WELCOME TO UNO
ITALY: ROME!

Participant Handbook
Dear Participants:

As Program Director for the UN0-Rome program, I look forward to getting to know each and every one of you this summer in Rome. I welcome the chance to show you one of the most interesting countries in the world and to help each student learn more about the culture and history of Italy.

When you arrive in Rome, you will meet our UN0 staff and faculty. Our faculty is dedicated to bring you their expertise and talent to create a learning environment that will provide a truly European experience. Our dedicated staff will be the support system needed to make this summer a comfortable experience for all. Together, we will try to make your trip most enjoyable!

The following helpful tips will help your stay in Rome be more comfortable. Please read this handbook carefully and bring it with you! You will certainly refer to it while on site. We know that the UN0-Rome program will be one of the most wonderful and enjoyable experiences you will ever have. We look forward to having you on our program this year!

Sincerely,

Marie Kaposchyn
Program Director
THIS HANDBOOK GIVES OUR PARTICIPANTS AN OVERALL PREPARATION FOR THEIR SUMMER ABROAD EXPERIENCE. APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH BEFORE DEPARTURE, A LIST OF TELEPHONE NUMBERS, ADDRESSES, AND CONTACTS IN ROME WILL BE SENT TO YOU. THESE ARE NUMBERS TO LEAVE WITH A RESPONSIBLE PARTY AT HOME SO YOU CAN BE REACHED AT ANY TIME IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:
All announcements will be emailed to participants of the program. This is also where any messages, extra field trips, and information about social activities are posted, so check your email daily!

ANXIETY:
It is very normal to feel anxious about your trip. Everyone is excited and nervous about the whole experience, so don’t feel like you are the only one. Calm down, rest, and be open to the wonderful experiences you will have in Rome.

E-MAIL:
You will have internet access in your apartment. Be prepared for it to go out once in a while. While in town, you will find internet cafes all over Rome. We encourage you to use the Internet (Skype and such) to keep in touch with those at home, but remember not to spend all of your time at the computer. Make some live friends instead!

EMERGENCIES AND/OR EVACUATION PLANS:
We do not anticipate any problems or emergencies, but as a safety measure you need to know where to go, whom to call and how to report. When you arrive in Rome, you will be given a walking tour of the area and shown the different places that are assigned as official emergency meeting places. In case of an emergency, you will be able to use this plan in order to have a quick and safe group assembly. You’ll also be given local emergency phone numbers, the local American Embassy numbers, as well as a plan to leave the country if necessary. It is important that you take these measures seriously and adhere to the instructions given by the group leader. All the possible emergency scenarios will be discussed and handouts distributed. Our office number in New Orleans is (504) 280-7455 and will be the official number for your family to call and get any pertinent information.

MEDICAL RESPONSIBILITY:
As a student you should be aware that there are certain risks inherent in international travel and that the University of New Orleans, as a State of Louisiana educational institution, cannot assume responsibility for all or certain aspects of your activities while traveling. You should also be aware of your personal medical needs and consult with a medical doctor before your departure regarding any personal needs while abroad. Also, be sure that you have completed the “Report of Medical History” form.
It is a good idea to bring a few items that can make your trip more comfortable such as aspirin or Tylenol, Imodium AD tablets, Dramamine, Band-Aids, and any prescription you are taking. Take all medicine in your carry-on, not packed in your suitcase. Bring a copy of the prescription, since refilling it in Italy may be difficult without the actual pharmaceutical name. Make sure that all medicine is properly labeled and bring enough to last you for the entire trip. If you use contacts or eyeglasses, it is a good idea to take an extra pair with you. Losing such items can be bothersome and hard to replace. Lastly, don't forget to bring sunscreen!!

