Temple University Rome Spring 2021
Pre-Departure Update #2

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This update contains important information about the Spring 2021 semester in Rome. Please read it in its entirety.

The Temple Rome Spring 2021 program is scheduled to run, but we know you and your families have many questions now and will continue to have additional questions as the program start date approaches. We addressed some of these questions in our first update issued on Sept. 11.

This second update provides additional important information. Please read this message in its entirety; contact Education Abroad staff via email or by making an appointment through our virtual front desk if you have any questions or concerns. We are here to help you now or at any time throughout the application and pre-departure processes.

Temple Rome administration and staff have been working together with Temple University Main Campus leadership, Risk Management, and Education Abroad and consulting with local Italian authorities and health experts to continuously monitor conditions in Italy related to COVID-19 and prepare our Rome campus for the spring 2021 semester.

As we transition into our pre-departure preparation phase after the program application deadline, we want to be sure that students accepted to the program are well-prepared and have realistic
expectations for their upcoming semester abroad. While we recognize this won’t be a typical study abroad experience, we are fully committed to making it a successful one, most importantly by implementing additional health and safety plans and protocols.

**Expectations**

Studying abroad will be different in spring 2021, and some of the expectations you had when you decided to study abroad may have to be adjusted and adapted to a new environment. We believe that, with your patience and flexibility, our core mission of providing global opportunities can still be realized. Please keep in mind that we may have to revise information shared with students as information about COVID-19 evolves and unanticipated challenges arise. Education Abroad and Temple Rome will make every effort to keep students updated. Please note that all outlined protocols, scenarios, and activities that follow are based on what we know now about the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on the study abroad experience.

**Program Status**

We are planning to move forward with the Temple Rome Spring 2021 program, and the Temple Rome faculty and staff are excited to greet students in January. As previously announced, U.S. citizens coming to Italy for the purposes of study are permitted to enter the country.

Temple continues to monitor developments related to COVID-19 that might impact the health and safety of our international travelers. As part of this ongoing process, Temple consults key governmental organizations, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, and Department of State, as well as our emergency services provider, International SOS, for guidance around international travel.

Additionally, due to the complexity of the COVID-19 pandemic, Temple is considering other key factors, such as 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.

Circumstances may change and require us to re-evaluate the decision to move forward with the program. In that event, we will notify students directly as soon as possible.

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

**Current Situation in Rome and Italy**

- Temple Rome campus facilities and administrative offices are open, as are businesses and museums. Schools have recently opened to begin the school year, and public transportation is operational. View our walking tour of Rome recorded on Sept. 23 to get a feel for life in the city right now.
● Recent news reports have drawn attention to the spike in COVID-19 cases in Europe. The situation in each country varies significantly, and in some cases, as in the U.S., within regions in each country. We are encouraged that COVID-19 cases in Italy have not increased to the same degree as in other countries highlighted in these news reports at this time.

● 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 continues to closely monitor trends in the country and encourages individuals to obey strict public health mandates including the need to quarantine when necessary.

● Some key guidelines issued in Italy for individuals to protect public health include:
  ○ wearing masks (disposable or washable) in closed spaces that are accessible to the public, including public transportation, and on all occasions when the maintenance of a safe distance cannot be guaranteed.
  ○ 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 will continue to follow public health guidance and regulations from the Italian Ministry of Health and consult with local health professionals.

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 main aspects of the 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 will be expected to adhere to these practices. In accordance with Italian public health guidance and regulations, facilities will be set up to maintain a minimum physical distance of 1 meter (3.2 feet) during classes, activities and events held at Temple Rome.

Student COVID-19 Testing

Temple Rome is collaborating with a local medical provider to develop a testing plan for the spring semester that includes, at minimum, testing of all student participants upon arrival in Italy and routine surveillance, which includes asymptomatic testing of all student participants on
a regular basis throughout the semester. Although testing options are evolving, at this time Temple Rome plans to use rapid tests used widely throughout Italy, including by the government in educational settings. Symptomatic students and students identified as close contacts through contact tracing will follow the Italian Health Ministry’s protocol for testing. More information 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 have been trained in contact tracing to assist in these efforts. Students will be required to download the Italian app “Immuni” to their smartphones for the semester; this is the official notification app of the Italian government.

**Student Health**
All students should plan to continue to follow the four pillars of public health while in Rome. The Temple Rome community is small, and everyone’s participation in these practices is critical to the health and safety of all, as well as our ability to host a successful semester. 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 will liaise with 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, will be required to stay in their apartments and contact a medical professional through the above-mentioned services immediately.
- All courses in Rome have online continuity plans in the event a student must quarantine or self-isolate.

**Arrival in Rome and the Quarantine Period**
As of this writing, the Italian government requires travelers entering Italy to quarantine for 14 days in single room accommodations.

- Students should expect a mandatory 14-day quarantine period upon arrival in a separate facility arranged by Temple Rome, after which students will move into their regular Temple Rome housing for the remainder of the semester. Temple Rome is coordinating housing, meal options and online programming for students while in quarantine. During this period, Orientation and classes will take place virtually.
- Quarantine upon arrival from the U.S. is mandated by Italian federal law, and enforced as such. Students are reminded that following local laws and regulations is required under Temple’s Student Conduct Code. It is a felony for travelers to break quarantine, which may ultimately prevent a student from participating in the rest of the Temple
Rome semester. Travelers who break quarantine are also subject to fines of up to several thousand Euros.

