
FLORENCE CAMPUS

Updated: August 16, 2018

OVERVIEW

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

The Florence campus is the signature Benedictine College study abroad program. Every semester a group of up to 50 students from Benedictine has the opportunity to spend a semester in Florence, Italy. Students live in a Tuscan-style villa located in the hill town of Settignano, overlooking the city of Florence. Villa Morghen used to be a Benedictine monastery and a mansion for wealthy people before being remodeled to host groups of students. A professor from Benedictine will accompany the students and teach a class. The other classes are taught by local instructors and include Italian Language (two levels), and a class that counts for Art or History, where students go out with the professor and learn firsthand by visiting places in Florence and as far as Assisi. The first week of the program takes place in Rome, where students get the chance to see the Pope and visit Montecassino and Subiaco, besides the most important sites in Rome.

LOCATION

Settignano is a small town at 40 minute bus ride from downtown Florence, far enough away from the city to feel relaxed and enjoy the hills and county atmosphere, but close enough to get to Florence and know the city. Villa Morghen is beautiful and very conducive to build community. Students live, have classes and eat their meals in the same building. Florence is packed with incredible art treasures that testify to its importance in medieval and early modern history.

PROGRAM TYPE

Faculty-led semester program.

CHANCE OF PLACEMENT

Chances of placement are fairly good in the fall; sometimes limited in the spring.

PROGRAM DATES

SM1: End of August or early September to November (the program usually ends before Thanksgiving); SM2 late January or early February to April. The program duration is 78 days.

ACADEMICS

FAST FACTS

[Florence \(Firenze\), Italy](#) (pop. about 370,000)

Student Enrollment: about 50.

Language of instruction: English

[Program webpage](#)

[Villa Morghen website](#)

PROGRAMS

The College's overarching goals for students studying abroad in Florence are designed to ensure that students enrich their learning by:

1. Experiencing and appreciating Italian culture and communicating with Italians in their language
2. Discovering and better appreciating the Catholic and Benedictine roots of Western culture
3. Developing insights into their own culture as well as skills and attitudes to interact with people from other cultures

Students enroll in 15 credits (see details in the Academic Notes section below). The program includes guided visits to Subiaco and Montecassino, Assisi and Perugia, Siena and San Galgano. The first week of the program is spent in Rome, where the group participates in the Wednesday Audience with the Pope, as well as visit the main historical and religious sites.

ACADEMIC NOTES

Classes offered every semester:

- ITAL-1000 Beginning Italian I - 4 credit hours, fulfills Foreign Language requirement.
- ITAL-1020 Beginning Italian II - 4 hrs, fulfills Foreign Language.
- ITAL-3000 Europe in the Middle Ages - 3 hrs, fulfills Aesthetic Experience or Historical Perspective, and Western Perspective
- GNST-3000 International Study Reflection and Practicum - 1 hour, General Education.

In addition to the classes above, a Benedictine College faculty member travels with the students to Italy as program faculty leader and teach a class.

- In the Spring 2019 Dr. Matthew Ramage will teach a Theology class entitled The Council of Florence and Christian Ecumenism.
- Dr. Ramage will also be offering the following optional theology courses:
 - The Holy Land (2 hrs) -- includes a Spring Break trip led by Dr. Ramage
 - Theology of the Divine Comedy (1 hr) -- a weekly seminar on Dante's masterpiece
- Exam sessions: November and April.

Holidays breaks: Fall break around Halloween (*Tutti i Santi* holiday in Italy), and Easter break in the spring semester.

TRANSCRIPT DETAILS

This is fully a Benedictine College program, there is no need to transfer credits back.

CREDITS AND GRADES

Same grading system as at Benedictine.

LANGUAGE NOTES

Language Notes: Courses are taught in English, however, the Italian language instructors will mostly use Italian during their class.

SPECIAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing to apply. Follow instructions in the Application Process section below.