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:**
Rome is surrounded by some of the most prestigious hospitals and medical centers in Europe. However, if for any reason you don't feel well, **you must contact your UNO representative first.** Unless it's a life-threatening situation, do not go to an emergency room alone. We will have the name of a doctor on duty to treat you. If you have a minor ailment, the pharmacists can give you medicines over the counter. **DO NOT FORGET TO LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE ILL, NO MATTER HOW MINOR THE AILMENT.**

**INSURANCE:**
All students will be covered by a comprehensive study abroad medical insurance plan that is included in the cost of the program. This policy provides for accident, medical expenses, emergency medical and evacuation, repatriation of remains, and family assistance coverage. **Extended coverage at additional cost is also available.** A brochure fully detailing the insurance plan can be found at the following link: [http://inst.uno.edu/forms/TW.Lord.Brochure.pdf](http://inst.uno.edu/forms/TW.Lord.Brochure.pdf)

This policy does not cover trip cancellation or baggage insurance. **Students will be covered for the duration of the program only.**

**HYDRATION**
Remember that the weather is very hot and dry. You will tend to dehydrate easily, so it is imperative that you remember to drink lots of water! Bring a water bottle (and a snack) with you on all field trips.

**JET LAG:**
If you have not traveled overseas, jet lag might be a problem. It is best to be well rested and avoid alcohol, caffeine, and rich foods during the flight to Rome. Do not nap too long upon arrival, no matter how tired you are. This throws your body clock off and could prolong your adjustment for several days. Instead, get out into the sunlight and take a walk. This gets your circulation going and helps your body adjust to the new time.
SAFETY:

Rome is a city where you have to be aware of your valuables. Petty theft is the major concern so precautions should always be taken when traveling or staying in a new city. Most dangers lie in crowds, where pickpockets can easily work. Don’t leave your purse or bag(s) unattended (especially in the outdoor cafés where street performers depend on your change for a living) or your wallets in plain sight. Guard your money well and acquaint yourself with the currency before your trip. Most students carry their money in a "fanny pack" or "neck wallet".

DON’T EVER WALK ALONE AT NIGHT. ALWAYS STAY WITH A GROUP, NO MATTER HOW SAFE YOU FEEL IN THIS CITY. Use your common sense, think before you act and you should avoid problems that can spoil a good trip. If for any reason you encounter a problem CONTACT A UNO REPRESENTATIVE IMMEDIATELY!

SAFETY INFORMATION:

When traveling overseas, there are a number of precautions that you should follow in order to travel safely:

1) Do not leave your bags or belongings unattended at any time.
2) Do not let anyone give you something to carry when traveling.
3) Never keep all your documents and money in one place and make duplicate copies of your documents (especially your passport).
4) Always be alert to your surroundings and be cautious when traveling.
5) Do not get involved in drugs and beware of becoming intoxicated.
6) Let people know where you are going and when you expect to return.
7) Have sufficient funds and/or a credit card on hand to purchase emergency items such as transportation tickets.
8) Be cautious when you meet new people and never bring them into the dormitory.
9) Report any unusual activity or suspicious persons to the program coordinator.
10) Be aware of the political situation wherever you are. Stay away from places that are experiencing political unrest.
11) Keep away from areas known to have large concentrations of residents aligned with interests unfriendly to the United States or its allies.
12) Be conservative in your dress and never wear expensive jewelry when traveling.
13) Don’t flash your money and be discreet when showing your passport.
14) Keep away from political demonstrations.
15) Avoid the media and don’t feel like you have to comment or give an interview.

These are just a few general rules you should of which to be aware. Most often, common sense will tell you what to do. That is why it is imperative that you avoid a situation in which common sense does not prevail--being intoxicated and using drugs.
SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR WHAT PARENTS/GUARDIANS/FAMILIES SHOULD DO IN ORDER TO INSURE A SAFE TRIP FOR THE STUDENT PARTICIPANT:

Parents/guardians/families should:

1) Obtain and carefully evaluate health and safety information related to the program, as provided by the sponsor and other sources.

2) Be involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in the study abroad program.

3) Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.

4) Be responsive to requests from the program sponsor for information regarding the participant.

5) Keep in touch with the participant while he/she is overseas.

6) Be aware that some information may most appropriately be proved by the participant rather than the program.

