



UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

August 14, 2020

Dear Prospective Students, Parents, and Loved Ones of our Fall 2020 Rome Class,

We are back again with a brief list of your pending questions and updates on the situation here in Italy.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

New Diagnostic Testing Date

Q: Because Monday, September 7, 2020 is Labor Day, testing-centers may be closed for business on that day. Could this cause problems either for taking a diagnostic test, getting results, or both? In light of this lost working-day in the calendar, can you reschedule the earliest date by which we can take a diagnostic test.

A: You're right, this does create an additional potential difficulty taking a test and getting a result. On the other hand, our medical experts tell us that the longer we anticipate the test, the less valid it becomes for the COVID prevention purposes it serves. So, let us find middle ground here and now establish that the test can be taken as early as Friday, September 4, 2020.

Exception to Policy on Diagnostic Testing for Students with Past COVID Infection

Q: A number of my family members tested positive for COVID earlier in the summer, and I probably got it too even though I never got tested. I've heard that some experts say that it is possible to test positive for COVID for up to three (3) months after having it, even if one is no longer contagious. I would hate to test positive for this reasons. What's your call on this issue?

A: We have created the following Exception-to-Policy for this issue. Students will need to submit to an antibody (serological) test to determine if they have a history of COVID infection and share results with us immediately. If the test comes back positive, we can assume that they have already contracted and built up an immunity to it, and so waive all further diagnostic-test requirements as long as said students do not exhibit COVID symptoms. If the test comes back negative for COVID antibodies, then the current policies apply to them, namely they will need to take the diagnostic test no earlier than Friday, September 4th and test negative in order to be admitted to the in-person phase of the Rome Program, and in addition submit to further testing when arriving in Rome.

Due Santi Pledge

Q: An earlier letter indicated that taking the [Groundhog Pledge](#) in compliance with the University's anti-COVID measures would not be sufficient for Rome. Can you please follow up on that point?

A: Yes, of course, we have now finalized language for what we are calling the Due Santi Pledge. You can find and sign that pledge with your Terra Dotta study-abroad portal.

Classes During Quarantine:

Q: I have a job in the United States whose working hours might conflict with the online class schedule. What do I do?

A: This question is more complicated than it seems. If that job includes dealing with the public, then you need to give notice in light of the self-quarantining rules in the 14 days leading up to your Rome departure. Remember: self-quarantine means both not putting yourself in a position to interact anyone who may potentially have COVID and furthermore just staying home. If your job is an online job, on the other hand, you can just pick up recordings of the missed classes

from your professors. NB: If your professors have not already written you with a syllabus for their classes, including how the first two weeks of online classes will work, they will be doing so very soon.

Sports on Campus:

Q: I've heard that all sporting activities, both university and intramural, have been suspended on the Irving Campus. Does the same apply for Rome?

A: No, not really. Given that we are a gated community under quarantine, as long as no one tests positive for the virus and then is placed in isolation, then sports will be okay under certain conditions. Until we administer our first diagnostic test on campus within a couple of days of arrival and get the results back, no contact sports without use of masks will be allowed. After that, sports can go ahead for anyone not infected with COVID. The sporting facilities available on campus include a weight and work-out room, bocce-ball court, running track (around the vineyard), swimming pool, outdoor tennis and basketball court, and small (*calcio*) soccer field. A volleyball net can be set up on the lawns, and we also have a croquet set.

Visitors on Campus

Q: Has the visitor(s) policy on campus been amended due to COVID?

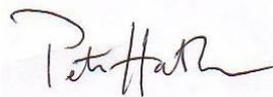
A: Yes it has. While there can be no outside visitors during the quarantine period, we will consider student requests for visitors on a case-by-case basis in relation to a COVID risk assessment for the balance of the semester. All planned visits must be requested no later than two weeks in advance to our Director of Special Programs, Annie Gibbs (agibbs@udallas.edu) and are subject to approval by the Director and Director of Student Affairs.

ITALIAN - USA UPDATES

- Italy: In its [weekly report \(August 3-9\)](#) of the incidence COVID virus and its containment in Italy, the Italian Ministry of Health made the following points: (1) Italy is beyond a critical phase of the disease but still needs to keep strict measures in place in order to contain the small increases in positivity that have occurred in July, (2) the R value (effective reproduction rate, or rather the average number of people that one infected person will pass the virus to another, is currently between .75 and 1.0 in Italy in general and .99 in our own area of Lazio, (3) no hospital in Italy is reporting difficulties handling existing and new COVID patients, (4) no relaxing of current anti-COVID measures is envisioned soon.
- USA: Department of State [travel guidelines for Italy](#) remain unchanged since last week.

For further questions, please do write either me at phatlie@udallas.edu or Mrs. Davies at bdavies@udallas.edu.

Sincerely Yours,



Peter Hatlie, Dean, Director, VP, Prof. of Classics