

# Temple University Rome Fall 2021

## Communication #1 for Rome Entry Year Students

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Thank you for your interest in studying at Temple University Rome this fall; we hope this message finds you well.

***This update contains a lot of important information about the Fall 2021 program in Rome. Please read it in its entirety.***

***Note that this message only focuses on your fall semester; more information about the spring 2022 semester will be shared when it is available.***

**We are moving forward with the Temple Rome Fall 2021 program,** and we know that you and your families have many questions and will continue to have additional questions as we move through the pre-departure process in the coming months.

**Contact Temple Rome staff via email at [rome\\_entry@temple.edu](mailto:rome_entry@temple.edu) if you have any further questions or specific concerns.** We are here to help you now or at any time throughout the pre-departure processes.

We want to be sure that students planning to participate in our program are well-prepared and have realistic expectations for their upcoming term abroad.

While we recognize this won't be a typical first-year experience, we are fully committed to making it a successful one, most importantly by implementing additional health and safety plans and protocols.

## **Expectations**

Studying in Rome will be different in Fall 2021, and some of the expectations you had when you decided to study abroad may have to be adjusted and adapted. However, with your patience and flexibility, our core mission of providing meaningful global opportunities can be realized.

Temple Rome and Temple's Education Abroad Office make every effort to keep program participants updated about plans for the Fall term. Please note that all outlined protocols, scenarios, and activities presented are based on what we know **now** about the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the study abroad experience. We may have to revise information shared with students as the COVID-19 situation evolves or as unanticipated challenges arise.

The trajectory or impact of COVID-19 we experience in our home countries or regions may not be the same, or even similar, elsewhere. As we have seen throughout the pandemic, the prevalence of COVID-19 and government responses to it vary significantly from location to location, as do access to and administration of vaccines.

Although learning firsthand how host countries address current-day challenges has always been an integral part of study abroad, it is undoubtedly a unique time to live in another country, as the ways that a host country responds to COVID-19 - from laws related to immigration and travel to regulations affecting daily life - will have a direct impact on students' experiences.

We communicate major program changes and pre-departure requirements through your **Temple email**; it is your responsibility to monitor your email for these updates. Also, please take a moment to confirm that the emergency contact information submitted in your [Rome Portal](#) is correct and current as we send program updates to your emergency contacts' emails when necessary.

## **Program Status and Review**

As noted above, we are moving forward with the Temple Rome Fall 2021 TREY program. Temple Rome is currently hosting over 55 students for the Summer I 2021 semester. You can learn more about the spring semester student experience via Temple Rome's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) sites. Our faculty and staff are pleased to have students back in Rome and are looking forward to greeting the fall semester cohort.

Program dates are tentative and subject to change. We will provide participants with the confirmed program dates in May when more up-to-date information about flight options and immigration rules (including any testing and/or quarantine requirements) is available.

Temple University closely monitors conditions related to COVID-19 and other health and safety issues that might impact our international travelers. Temple reviews information from government

organizations such as the US Department of State, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, as well as our emergency services provider, International SOS, to determine whether we can support travel to and study in a particular location. Our staff also considers border and travel restrictions, local conditions including medical infrastructure and capacity, program infrastructure and student support capabilities, health and safety measures, program provision for quarantine/isolation accommodations, and ability to ensure academic continuity in making decisions about program status and continuity.

Temple Rome administration works with Temple University Main Campus leadership, Risk Management, and Education Abroad, and consults with local Italian authorities and health experts to continuously monitor conditions in Italy related to COVID-19 and to ensure that appropriate protocols and practices are in place for our Rome Campus.

As we have seen with this pandemic, circumstances may change and require us to re-evaluate decisions to move forward with the program; any changes will be communicated to program participants as soon as possible.

Please see flight booking and contingency sections (below) for additional information.