STUDENT REGULATIONS:

As a participant in the program, you are expected to comply with program regulations. These rules of conduct govern a set of citizenship standards: living together in harmony in the apartments, respecting your neighbors and the citizens of Rome, avoidance of drunkenness, disorderly conduct, drugs, dishonesty, criminal acts, academic cheating, damaging property, etc. You are also governed by the University of New Orleans policy and procedures regarding students.

Students must conduct themselves in appropriate manner and abide by all policies outlines in the UNO Judicial Code:

http://www.uno.edu/%7Estlf/Policy%20Manual/judicial_code_pt2.htm

Cheating, plagiarism, and academic misconduct will not be tolerated.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

It is the policy of the University of New Orleans, on a flexible and individualized basis, to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are strongly urged to inform us of their disability and specific needs, and accommodations. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact their instructors to discuss their individual needs within the academic context of the class requirements.
HOUSING
The UNO-Rome program offers its students some of the best housing available in Rome. Our students are all housed in the same apartment building and they will share fully furnished, air-conditioned apartments. The rooms are equipped with twin beds and there will be two students per room. There are a few single apartments available at a higher rate. Apartments house from 2 to 8 students accordingly and are not co-ed. In a shared living situation, certain rules must be adhered to in order to make the stay a safe, comfortable and pleasant one for all.

1) No smoking is allowed in the apartments at any time. Even if all participants in the apartment are smokers, please smoke outside the building. Drugs are illegal and not allowed at all.

2) Keep your food separated and labeled in the refrigerator. Refrain from borrowing anyone else’s food, clothing, or personal property of any kind.

3) Our apartments are in a quiet area of town. No loud noise or late parties are allowed, there are other guests in the building who need their rest.

4) Do not open the door for anyone you don’t know.

5) Abusive or irresponsible behavior will be dealt with immediately and will jeopardize the participant’s participation in the program.

6) Non-participants are not allowed to stay in the apartments. Ever! Even if everyone else in the apartment “agrees” to have a non-participant come visit or stay. Everyone in the apartment will be held responsible for the decision.

If you have a friend or relative passing through that wants to come see you in the apartments, you will need a clearance from the Program Director or Academic Director prior to the visit.

Breaking any of these rules will jeopardize your room privilege at the apartments and you can be asked to vacate the premises and leave the program without a refund immediately. The security of our group is our first priority and it is taken very seriously!
PASSPORTS

You need a valid passport to enter Italy. Check with your local passport agency (listed in the front of your city’s phone book) to find out the proper procedures to obtain one. Some post offices also issue passports. This procedure sometimes takes weeks, so apply early. Always remember to keep your passport in a safe place. This is the most important document you have! You also can check [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html) for the nearest agency to you.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU MAKE COPIES OF YOUR PASSPORT (INSIDE COVER, PHOTO PAGE, NUMBER) BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE STATES AND LEAVE ONE COPY WITH A RELATIVE OR FRIEND AT HOME AND SEND THE OTHER ONE TO OUR OFFICE. This way, if you lose this document, copies can be faxed to the embassy.

BOOKS:

Books for your classes can be ordered online. We will send you information about the books and/or supplies assigned for your class and how to order them. Get your books before you go, the books cannot be found once you arrive to Rome.

ELECTRIC APPLIANCES:

Do not expect your American appliances to work in Europe without proper conversion equipment, since the voltage differs from America. In order to use hair dryers, razors, etc. you MUST purchase both a converter (for the voltage) and an adapter (for the plug to fit the wall socket). Some of the newer appliances have built-in converter (simply a switch for 220v), but these still require the wall-socket adapter. Please purchase the proper equipment before you arrive. Most electrical stores (such as Radio Shack and Wal-Mart) will carry such equipment.

FLEXIBILITY

You will hear this word many times during your stay. You are in Italy to learn about another country, its customs, or its language. Forget how you are "used to doing things". The food, people and the sights are all different. If you are not open to new ideas your stay will not be as pleasant. Forget macaroni and cheese and try the local homemade pasta. Try all the wonderful flavors of “gelato” ice cream. You’d be surprised how happy a simple meal of bread, cheese and fruit can make you!!
CULTURE SHOCK:
Even for those who have traveled abroad, it is something of a shock to find oneself in a totally new environment. The first few days can translate into the dreaded disease called HOMESICKNESS!!! Some students can suffer from homesickness so acutely that they develop stomach problems or flu like symptoms! However, in a few days, things get back to normal and four weeks in Rome goes by quickly.