CAMPUS LIFE

HOUSING AND MEALS

Residence and student life facilities at Villa Morghen include: double, triple, or quadruple occupancy room; laundry facilities (washing machine, dryer, area for drying laundered clothes); kitchenette with cold and hot water, a fridge and a microwave oven; drinks and snacks vending machine; Satellite TV Room; recreation rooms ("Cantina"); Chapel; small fitness room.

Students will have a 19-meal plan as follows. Monday to Friday: full board (continental breakfast, lunch, dinner). Saturdays: breakfast and sacked lunch. Sundays: breakfast and dinner.

ORIENTATION

After being accepted into the program students attend three orientation meetings. Students are also given a detailed handbook covering all the information they need to know before leaving to Italy.

ARRIVAL DETAILS

Students receive arrival information at the orientation meetings and in the student handbook.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Numerous activities will be proposed to students by the Residence Director and the Residence Assistance, as well as by the local program coordinator. Activities are aimed at building community as well as at developing students' ability to appreciate Italian culture and communicate with people. Examples include watching a soccer game at the Florence stadium, wine tasting, learning how to make pizza, speaker series, music with Italian musicians, and more.

MINISTRY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

English speaking priests are available to students in Florence. Students also have the opportunity to attend Mass and go to Confession in English. Occasionally Mass is celebrated at the Villa Morghen Chapel. Students will be given a bilingual Order of Mass. Activities proposed by the Villa staff include charitable work or involvement in Church activities and groups.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND COSTS

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application forms are available online starting from the first day of classes of the semester prior to the one students intend to apply. Students have to submit the online form and pay a \$750 fee at the Business Office. The capacity of the program is limited to 50 students. Selection criteria include: seniority, major (some majors require study abroad, others have limited flexibility on when the students can go abroad), academic concerns, financial concerns, student life concerns. Programs of Distinction participants (Presidential, Honors, Gregorian) have some priority in the fall semester. As long as students apply and pay within the deadline the timing of the application/payment is not a selection factor anymore.

STUDENT VISA

All U.S. and non-EU citizens are required to have a valid passport for entry into Italy as well as any other European country. Your passport must be valid six months beyond the projected last day of stay in Italy. As the program is shorter than 90 days, US citizens do not need a visa to study in the program, but need to respect the 90-day rule for travel in continental Europe.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Students will have to get Travel Medical Insurance through Benedictine (\$90). This coverage is essential in case students need to be repatriated for health reasons.

COSTS

This is a list of program costs that will help students estimate their budget for the semester in Florence.

- Tuition, Room and Board - Regular Benedictine College tuition for a semester. Room cost is based on an Elizabeth Hall room, and meals on a full meal plan. All scholarships apply.
- Administrative study abroad fee - Nonrefundable deposit of \$2,000 paid in two payments (\$750 when you apply, and \$1,250 after you have been accepted).
- Airfare - Cost depends on the airline and varies over time.
- Platinum iNext Card – Students pay \$90 for the Travel Medical Insurance coverage. The \$90 will be charged to the student account. The card is valid for a year. Visit [here](#) for more information
- Books - for the class taught by the BC faculty, if required. (You don't need to buy books for the other classes).
- Laundry - Washing: € 3.5 per load. Drying: €2.5 per load.
- Telephone - Consider buying prepaid international calling cards or renting/buying a local cell phone.
- Two meals on weekends - Saturday dinner and Sunday lunch are not covered by the meal plan at Villa Morghen.
- Local transportation - when not on site visit with class. Cost of local transportation in Florence is € 1.2 for a 90 minute ticket. Monthly bus passes in Florence cost € 35.
- Personal expenses - The total amount of money for personal expenses largely depends on the lifestyle you choose. In particular, consider if you are planning to:
 - Travel before or after the program, as well as during weekends (trips to Italian cities by train are relatively inexpensive, trips to European destinations are more expensive, however, you can find excellent opportunities by flying with low-cost airlines like Ryanair)
 - Buy souvenirs for family and friends (including wine, food, clothes, etc.)
 - Spend on meals and entertainment during weekends.

Students in previous semesters have indicated that their total personal budget was in a range between \$1,500 to \$4,000.