### **Current Situation in Rome and Italy**

- The Temple Rome campus is open and hosting students for the Summer I 2021 semester. Classes are taking place in person; a hallmark of the Rome program is connecting participants with Rome and its art, culture, and communities, and these activities are planned for the fall. Visit Temple Rome's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) sites to learn more about the 2021 student experience.
- Italy's current restrictions are structured using a color-coding system for each region, based on many risk factors, including the number of cases and the effect of infection rates on the healthcare system in each region. Each color code (white, yellow, orange, and red) includes different travel restrictions, curfews, and restrictions to the opening and operations of certain businesses.
  - To see an updated listing of these zones (Rome is in Lazio), you can check this site: <http://www.salute.gov.it/portale/nuovocoronavirus/dettaglioContenutiNuovoCoronavirus.jsp?lingua=english&id=5367&area=nuovoCoronavirus&menu=vuoto>. These zones are typically updated weekly.
    - For a listing of restrictions by zone (Rome is in Lazio), visit the Italian Ministry of Health's website (links from this page list the restrictions in Italian): <http://www.governo.it/it/articolo/domande-frequenti-sulle-misure-adottate-dal-governo/15638#zone>.
  - **There is a nationwide 10PM curfew.**
- COVID-19 cases in Italy have been steadily decreasing since late March, and vaccines are rolling out, although vaccination rates are lower in Italy than the U.S. After a period in the red zone, the Lazio region, which includes Rome, moved to the orange zone in early April. In-person classes,

including on-site visits throughout Rome, and in-person program activities resumed. Effective April 26, 2021, most of the country, including Rome, moved to a yellow zone.

- We do not know at this time what exact restrictions may be in place for the fall, but we need participants to understand the extent of Italy's commitment to mitigation measures as a way to bring the spread of the virus under control.
- The Centers for Disease Control continues to advise U.S. travelers that the [risk of COVID-19 in Italy](#), like much of the world, is very high. The U.S. Department of State recently adjusted its own advisory levels to align with the CDC; as such, Italy is rated a [Level 4](#). This update does not signify a change in conditions on the ground, and Temple continuously reviews conditions for travel as described above.
- Up-to-date COVID-19 data from Italy (Rome is in the Lazio region) can be accessed through the [Italian Ministry of Health's website](#).
- The Italian Health Ministry also [closely monitors trends in the country](#) and encourages individuals to obey strict public health mandates including the need to quarantine when necessary.
- Some key mandates issued in Italy for individuals to protect public health include:
  - wearing masks (disposable or washable) in public, including outdoors and on all public transportation, and on all occasions when the maintenance of a safe distance cannot be guaranteed. **Students are required to wear masks at all times while inside the Temple Rome campus building. In Italy, mask requirements apply to everyone regardless of vaccination status.**
  - keeping a mandatory interpersonal distance of at least 1 meter (approximately 3.2 feet).
  - forbidding people with a respiratory infection characterized by fever (higher than 37.5° C/99.5 °F) to leave their home or place of residence.
  - Additional information can be found on the [Italian Ministry of Health's website](#).

### **COVID-19-related Health and Safety Measures at Temple Rome**

The health and safety of our students is our top priority. Temple Rome follows public health guidance and regulations from the Italian Ministry of Health and consults with local health professionals to assure a safe, healthy environment. Based on guidance from these sources, as well as Temple University's Main Campus, Temple Rome has developed detailed COVID-19-specific protocols to mitigate risk of transmission in program facilities and respond to possible and actual COVID-19 cases. We highlight several aspects of these plans and protocols below.

#### **Four Pillars of Public Health**

Important public health measures have been implemented at Temple Rome, including the four pillars of public health best practices: face coverings, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and health monitoring. All staff, faculty and students are expected to adhere to these practices. In accordance with Italian public health guidance and regulations, facilities (classrooms, common

areas, etc) are set up to assure students can maintain a minimum physical distance of 1 meter (3.2 feet) during classes and for activities and events held at Temple Rome.

### **Student COVID-19 Testing**

- All students are tested upon arrival in Italy and asymptomatic testing of all students is conducted on a regular basis throughout the program.
- Although testing options are continuously evolving, Temple Rome currently uses rapid tests used widely throughout Italy, including those in use by the government in educational settings.
- Symptomatic students and students identified as close contacts through contact tracing follow the Italian Health Ministry's protocol for testing.
- Temple Rome coordinates COVID-19 antigen testing for students departing Italy on the official program end date if required for students' return flight to their home country.
- More information on testing protocols will be provided to accepted students in a future update.

### **Contact Tracing**

The Italian Health Ministry conducts detailed contact tracing throughout the country, and Temple Rome staff are trained in contract tracing to assist in these efforts.

### **Student Health**

All students should plan to continue to follow the four pillars of public health while in Rome. The following resources and protocols are also in place.