- Temple Rome is making every effort to assure this initial quarantine period is as comfortable as possible, providing each student with a private apartment that is spacious, clean, and equipped with an outdoor balcony or small patio. Details about meal options will be made available to accepted students soon. Wi-Fi access will be available for participating in online group activities and coursework.

- Entering a two-week, isolated quarantine after arriving in a new country may 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 will be 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.

**Spring Semester Housing**

In order to ensure that Temple Rome can respond to any outbreaks and best assist students during the spring 2021 semester, students are **required to stay in university-arranged housing throughout the semester and may not choose to find their own accommodations**. Homestays or independent housing will not be permitted this spring.

The cost of the semester-long housing includes the initial 14-day quarantine housing (which will be in a separate location from the full semester’s housing placement) and additional COVID-19-related expenses including testing throughout the semester. This program cost will not exceed $5,150 USD for the full semester and will be confirmed in early October. Detailed information about housing refund and billing policies will be available once students are asked to complete their housing agreement and deposit. These have not yet been posted to students’ accounts.

University-arranged housing facilities are apartment-style complexes and have been selected to assure physical distancing. Students should plan to share 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. These 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, and many students choose to walk—a great choice should one decide to pick up an espresso along the way.

**Program Costs**
Detailed, confirmed program cost information, as well as billing and refund policies, will be provided to students and posted to our website in early October.

**Booking a Flight to Rome**

Program participants **should not book flights** until further travel information is provided by Education Abroad and program dates are fully confirmed. This information will be available in early October.

Because of the mandatory quarantine, **students will be required to arrive in Rome on a specified date and participate in the quarantine over 14 days.** Transportation from the airport to quarantine housing will be coordinated by Temple Rome.

**Personal Travel**

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission or complications with crossing borders and/or quarantine requirements, students with Italian study visas must remain in the country. **Temple Rome students will be prohibited from traveling outside of Italy during the spring semester.**

Unfortunately, it is impossible to know at this juncture if tourist-related travel to other countries will be allowed at the end of the program when the student visa dates end. For this reason, students should not plan to travel after their semester or they should be prepared to change their travel plans, which could be very costly. We hope that these restrictions may lift by May, but flexibility, patience and understanding any financial commitments remain key when considering personal post-program travel.

As a result of these restrictions, spring 2021 participants should plan to have a fully Italian immersive experience that **does not** include travel outside of Italy.

At this time, as physical distancing is better enforced on Italian rail lines than budget flights, students should also expect to rely on train travel over airlines for any personal travel within Italy.

We understand that this may be disappointing. However, we hope students will see this as an opportunity to embrace Italian culture and complete the semester feeling more like a local than a visitor. Italy is a beautiful country with distinct and varied regions and traditions, and 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.

**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 still strongly encourage families to have valid passports in the event they need to visit for a serious emergency and are permitted to do so. 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 still be subject to a mandatory 14-day quarantine. Also, please note that overnight guests are not permitted in student housing.

**Visa Requirements**

All students with a permanent residence address or who attend a university located within the Philadelphia OR Los Angeles consulates’ jurisdictions are required to participate in Temple Rome’s visa BATCH processes and will receive details for how to complete their visa applications in their study abroad portal later this week. Please note, these are two separate visa “batches,” and students who qualify to participate in either will receive instructions specific to them shortly.

Students who live and study outside the Philadelphia or Los Angeles consulates’ jurisdictions will receive information about how to schedule an independent appointment at the consulate that is appropriate for them and must go in person to the consulate for their visa application appointments. 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.

As communicated previously, all students must have valid passports in order to apply for a visa.

**Course Registration**

Students will not self-register online for their classes. Once the class schedule is finalized, students will be asked to complete an official course request and, based on this information, will be registered for classes.

**Contingency Planning**

**Academic Continuity**

Although we remain committed to offering the spring 2021 program, we have learned over the past several months that some factors are beyond anyone’s control. We want to make sure that students can continue with their academic programs in the event that we cannot run the program.

Therefore, out of an abundance of caution, we advise all spring semester students to create a back-up academic plan for courses, as follows.
○ Temple students should register for a full course load of fall classes on MAIN CAMPUS when priority registration begins. As noted above, we will register students administratively for their Rome courses, replacing their Main Campus courses, at a later date.

○ Non-Temple students should reach out to their home school study abroad office and/or registrar to discuss how they can keep a “back-up” semester of courses for spring.

Once the program begins, Temple Rome is prepared to transition to an online format, either on a program or individual level, for any period of time in the event that any lockdown or quarantines are necessary during the semester.

### Housing
We also advise all program participants to consider spring semester housing back-up plans. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please contact Temple University Education Abroad Staff. Non-Temple students should speak with their home school study abroad office about their options.

### Program Interruption
Students who start the spring 2021 semester with Temple Rome will be able to complete their credits in the event that we are forced to make changes to the structure of the program. All Temple Rome courses will be ready for remote learning, should we need to implement this option 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 would work 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 are covered by international travel medical insurance. We advise all students to keep their insurance coverage in their home countries, as the travel medical insurance will only cover students while participating in the program abroad. Details about the coverage are provided to accepted students in the pre-departure materials.

### Education Abroad Contact Information
Students who would like to meet with Temple Rome Program Manager Rosemary Carlson may visit the Education Abroad virtual front desk to set up an appointment. Alternatively, students may contact Rosemary by email at rcarlson@temple.edu.