ITALIAN LANGUAGE
It’s amazing how different your experience can be if you try to blend in and communicate in the language in which you are immersed. Italians are especially appreciative of any attempt to speak their language. You need not be fluent, only try. A list of useful phrases will be provided for your trip, but you can also find many useful phrasebooks and apps on your own.

READING LIST:
It would be a good idea to look up Rome in one of the many travel guides in your library such as LET'S GO ITALY: THE STUDENT TRAVEL GUIDE OR FODOR’S ESSENTIAL ITALY. There are also guides by Rick Steve, an avid traveler with several books and a tv show. Also, Italian tourism websites are always great resources to learn about the cities and what to do there. Some of our favorites websites are:

http://www.turismoroma.it/?lang=en
http://www.italia.it/en/home.html
http://www.justitaly.org/
http://www.italylogue.com/tourism
http://www.raileurope.com/us

INDIVIDUAL TRAVEL:
We encourage you to travel and to make the most of your European trip. Please inform us of your plans and when to expect you back at the apartments. Students are allowed to travel only on days when no classes are scheduled. (Friday, Saturday and Sunday).
**FOOD STORES**

Around Rome you will find many quaint and very local food stores where the prices are higher. It is wise to stay away from these unless you just go to look around. It is best to go to local fresh markets; there are two within walking distance or a short metro ride away. Campo de’ Fiori is across the river and a 20 minute walk, while Mercato Trionfale is a 15 minute walk to the other side of the Vatican Museums.

**TAXIS:**

Tipping is about 10 to 15% of the metered charge. Sometimes the taxi driver will charge extra per piece of luggage that is carried in the trunk. Also, night rates are higher. No more than three (sometimes four if the driver is in a good mood) passengers are allowed in a taxi. Always go to the front of the cab line to board. The main taxi line in town is located in front of the train station. **ONLY USE TAXI STANDS!** There are other “cabs” around town who will charge you more than normal, especially at airports! They target tourists near the luggage area of the airport, **DO NOT ACCEPT THESE!**

**TRANSPORTATION:**

The metro is very convenient and available throughout the city. It is also a very inexpensive form of transportation. The apartments have a metro stop near the Vatican that will take you all over the city very quickly. Hours and schedules vary, are posted at the bus stop, and are available 5:30am until 11:30 at night. Buses are available throughout the city as well, but are not as quick as taking the metro. If all fails, and you find yourself downtown late after buses and the metro have stopped running, you can take a taxi back to the apartments. You will receive a city metro pass for the duration of the program that is valid on the bus as well. To view metro lines, you can visit www.rome.net/metro
TRAVEL ADVISORY:
You should realize that anytime you travel abroad there is potential for danger due to crime, political unrest, unforeseen “Acts of God,” strikes that will delay your travel plans, etc. We simply cannot list every possible scenario in this handbook. We therefore recommend that if you have concerns about traveling you contact the U.S. Government Travel Advisory. This can be found on the Internet at:

www.state.gov/

HOURS OF OPERATION FOR BUSINESSES:
Basic hours of business are 8 or 9 am until 12 or 1pm. Most businesses are closed for 2 to 3 hours for lunch, reopening at 2 or 3pm. Closing time is usually 6:30 or 7pm. Many restaurants, shops, etc. are closed on Sunday and/or Mondays, so consider this when making plans to shop for food, eat out, etc.

EURO AND YOUR BUDGET:
The Euro is the currency used in Italy and many countries in Europe. The exchange rate varies, but is currently 1 euro is equal to $1.15 US (approximate). It is very helpful to have some dollars changed into Euros before your trip. Any major bank in your home city can do this. About $50 worth of Euros should be helpful for the first few days. The easiest, most convenient way to get money once in Italy is from an ATM. They take MasterCard or Visa debit cards and use the same pin number as you would at home. The biggest advantage is you get the best exchange rate possible. Remember that when you make a purchase in Italy, tax is included in the price. Whatever price is marked is what you pay. We will go over money during the orientation held on the first day of the program.