- Students have access to the English-speaking health assistance provided 24/7 by International SOS. Through this service, students make appointments with local, English-speaking doctors for anything from a cold to emergency care.
- Additionally, Temple Rome works with a private, English-speaking doctor who is available for house calls as necessary and works with students and public health authorities (as appropriate) regarding COVID-19-related symptoms, testing and medical care.
- Students who experience any symptoms related to COVID-19, or who have been in close contact with a positive case, are required to stay in their apartments and contact a medical professional immediately.
- All courses in Rome have academic continuity plans in the event a student must quarantine or self-isolate.

### **Vaccination Status and Prior COVID-19 Diagnoses (Updated May 26, 2021)**

**We strongly recommend all students be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to traveling.** We want to share the following information and guidance that is important to understand as you prepare to study at Temple Rome.

- Being vaccinated significantly reduces the risk of contracting the virus, and while the Italian government does not currently require COVID-19 vaccination for travel to Italy, regulations are subject to change.
- Temple University is currently evaluating whether the vaccine will be required on Main Campus or the Rome Campus.
- Program participants should not expect to get vaccinated against COVID-19 while studying abroad in Italy. Students who are planning to get a vaccination requiring two doses should ensure that they are able to receive the second dose prior to departure.
- As of this writing, vaccinated individuals in Italy must follow all of the same rules and protocols as unvaccinated individuals. Individuals with prior COVID-19 diagnoses must adhere to all of the same rules and protocols as well. This means vaccinated individuals are required to quarantine/isolate if exposed to COVID.
- It is unknown at this time if a COVID vaccine booster will be recommended or required, and if it will be available in Italy if it becomes required. We encourage you to discuss any concerns or questions with your family physician.
- We recommend that vaccinated individuals travel with their vaccination card in the event you need to provide proof of your vaccination status while abroad.
- Please complete the FORM and provide proof of vaccination (Temple and non-Temple students) in the [Temple's Student Health Services patient portal](#) by August 15, 2021. Instructions are provided after logging into the portal. Sharing your vaccination status will also allow Temple Rome to respond to any potential changes in government regulations and appropriately advise students during their stay in Italy.
- Conditions and protocols as they relate to COVID-19 are constantly evolving, and we will update students to any significant changes we become aware of.

### **Student Conduct, Pledge and Sanctions**

The Temple Rome community is small, and everyone's participation in following Italian laws and regulations as well as Temple Rome rules and protocols is critical to the health and safety of all, as well as our ability to host a successful program. Therefore, we want to emphasize how important it is for all students on the program to follow the instructions and rules prior to departure and while in Italy. All study abroad students will be required to sign [a pledge](#) with Temple Rome committing to follow several rules.

Following local laws and regulations, in addition to Temple Rome rules and protocols, is required under [Temple's Student Conduct Code](#).

**Noncompliance with Italian or Temple Rome quarantine requirements is a violation of Temple Rome policy** and will result in disciplinary sanctions. Students are required to follow all Temple Rome protocols during the arrival quarantine and any subsequent quarantine/isolation periods, if applicable. Violation of Italian-mandated quarantine is a felony and may result in fines of up to several thousand Euros.

**Travel outside of Italy during the program is strictly prohibited by Temple Rome.** This rule applies to all students regardless of citizenship, prior COVID-19 diagnosis and/or COVID-19 vaccination status. Travel outside of Italy is a violation of Temple Rome policy and will result in disciplinary sanctions.

Students found responsible for violations could face serious sanctions, including dismissal from the program. **Students dismissed from the program are responsible for the costs of their departure and will not receive any refunds for the costs of the program.** Temple Rome collaborates with Temple's Main Campus office of Student Conduct and Community Standards on student conduct matters and processes.

### **Fall Program Housing**

All Temple Rome Entry year students are **required to stay in university-arranged housing throughout the program unless staying with family who resides in Rome.** Unfortunately, homestays are not offered this fall semester.

The housing cost includes costs for quarantine housing, meals during the initial mandated quarantine and additional COVID-19-related expenses, including routine testing throughout the term. The final housing cost will be confirmed in June. Detailed information about housing refund and billing policies will be available once students are invited to complete their housing agreement and deposit; neither the housing agreement nor the housing deposit has been posted to students' accounts.

University-arranged housing facilities are located in apartment-style complexes and have been selected to ensure physical distancing.

- Students should plan on sharing a bedroom with no more than one other person. Depending on the size of the apartment itself, there may be multiple bedrooms.
- Every apartment has a kitchen, living area and bathroom. Depending on the number of bedrooms, apartments may have more than one bathroom.
- Apartments are located in Rome's *Prati* neighborhood, an upscale, residential neighborhood within 2.5 kilometers (about 1.5 miles) of Temple Rome's campus. There are public transportation options available between school and the apartments, but many students choose to walk to campus.

