be reimbursed, etc.).

All students must have some form of medical coverage in order to participate in the program. If you are not insured yourself or by a family policy, or if your insurance plan will not cover you while abroad, a policy may be purchased through Sarah Lawrence. The cost is \$1,870 and will provide coverage from September 1, 2008 through August 31, 2009.

### **For serious and urgent matters: Emergency Numbers**

#### **The following numbers require someone who speaks Italian:**

General number for urgent emergencies of any type, 113

Carabinieri (all-purpose police force, quite reliable), 112

Fire department, 115

Medical emergencies of any type, 118.

**Mental health:** Should students want to discuss any problems with a practitioner, the Florence office can provide you with a list of appropriate mental health practitioners.

Be prepared to pay cash for medical services. Doctors and hospitals will not allow patients to pay through their insurance plan. It will be up to you to seek reimbursement through your insurance company. **Always ask for receipts no matter how trivial the cost.**

### **Warning: Drugs**

**Italian law does not tolerate the possession or use of any illegal drugs. Anyone arrested for the possession or use of illegal drugs will be prosecuted and tried according to the Italian judicial system. This law is strictly enforced.**

### *Work in Italy*

Students are **not** allowed to work in Italy. All jobs are totally illegal in Italy. This includes even casual work like babysitting, being a waitress, giving English lessons, and

anything else you may have in mind. Do not count on making money while you are overseas.

### **Business Hours**

Most stores and all offices are closed Sundays. In Florence, most stores are also closed Monday mornings, opening in the afternoon (around 3:30 pm), with the exception of food stores and supermarkets. Ordinary business hours for both shops and offices are 9am-1 pm and 3:30-7 pm (4-8 pm in the summer). Public offices (state and local) are usually open Monday-Saturday 8 am-noon, but are often only open one or two afternoons a week, if at all. Some large department stores and supermarkets stay open during the lunch break.

Post offices are generally open Monday-Saturday 8:15 am-1 pm (Saturdays until 12:30pm). However, the central post office, located near Piazza della Repubblica at Via Pellicceria 3, is open Monday-Saturday 8:15 am-7 pm and Sunday 8:30 am-1:30 pm. (Entrance on Sunday is via a side door located at Piazza Davanzati 4.) On the last Saturday of the month, all post offices, including the central one, close at noon.

Banks are open Monday-Friday only, 8:30 am- 1:30 pm; most re-open for an hour in the afternoon, from about 2:30 pm.

Note: In Florence, during the winter season (approximately October-May), food shops are closed on Wednesday afternoons; this changes to Saturday afternoons in the summer (May-September).

### ***United States Consulate Office***

The U.S. Consulate is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-12:30 pm and 2-3:30 pm. The address is Lungarno Vespucci 38, telephone: 055 239-8276. Please note that the office observes both Italian and American public holidays.

### ***Voltage Requirements***

Voltage in Italy is 220, and although the three-prong round plug is preferable, a round two-prong also works. Many North American appliances have 220-volt switches and may be used in Europe. They may still require a plug adapter, however. If there's no voltage switch, a converter is required as well. Using cheap converters for computers is not recommended.

### ***Tipping***

Tipping is not obligatory since most restaurants include a cover charge per person (pane e coperto) and usually a 12% service charge (*servizio*) in the bill. Together, these make up a good tip. However, if you wish to reward especially good service, you might leave an extra 5%. It is quite common to round up the charges for taxis in Florence. For example, if the charge is 5.50 Euro, it's quite normal to round up to 6 Euro.

### ***Weather***

Summers are hot; spring and fall mild. Winter isn't particularly cold, but very foggy and humid. Although winter temperatures are not very low, dampness makes the cold very penetrating. February, March and particularly November can be quite rainy. Average temperatures:

Jan. 35-49 F/2-9 C	Feb. 36-53 F/2-12 C
Mar. 40-60 F/4-16 C	Apr. 46-68 F/ 8-20 C
May 53-75 F/12-24 C	Jun. 62-81 F/17-27 C
Jul. 63-89 F/17-32 C	Aug. 62-88 F/17-31 C
Sep. 58-81 F/14-27 C	Oct. 51-69 F/11-21 C
Nov. 42-58 F/6-14 C	Dec. 37-50 F/3-10 C

### ***Clothes***

Winter in Florence may be cold and is always wet. Clothes in Florence are expensive. Bring what you need, but remember that you will have to carry it all back with you along with the new belongings you acquire during your stay in Florence. Student dress is casual, but you might want to bring a nicer outfit or two for a special occasion. Italian families tend to keep the heating at a low level during the winter months. We recommend wearing layers to fight the winter dampness and the chill you may feel at times.

