



UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

August 21, 2020

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

The beginning of classes and your arrival in Rome are drawing ever more near. Here are some new Q+As that have come in and updates on the international situation.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Another Question on Testing

Q: I've recently experienced COVID-19 symptoms and indeed just finished self-quarantine. My fear—backed by things I've heard—is that if I take a serological test to demonstrate that I have definitely had COVID-19 (and thereby qualify for UD Rome's exception-to-policy on diagnostic testing), I will end up testing negative. Why? Well, because of the fairly short time in which my antibodies have had time to develop and show traces on a serological test. At the same time, I fear that in any diagnostic test I may end up testing positive and therefore be turned away from the in-person phase of the Rome Program. What can I do?

A: This is a difficult matter indeed. Please give us a few days to respond as we ask our experts their opinion. We are confident that if a student is officially tested by an Italian health official (at the airport for example) and tests positive, as long as they have the positive serological test result they will still be allowed entrance into Italy. But this third scenario –i.e. serological negative and diagnostic positive—is troubling and difficult to justify.

Due Santi Pledge

Q: There are parts of the Due Santi Pledge that make me uncomfortable either because I don't agree with the policies outlined, or it compromises my right to free speech and free thought, or both. Will the University amend language in the Pledge so that I feel comfortable signing it?

A: No, I'm afraid not, given that it is an approved policy whose reasonable goal is to protect student and staff health. The Due Santi Pledge is actually almost identical to the Irving [Groundhog Pledge](#), the latter having been developed and approved as policy by UD's leadership right up to the Presidential and Board level. As for the part of the Due Santi Pledge that is different from the Groundhog Pledge, i.e. the second clause only, that is a matter of Italian law. We must be clear with students in saying that failure to sign the Due Santi Pledge will result in their not being admitted to the in-person part of the program beginning September 13, 2020. For any related concerns on this matter, please feel free to contact me at phatlie@udallas.edu.

Legal Protocols upon Arrival to the EU with destination Rome (I)

Q: I understand that students are an exception to the rule that US citizens cannot enter Italy as the US is still considered a high risk country. How will I prove my student status?

A: We have uploaded a packet to your application with documentation for you to print out and put with your passport to carry with you. The first page of the packet includes a detailed list of all documents, how they should be completed, and what additional documents you must print out.

Legal Protocols upon Arrival to the EU with destination Rome (II)

Q: My flight goes through a European country that has restrictions on entering from a high risk country. Will I be permitted to transit through the airport of that country on my way to Italy?

A: Regulations for individual countries and airlines change daily. Students with such reservations are advised to check with their airlines and with the particular countries in question for the latest requirements. The following sites may be of help:

- Information for Travelers Going to Europe from travel.state.gov/content/travel/:

If you are planning to visit or travel through Europe, we urge you to check the websites of the relevant [U.S. embassies or consulates](#) for information on restrictions, foreign quarantine policies, and urgent health information provided by relevant authorities. Some European countries currently prohibit entry by tourists and other non-essential travelers. For specific country information visit travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/COVID-19-Country-Specific-Information

- This is one of the main information sources being used during this period for entry requirements: www.iaatravelcentre.com/international-travel-document-news/1580226297.

Post Quarantine Easing of Restrictions

Q: Assuming that all students receive a negative COVID-19 diagnostic test during the quarantine period, will there then be a loosening of the policies that require mask wearing and social distancing?

A: No, owing to the fact that mask wearing, social distancing, and other COVID-19 prevention policies are simply an extension of Italian law. On the up side, the weather ought to be great (80s during the day and 70s at night) so students can spend lots of time outside on our beautiful grounds if the want.

Fall 2020 Calendar Classes, Masses and Events

Q: When will we receive an updated calendar of class times and other activities?

A: My guess is that you've already received emails from most if not all of your Rome professors with a syllabus. Their syllabi are in turn based on a general fall calendar that we are attaching here, a calendar that has class dates and times, Mass dates and times, meal times, Student Life activities, and field-trips. This calendar is still a work-in-progress, although very few significant changes will be made to it except as necessary to accommodate any negative developments owing to COVID-19.

Q: Is the attached calendar reliable enough that I can start to plan my fall break (October 17-25), long weekend (November 6-8), Thanksgiving Day break (November 21-29) travel plans?

A: Hmm...well, yes and no. I would definitely start planning but not yet make transportation and accommodation bookings. You will have plenty of time to make such plans and proceed ahead with reservations during the quarantine period. Remember, too, that all travel plans must be submitted for approval starting on September 1. You will find a questionnaire uploaded to your application profile to complete. Although we are asking you to hold off on reservations at this time, the good news is that there is less demand on travel and accommodations in October and November. Consequently, both prices and availability should work in your favor.

ITALIAN - USA UPDATES

- Italy:

→ In its [weekly report \(August 10-16\)](#) on COVID-related issues, the Italian Ministry of Health made the following points: (1) New cases have been gradually on the rise since June, and as of today 9.65 people in 100,000 are infected; (2) 28% of the new cases were imported from abroad, (3) most new cases concern people under 30 years of age—a big change from the earlier phases of the contagion, (4) because younger people are mostly affected, the number of asymptomatic cases is high and the gravity of illness in the infected reduced, (5) testing is on the increase in response to the increase in new infections, (6) the virus is still currently under

control even though the number of new cases has increased.

→ Because young people are the greatest source of new cases of COVID-19, the Italian gov't [ordered all discotheques and nightclubs closed](#) until further notice and ordered mask-wearing –even outdoors--in public places between 6pm and 6am. This ordinance was subsequently challenged and upheld in the courts.

- 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