

KSU ITALY

STUDENT GUIDEBOOK



**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**

GLOBAL EDUCATION
Education Abroad

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PRE-DEPARTURE

Passport

Hold a passport that is valid for six months after the completion of the program. Keep copies of your passport on you and lock your passport in your hotel room unless unavoidable. Never pack your passport in your checked luggage.

Itinerary

Be familiar with the travel itinerary and details of the program to prepare you for what to expect. While most items are planned for you, it is good to be well versed in what you will experience. Also, know what is included and excluded in the program. Some programs may include free days or weekends for you to do as you please.

Travel Information

Try to become familiar with currency regulations, exchange rates, weather conditions, and customs procedures of the country you are visiting. While this guide and your Program Director will be great resources for you, you are welcome to do any extra research on your own to help prepare you for this experience.

Excursions

Work with the Program Director if you choose to do excursions outside the itinerary. Time may be limited during the dates of travel for extended periods, but travelers may choose to travel independently before or after the itinerary dates.

Air Information

Be familiar with your flight schedule for the program as well as any airline regulations. Travelers should be at the airport at a minimum of 3 hours before their scheduled flight. Keep a copy of your airline information including a confirmation/booking number and your ticket number on you for travel. Know who you will travel with and when you will need to arrive at your destination.

Travel Insurance

Please bring a copy of any travel or international health insurance cards (CISI). Your CISI insurance policy will be sent to your KSU email before departure.

Luggage

Make sure all of your bags are labeled. Pack layers & washable fabrics in modest styles. In churches, Italians expect visitors to dress appropriately. This means shoulders and knees should be covered. A rain jacket or small folding umbrella is advisable in case of rain (Spring, Early Summer, Late Fall).

Health, Safety & Security

Be aware of any safety and security guidelines that you should follow on the program. Some cultural differences will also need to be understood in order to avoid an uncomfortable or offensive situation. All students must abide by the KSU Code of Conduct and the laws of the country.

Culture

Italian culture tends to be more laid back than American culture. The four big areas of culture for Italy are Food, Faith, Family, and Art.

CONTACTS

KSU CONTACTS

Education Abroad:

- (+1) 470.578.6336
- educationabroad@kennesaw.edu

Office of International Safety & Security:

- (+1) 470.578.6336
- globalsafety@kennesaw.edu
- If you are experiencing an emergency abroad, the **24/7 KSU International Emergency Phone can be reached at (+1) 470.578.6666**. Please identify yourself as a student, faculty, or staff member experiencing an emergency abroad to be routed appropriately.

ITALY CONTACTS

Scuola di Italiano il Sasso:

- Heike Wilms

Terre Toscane:

- Virginia Vannuccini

ITALY EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In case of emergencies, before calling the local police (112) while in Montepulciano, first contact your Program Director (at the phone numbers listed above) unless it cannot wait.

- Local Police (Italy): 112
- General emergencies: 113
- Medical Emergencies: 118
- Fire: 115
- U.S. Embassy (Rome): (+39) 06.46741
- U.S. Consulate (Florence): (+39) 055.266.951
- Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI): (+1) 203.399.5130

KSU ITALY



KSU'S MONTEPULCIANO EDUCATIONAL SITE (KSU ITALY)

OVERVIEW, BACKGROUND, AND HISTORY OF THE SITE

Kennesaw State University's first permanent international education site is located in the Renaissance town of Montepulciano, Italy, where KSU students, faculty, and friends of the university have come to study, live and explore like a local since 1999. Montepulciano is known as the largest hill town in southern Tuscany which has picturesque views overlooking vineyards and rolling hills.

Our aim is to make Montepulciano and its superb Italian facilities available first to students from Kennesaw State University and its University Systems of Georgia (USG) consortium partners. While the programming has expanded over the years, KSU Italy has upheld the importance of its partnerships with both Montepulciano-based and Georgia-based institutions. KSU Italy aims to serve as a resource for the entire State of Georgia. In more than 20 years of programs in Montepulciano, KSU Italy has established many connections to facilitate learning and culturally enriching experiences. KSU has created state-of-the-art classroom and studio facilities in Montepulciano's Fortezza Medievale through the generosity of the KSU Foundation and the efforts of Global Education, where it is housed.

From the beginning, KSU has worked closely with the Comune di Montepulciano, now under the leadership of Mayor Michele Angiolini, the Consorzio del Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Il Sasso Italian Language School, and Terre Toscane. In addition, based on the idea of the original consortium, KSU Italy continues to collaborate with other universities from Georgia such as Georgia Southern, Georgia College, and Valdosta State University.