### **Visa Requirements**

At the time of this writing, **U.S. citizens are allowed in Italy for the purpose of study.** As explained in the Temple Rome program application, a valid passport (valid for at least 6 months beyond your intended stay in Italy or the Schengen area) is required to apply for a visa and to travel to Italy. A visa is required for non-EU citizens, and Education Abroad and Temple Rome provide students with visa instructions and additional documentation needed for entry.

Students who are not U.S. citizens/permanent residents or who do not have a valid passport should contact the Rome Entry Year Associate Director, Francesca Cuccovillo (f.cuccovillo@temple.edu), immediately for guidance. Immigration rules can change; we continue to monitor entry guidance and update students as necessary.

All students who are U.S. citizens/permanent residents are required to participate in Temple Rome's visa Batch process and receive details for how to complete their visa applications in their study abroad portal. Students participating in the Philadelphia Batch process must submit their passports and applications to Education Abroad no later than **June 1**. Students who are not U.S. citizens must apply in their home country and will receive more information from Temple Rome.

Each visa group will receive instructions specific to them in their study abroad portal. Students with valid passports for countries in the E.U., C.H., or E.E.A. do not need to apply for a student visa and must enter Italy with their European passport.

### **Booking a Flight to Rome**

Detailed flight booking guidance was shared with students and posted to their Rome Portal on May 21.

### **Arrival in Rome and the Quarantine Period (Updated May 26, 2021)**

All Temple Rome fall semester program participants are required to arrive in Rome on an officially designated "COVID-tested" flight. Please refer to the **Flight Guidance** that was shared with students on May 21, and posted to their study abroad portals, for details on booking flights.

Key notes about quarantine and arrival:

- Students who (1) provide Temple with proof of full COVID-19 vaccination, to the [Student Health Services patient portal](#), by August 15, 2021, (2) arrive on a COVID-tested flight, and (3) test negative at the airport upon arrival in Italy, will not be subject to a quarantine period upon arrival in Italy.
- To protect the health of the community, program participants, faculty and staff, Temple Rome will require all students who have not provided Temple with proof of full COVID-19 vaccination by August 15th, 2021 to quarantine within their apartments upon arrival for 5 days, even when arriving on a COVID-tested flight and testing negative at the airport upon arrival in Italy. Students will be tested on day 5 and will be released from quarantine on day 6 provided they have received a negative test result and have followed all quarantine protocols.
- Students required to quarantine may be placed in a different apartment than their assigned apartment for the quarantine period. In that event, following quarantine, students will move into their regular Temple Rome housing for the remainder of the program.
- Temple Rome coordinates housing, meals and online programming for students during the arrival quarantine. During this period, orientation and classes take place virtually.

- Noncompliance with Italian or Temple Rome quarantine requirements is a violation of Temple Rome policy and will result in disciplinary sanctions. Violation of Italian-mandated quarantine is a felony and may result in fines of up to several thousand Euros.
- Temple Rome makes every effort to assure the arrival quarantine period is as comfortable as possible by providing apartments that are spacious and clean. Wi-Fi is available for participating in online group activities and coursework.
- For some students, entering quarantine after arriving in a new country can be a difficult adjustment.
  - All students should consider the potential effects of this isolation on their mental health and consider engaging in tele-counseling while abroad.
  - Temple Rome works closely with licensed clinical therapists who are available for Zoom or phone sessions. Other options include tele-counseling through International SOS, Temple Rome's health assistance provider, or private providers in the U.S., if a student chooses to work with an existing care professional who offers remote services to travelers outside of the U.S.
- Transportation from the airport to quarantine housing and to final program housing is coordinated by Temple Rome and covered by program fees.

Please take time to read [Temple Rome's Summer 2021 Quarantine and Isolation Guidelines and Regulations](#) which explain quarantine and isolation procedures and requirements, including those for positive COVID-19 cases and close contacts. A fall semester version with any relevant updates will be provided to program participants closer to departure.

## Personal Travel

### **Prior to the official start date of the program:**

If you are currently residing outside of the U.S. or considering any travel outside of the U.S. from now until the official arrival date in Italy and have not already discussed your situation with the Temple Rome Student Life team, you must contact Francesca, the Associate Director of Student Life and Rome Entry Year (f.cuccovillo@temple.edu), immediately. In addition to needing to submit your passport as part of the visa application process, the Italian government has immigration restrictions in place for travelers who have visited or transited through certain countries within a certain time frame prior to arrival in Italy. Such types of restrictions may be put in place at any time and could jeopardize your participation in the program.