#### Italian Clothing Sizes:

##### Women's clothing:

U.S. Size	8	10	12	14	16	18
Italian Size	36	38	40	42	44	46

##### Women's shoes:

U.S. Size	5	6	6-1/2	7	7-1/2	8	8-1/2	9
Italian Size	35	36	37	38	38	38	39	40

##### Men's shirts:

U.S. Size	14	14-1/2	15	15-1/2	16	16-1/2	17	17-1/2
Italian Size	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43

##### Other men's clothing:

U.S. Size	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48
Italian Size	44	46	48	50	52	54	56	58

##### Men's shoes:

U.S. Size	7	7-1/2	8	8-1/2	9	9-1/2	10	10-1/2	11
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Italian Size	39	40	41	42	43	43	44	44	45

#### Lengths and distances:

- 1 inch = 2.54 centimeters
- 1 foot = 30.5 centimeters
- 1 yard = 91.44 centimeters (approximately 1 meter)
- 1 statute mile = 1.61 kilometers
- 1 nautical mile = 1.85 kilometers

Useful approximations:

5 centimeters = 2 inches

30 centimeters = 1 foot

10 meters = 33 feet

10 kilometers = 6 miles

10 centimeters = 4 inches

1 kilogram = 2.2 pounds

1 liter = 1 quart + 1/4 cup

16 kilometers = 10 miles

# SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE

## FLORENCE PROGRAM

### **Academic Seminars and Art Restoration: A brief introduction**

#### ***ART HISTORY***

The course will focus on Florentine and Tuscan Art between the 13th and 16th centuries (from early Christian Art to Michelangelo) including a survey on the origins and early medieval development. Particular attention will be dedicated to examining and understanding images and style of the different artists, which can be considered the 'syntax' of a visual language. Throughout the year we will be focusing on the sociological and philosophical values of these images in Western society starting from Byzantine icons until the late Renaissance – a period that will be covered in the second semester.

The course will include discussions on the use of different techniques, iconography and patronage; it will also involve visits to churches and museums which will allow direct viewing of many of the important works discussed in class. There will be special lectures on Medieval, Renaissance as well as Modern Italian art.

#### ***HISTORY AND ANTHROPOLOGY***

The fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 represents a crucial watershed in the history of European civilization. Nevertheless, the patrimony of ideas of pagan antiquity survives and continues to inspire political and religious beliefs. The course starts with a brief survey of the principle events that shaped this complex period and introduces some of the key lines of cultural history from the Middle Ages.

A great transformation was later represented by the phenomenon of the re-birth of cities. In fact, around the 11th century, demographic and economic factors produced a real urban revolution in some areas of Europe, and this turning point actually represents the transition from the feudal system to the late medieval civilization. The city-republics, the family, daily life, the economy, the religious beliefs and above all the mentality of the people will all be discussed in the effort of reconstructing the features of medieval urban civilization. This complex universe, expressed through a specific architecture (such as city walls and gates, towers, public palaces, market squares, workshops, cathedrals and monasteries) allows one to reconstruct the environment of late medieval civilization. Particular emphasis will be given to the age of Dante, a period in which Central and Northern Italian cities were at their apogee and of which Florence was one of the largest and most powerful.

### ***HISTORY OF ITALIAN CINEMA***

This course will explore the distinct Italian cinematic tradition from Neorealism to present. In the first semester students will develop the language to analyze films by focusing on major films, issues and debates during the period of Italian film history between 1942 and 1960. Then they will examine Italian cinematography between 1960 and 1970. The films analyzed will include Italian comedies, political films and fictional films. The second semester will be dedicated to the more recent impact of films by Moretti, Tornatore, Salvatores, Amelio, Archibugi, Comencini among others. Students will travel to one or more Italian film festivals as part of this course.

### ***ITALIAN LITERATURE***

This course will begin by introducing Italian Literature from the Medieval, Renaissance and Modern periods. In this first semester, three texts will be examined: Dante's *Divina Commedia*, Petrarca's *Canzoniere* and Boccaccio's *Decamerone*. Then the course will focus on the rebuilding of the modern vernacular tradition and the early 16th century (Machiavelli, Castiglione, Ariosto, Tasso). Second semester will cover literature from Sicily and then move to the problem of the Italian novel. The course will be followed by a consideration of the utopia of the Risorgimento as seen in U. Foscolo's *I Sepolcri*, as well as aspects of the Italian melodrama and the *Commedia dell'Arte*.

### ***ART RESTORATION (an Arts elective)***

The course offers the student a solid understanding of the artistic techniques typical of the Tuscan\Florentine ambient, in particular referring to the period from the 14th century through the Renaissance: physical and chemical composition of objects relative to each of the techniques treated, the historical evolution and development of these techniques, their conservation and restoration, including scientific methods of diagnosis and examination of works of art. The course concentrates on painting: fresco and other types of wall painting during the first semester, painting on wood panel and on canvas during the second. Other techniques (objects made of wood, stone, metal, paper, parchment, etc.) will be studied in a more general form, emphasizing the fundamental guidelines and approach to their understanding and treatment, method which the student will be expected to use as a basis for his/her individual research project.