



UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

August 28, 2020

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

I am writing you once again from the Rome Campus as we approach the beginning of our online phase of the semester next week, followed by the in-person phase of our semester just over two weeks from now.

Let me remind you that we've already sent you a whole lot of information about the semester to come. If you do not have all of my previous letters on file, please click [here](#) for an archive of those letters. And please note that to the extent that any information and advice has changed over the weeks, the later the date of the letter, the more accurate the information it contains. For example, please note that the earliest date by which we require students to take a diagnostic test was originally announced as Saturday, September 5 (see letter of August 7th) but then changed to accommodate the Labor Day holiday to Friday, September 4 (see letter of August 14th).

With this note I want to share a brief series of updates with you and welcome your feedback and questions in case this communication does not clearly and completely provide all the information you need at this time.

COVID-19 Trending in Italy: Regrettably, COVID-19 cases have increased in recent weeks in response to a significant influx of tourists into Italy over the summer and a significant uptick in cases due to Italians going abroad and bringing COVID-19 back with them. The average age of infected individuals stands at 29 years of age, way down from earlier outbreaks and therefore demonstrating that young people are the major carriers and spreaders of COVID-19 right now. This week's [Ministry of Health Update \(for August 17-23\)](#) predictably strikes a more cautious tone than any report in recent months, noting that (a) the number cases is still containable but on the rise, (b) Italy is still in a better position than its EU neighbors in terms of containment, but (c) anyone coming to Italy needs to be careful, be vigilant, and adopt all necessary anti-COVID measures. The same Ministry of Health has also increased testing, notably [from people returning from vacation destinations](#) that have proven to be risky for the virus's transmission. The consequence of the developments described above is this: Rome Program participants are not at any more risk for contracting COVID-19 than before nor is the Rome semester itself in any jeopardy, I believe, but students may face more scrutiny over testing issues as they leave the USA and enter the EU and Italy.

Testing Issues for Students Who Have Previously Contracted COVID-19 Earlier this Summer: As discussed in last week's letter, a small number of students have already contracted and fortunately overcome the virus during the summer and therefore can expect to be COVID-free presently and thus, in principle, are eligible to attend the in-person phase of the semester in Rome. I say "in principle" in view of the fact that health experts in the USA and Italy may not fully agree on risk factors in this regard, so one has to be careful not to underestimate the very cautious position of Italian health officials in this respect, because that is the opinion that counts at the moment. To get to the bottom of this issue, I met today with the Italian health official who is responsible for our campus, presented the case outlined above, and asked her for feedback. Her response was as follows: Students who believe that they have contracted COVID need to obtain

a serological test demonstrating that they have developed anti-bodies to COVID-19. Alternatively, if it is the case that they are testing negative for antibodies but testing positive in a viral test, then these students need to obtain a detailed declaration from their doctor(s) documenting the diagnosis of COVID-19, complete with dates and any appropriate clinical information. My strong recommendation is that even students who have tested positive for antibodies through a serological test also bring a doctor's report.

Potential USA Testing Complications from some New CDC Testing Guidelines: It has come to our attention that [some new CDC guidelines on diagnostic testing](#) may render student access to such testing more difficult. Revised on August 24th, as we understand, the new guidelines say that, "If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms and have not been in close contact with someone known to have a COVID-19 infection: You do not need a test." It has been reported to us that the previous practice of testing on-demand is no longer valid in some places. We are studying this matter presently and can report that the following testing centers are still offering on-demand testing, [NextCare](#) and [MedExpress](#). Please email the Rome Office at udrome@udallas.edu if you experience problems obtaining a test in your particular area.

Online Classes during the Next Couple of Weeks: All students should have heard from their professors by now with course information. In most cases they should also already have Zoom (or other) links for their first classes. If you have not heard from your professors by Monday, August 31, please contact me at phatlie@udallas.edu and I will look into the matter.

Campus Zoom Meetings during the Next Couple of Weeks: We have a series of required Zoom meetings scheduled during the next couple of weeks. They are:

- **Welcome to the Rome Program** (Monday, August 31, 10:00am CDT). In this meeting of 30-45 minutes, your Rome chaplains, professors and staff will introduce themselves and offer some words of welcome. The link is:
 - <https://zoom.us/j/93538035692?pwd=aDU0KzB0RUJLUHZSelhCUXVEMXhqdz09>
 - Meeting ID: 935 3803 5692
 - Passcode: 714500
- **First Orientation Meeting – Forms** (Tuesday, September 1, 4:00pm CDT), In this meeting of 45-60 minutes, our Office of Student Life staff will review the forms you need to fill out and make sure everything is in order. The link is:
 - <https://zoom.us/j/95090067112?pwd=Q2hlNGRrSU2krRIRZcytxd2pHa2kvUT09>
 - Meeting ID: 950 9006 7112
 - Passcode: 424130
- **Second Orientation Meeting – Academics** (Thursday, September 3, 4:00pm CDT). In this 60 minute meeting, Dr. Hatlie will go over academic policies, events, and the calendar. The link is:
 - <https://zoom.us/j/98475529109?pwd=T0lxd0djM01YbzNIOWhKTXpjOEFYdz09>
 - Meeting ID: 984 7552 9109
 - Passcode: 858375
- **Third Orientation Meeting – Campus Policies and Student Handbook** (Tuesday, September 8, 4:00pm CDT). In this 60-minute meeting led by the Office of Student Life, campus policies will be discussed. The link is:
 - <https://zoom.us/j/97373168749?pwd=S01EaE43S1hmenp6NTVHbk5wVnV3>

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→ Meeting ID: 973 7316 8749

→ Passcode: 784639

- **People, Tastes and Sounds of Due Santi.** We'd love to have you join us for a couple of nice virtual events highlighting some of the riches of the Rome Campus this weekend. Sponsored by UD Irving's Office of Advancement, they are [Due Santi Wine Tasting](#) and the [Due Santi Cooking Class](#) featuring our campus cooks, Nino and Nuccia.

I hope that the above information has been useful for everyone. And thank you once again for your perseverance and resilience through all of the ups, downs, and sideways of this process. I'm convinced that we are doing the right thing and pledge to work my very hardest and do my very best in the interest of our students and their parents/guardians, our incredible crew of staff members, chaplains and professors, and of course our beloved University itself. It's not an exaggeration to say that I am dying to see our students arrive in Rome and experience the wonderful offerings and opportunities that the Rome Program affords.

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