Students often ask, "How much money should I bring?" This is a highly individualized question. The program does not include meals. You are also responsible for personal expenditures such as telephone calls, souvenir purchases, snacks, travel on free weekends, etc. It is our suggestion to budget at least $200 per week for your spending money. Try to budget yourself wisely. A cup of coffee in a cute sidewalk café can cost as much as 4.00 euro!

VALUE ADDED TAX
If you are lucky enough to have a lot of spending money available, don't forget this important little item that will save you even more: VAT or TVA. Visitors carrying their passports can get a refund of the value added tax on purchases of around $400 or more at any single store.
**TIPPING**

Most restaurants include a 15 percent service charge and tax in their prices. If a meal or service has been particularly good, leaving some extra change is customary, as is leaving the waiter the small change from your bill if you have paid in cash. If service is not included in the price (a 15% tip is customary). Most, if not all, restaurants in Italy will post their menu and price list outside so you can select the type of food you like and the price range you need. A fixed price menu is usually the best bet since for one price you get about three courses (appetizer, entree, and desert) but be careful of extras such as coffee and wine, sometimes they add up more than the meal itself!

**WEATHER:**

The summer weather in Rome is usually hot but very pleasant. Be prepared for some cool nights where you will need a light jacket or sweater. In previous years we have also experienced extreme heat. You will need to prepare for this change of weather.

**PERSONAL ITEMS:**

**DON'T BRING ANYTHING WITH YOU THAT YOU DO NOT WANT TO LOSE.** This is no time to flaunt your great grandmother's jewelry or that irreplaceable family object. When packing your suitcase, be sure your name is on the outside tag as well as inside your bag. If for any reason your luggage gets lost, your identification will be available inside.

Leave a copy of your itinerary, phone number, and address of the places where you will be staying with a family member or trusted friend. Also, leave copies at home of your passport, credit cards, and any important documents.

**PHOTOS:**

You will definitely want to bring your camera to bring all of your memories home. Most museums do not allow flash photos to be taken at all, so be sure to have them turned off while viewing artwork.
SHOPPING

There are so many shops and stores to choose from in Italy! Since the majority of students are on a budget, most look for stores that offer convenience, reasonable prices, and a variety of items. Don't forget that most stores (except major chains) close every day for lunch. Check posted times of opening.

YOU WILL HAVE A WALKING ORIENTATION UPON ARRIVAL THAT WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND SHOW YOU WHERE THE SHOPS, BAKERIES, AND MISCELLANEOUS STORES ARE LOCATED.

RETURNING HOME:

At customs, you are allowed a total of $800.00 worth of purchases including one liter of alcohol (if you are over 21 years of age), duty free. After that you will have to pay duty. Remember that certain things are not allowed to come into the U.S.: Fresh fruits and vegetables, meat byproducts, medicine or narcotics, plants or pets are not allowed to enter the States.
CLOTHES:
I cannot say this enough: **Pack light!** This, of course, does not have the same meaning for everyone. You will be tempted to acquire a new wardrobe for this exciting trip. Please don't. People in Italy dress according to the weather, which is usually very warm. You will be walking around most of the time so you need to wear **COMFORTABLE SHOES** and clothes. You may wear slacks or t-shirts but women should always bring a jacket or large scarf and avoid shorts. You never know when your class runs into a church that can be visited (in Italy there are strict rules about covered shoulders, long pants or skirts). Most of the clothes you need are casual. One or two dressy outfits will be enough for restaurants or special parties. **If you can't carry your suitcase on your own, you have over packed.** It is important to have some empty space in your bags for souvenirs and purchases made while on your trip.

A backpack (small) is a good idea for those who go on weekend trips. You will also find it helpful for grocery shopping, carrying your water bottles and for laundry day. The best tip is to always carry a hat and a water bottle.