### **During the program:**

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission or complications caused by crossing borders and/or quarantine requirements, and because of our limited ability to assist students outside of Italy during a pandemic, students must remain in Italy during the program; **travel outside of Italy is strictly prohibited. This restriction applies to all students regardless of citizenship, prior COVID-19 diagnosis, and/or COVID-19 vaccination status. Travel outside of Italy is a violation of Temple Rome policy and will result in disciplinary sanctions.**

As a result of these current restrictions, Fall 2021 participants must plan to have a fully Italian immersive experience that *does not* include travel outside of Italy. Restrictions may also be in place for travel to other regions within Italy.

We understand that travel restrictions may be disappointing. However, we hope students view this situation as an opportunity to embrace Italian culture and complete the program feeling more like a local than a visitor. Temple Rome faculty and staff are looking forward to sharing the countless ways students can explore Rome and Italy so that students can make the most out of their experience. As the Romans say, "*Roma, non basta una vita,*" or one life is not enough to see everything there is to see in Rome.

### **Winter Break:**

Unfortunately, it is impossible to know at this time if tourist-related travel to other countries will be allowed when the semester ends. For this reason, students should not plan to travel after the program or should be prepared to change their travel plans, which could be costly. We hope that these restrictions may ease, but flexibility, patience and understanding any financial commitments remain key when considering personal, post-semester travel. Students may remain in Italy for winter break, however, they must find their own housing accommodation, as Temple's university-facilitated apartments are not available between semesters.

### **Visitors**

At this time, tourists from many countries (including U.S. citizens) are **not** permitted entry to Italy, so family and friends should not expect to be able to visit program participants.

However, we strongly encourage families to have valid passports in the event they need to visit for a serious emergency. Please note that due to public health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, U.S. passport operations are delayed. Read our [notice about passport operations](#).

If visitors (tourists) are able to come to Italy, they may be subject to a mandatory quarantine. Please note that guests are not permitted in student housing.

### **Pre-departure Orientation Programming**

To prepare you for your semester in Rome, Education Abroad and Temple Rome staff have developed a series of mandatory virtual workshops. The Fall 2021 virtual Pre-Departure Orientation includes a combination of small workshops and full-group information sessions for students, a session specifically for parents and families of students, and a Canvas "course" with online learning modules. All workshops and information sessions are hosted on Zoom. These sessions will be scheduled throughout the summer, beginning with a Visa 101 session in May. Students will receive a full calendar of program dates and events in May.

## Contingency Planning

### Academic Continuity

Although we remain confident and committed to offering the Fall 2021 program, some factors are beyond our control. We want to make sure that students continue with their academic programs in the event that we cannot run the program; if students must attend Main Campus in Philadelphia, they will be registered for all of their necessary first-semester coursework.

Once the program begins, if there is a situation which requires a lockdown or quarantine, Temple Rome is prepared to transition to an online format, either on a program or individual level, for any period of time.

### Housing

We advise all program participants to consider housing back-up plans in case the program is cancelled. Temple students with any questions or concerns about housing options for the fall should contact Temple University Residential Life directly, as that office is in the best position to assist.

### Program Interruption

Students who start the Temple Rome program are able to complete their credits in the event that there is a forced change to the structure of the program. All Temple Rome courses can be delivered using remote learning should this format be necessary at any point of the semester.

If conditions change to the degree that we need to ask students to return to their home countries, Temple Rome is prepared to facilitate an orderly but prompt departure (as we did in Spring 2020). Students would be responsible for contacting their carrier to arrange a return flight to their home country.

- Temple University is unable to assist with any additional costs associated with having to leave Italy, so we advise students to purchase flights with the most flexible change and refund policies, and to understand both those policies and their financial responsibility as a way of preparing for this possibility.

All students who study abroad with Temple University are covered by international travel medical insurance. We advise all students studying with Temple Rome to keep their insurance coverage in their home countries, as the travel medical insurance only covers students while participating in the program abroad. Details about the coverage are provided to accepted students in pre-departure materials.

### Temple Rome Contact Information

Students who would like to meet with one of our Temple Rome Entry Year Program staff may contact us by email at [rome\\_entry@temple.edu](mailto:rome_entry@temple.edu).

We look forward to helping you prepare for a unique and rewarding year in Rome!