**Note:** Because of new regulations, most airlines are charging extra for luggage. Please check with the airline you are using for suitcase regulations.

**WHAT TO PACK FOR YOUR TRIP:**

1 light jacket, windbreaker, or rain jacket (NOT a heavy coat)
1-2 nice outfits for going out at night
2-3 pairs of jeans/slacks
2-3 pairs of shorts
3-4 casual shirts and tee shirts
1 pair of dress shoes
1 pair of sturdy, but comfortable shoes for walking like tennis shoes
1 pair of sandals
1 swimsuit
a cover up for women visiting churches (Women must cover their shoulders of bare arms, **no one** is admitted with short pants into Italian churches. This is enforced at all times, a large scarf or jacket is good)
plenty of underwear and socks
pajamas and/or a robe
towel and soap
an umbrella and a hat
NOTE: A good rule of thumb is to remember that you will be wearing casual clothes 98% of the time. Since your clothes will be laundered, pack for a week and wash. YOU DO NOT PACK AN ITEM FOR EACH DAY OF THE FOUR WEEKS.

Also, the less things in your suitcase on your way in, the more you can fit on the way out. We have had too many mad dashes to the luggage department in order to get a bigger suitcase for the return trip! You might want to consider bringing an **EMPTY** duffel bag for souvenirs.

**A QUICK CHECKLIST FOR THINGS TO BRING:**

__AIRLINE ITINERARY (and confirmation number for e tickets)  
__PASSPORT (leave a copy of the inside pages at home with your family)  
__DEBIT OR CREDIT CARD (with pin number)  
__GOOD WALKING SHOES  
__LIGHT SUMMER CLOTHES (and a cover up for church visits)  
__SMALL ITALIAN/ENGLISH DICTIONARY  
__TOWELS (BEACH TOWEL TOO!) AND SOAP  
__TRAVEL ALARM CLOCK (**battery operated**, not electric!)  
__BATHING SUIT/HAT/UMBRELLA  
__JACKET (IT CAN GET COOL AT NIGHT)  
__THIS HANDBOOK  
__BACK PACK FOR DAY TRIPS  
__SUNBLOCK  
__FLEXIBILITY AND AN OPEN MIND

“He who would travel happily must travel light.”

-Antoine de Saint Exupéry, pilot and author
WHAT TO DO ON TRAVEL DAY

When preparing to leave for the trip, be well rested and have all your travel documents easily accessible. Arrive to the airport at least **TWO** hours before your departure time.

1) **Verify that all the information on your ticket is correct and know your flight times and connections.** Everyone should have ample time to make connections.

2) **WHEN BOARDING YOUR FLIGHT IN YOUR HOME CITY, MAKE SURE YOUR LUGGAGE IS CHECKED ALL THE WAY TO YOUR FINAL FLIGHT DESTINATION: ROME.**

3) If for some unfortunate, unforeseen reason, you **miss** your connection in your home city, notify the airline counter **immediately** so that they can arrange a later flight. Call home, let them know your change of plans, and **have them contact us** with your new arrival plans.

**BE SURE TO SEND US A COPY OF YOUR ITINERARY AND THE TIME TO EXPECT YOU IN ROME. WE WILL SEND YOU DIRECTIONS TO YOUR APARTMENT AND THE DIFFERENT TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS TO GET THERE.**

BRING THIS BULLETIN WITH YOU SO YOU CAN REFER TO IT, IF NEED BE. **MAKE A COPY OF THE CONTACT NUMBERS FOR YOUR FAMILY AND LEAVE IT AT HOME.** Closer to your departure time, we will send everyone a list of contact numbers in Rome.

**IMPORTANT!!!** There are three (3) things that you **absolutely must** have in order to make it from your home city to Rome and back again. You can get there without your iPod, without your camera, even without your **clothes**, but you cannot go from here to there without your

1) **flight information**

2) **your PASSPORT**

3) **and to a lesser extent, your money (credit cards or travelers checks)**

Those items should be attached to your person.

**BUON VIAGGIO!**