KSU plans to expand activity in Montepulciano to benefit students, alumni, faculty, and staff beyond what is currently in place. Our goal is to offer a wide range of programs, from cooking lessons to executive leadership training, to alumni, community, educational, and business groups on a space-available basis. Over the last several years, every KSU college has offered Education Abroad Programs in Montepulciano.

From the staff at KSU Italy, thank you to all who make this possible, and we hope you enjoy your stay in Montepulciano.



MONTEPULCIANO



THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MONTEPULCIANO & ITALY

Montepulciano is nestled in the heart of the Vino Nobile wine region. Built on a narrow tufa limestone ridge, Montepulciano is the largest hill town in southern Tuscany. Besides the spectacular view of rich green rolling hills lined with grape vineyards that fade into the mountains, this Renaissance town offers a historic, artistic and natural authenticity that captivates the hearts of its visitors.

Montepulciano is known worldwide for its wine and is also revered for its Pecorino cheese, pasta, and honey. Around 200 events take place in Montepulciano every year including concerts at the Palazzo Rici, theater performances at the Piazza Grande, the barrel-racing contest "Bravio delle Botti" held in August every year, the Christmas festival, and much more. These authentic traditions are experienced by locals and visitors alike with passion that has been passed down through the centuries.

KEY LANDMARKS IN MONTEPULCIANO

Porta al Prato

The main gate for both pedestrians and traffic to enter the town. It's located at the bottom of the main street (the Corso) on the north end of the walled town. Wherever you are, just keep going downhill and you will likely come to the Porta al Prato.

The Corso

The commercial spine of the town, the Corso is the main street for restaurants and shopping. The Corso runs almost the length of the town, from Porta al Prato at the bottom up to a sharp switchback to the right that leads to the Piazza Grande at the top.

Piazza del Erbe

This is a T-shaped intersection about one-third of the way up the Corso with an open loggia (a columned, covered space) that was once a vegetable market. **Il Sasso**, our partner, is located just below Piazza del Erbe on the right side going downhill.

Piazza Grande

Piazza Grande is the large open square at the top of the town with the cathedral, bell tower, city hall, the Medici well, restaurants, and a café. No matter where you are, go uphill and you will reach it.

The Fortezza

A 13th century fortress where students have classes. It is the home base for KSU and is located at the top of the hill behind the cathedral (walk through the gate and up the shaded drive to the door). To give you a sense of scale, the distance from the Fortezza to Porta al Prato is one-half mile or about a 15-20 minute walk.

The Bus Station (Autostazione)

Walk down the Corso, go out Porta Prato, continue walking down to the traffic circle in front of Santa Agnese church; take the soft right sharply down the hill. Walk past the Conad and take the first street to the right. You will see the "Stazione" ahead on the left.

DAILY LIFE & BAR ETIQUETTE

The people of Montepulciano "Poliziani" are very used to KSU students and tourists. Most will feel comfortable speaking English with you, but they will also enjoy it if you try to speak some Italian with them. Entering into any restaurant or business, it is custom to say "ciao" (hello/goodbye) or "buongiorno" (good morning) to the shop keepers and workers when you enter, and then "grazie" (thank you) when you leave.

Expect a difference in the dining process in Italy. The bar is a neighborhood institution for morning coffee, mid-day snacks, a quick light lunch, or a glass of wine at the end of the day. The price varies depending on whether you consume your purchase standing at the bar or sitting at a table. To-go or a "takeaway" is not very common either. Also, note that you will have to pay for water at restaurants, and you will have to choose either sparkling "frizante" (gas) or still (no gas) water.

Another part of bar etiquette involves paying. In most bars, you pay for your purchase first, then take the receipt to the barman who will serve you. If you see a table and chairs anywhere, like in Piazza Grande, it is probably for a nearby restaurant, and they are for paying customers, so be prepared to order something if you sit there. If you have a view with a meal, there can also be an extra charge added to your bill.

APARTMENTS

As a KSU Education Abroad student, living in Montepulciano is culturally rich and is a significant aspect of your program. Students share two to four-bedroom apartments with other students within the program. Although the apartments are located within the historic walls of Montepulciano - the newest being over 300 years old - they are equipped with modern amenities. Each apartment will have cooking equipment to cook your own meals. Some apartments may have laundry units in them, but if not, there are two self-service laundromats in the town that you can use. Most apartments will not have WiFi, but the best WiFi in town is in the Fortezza.

The apartments in Montepulciano will be treated similarly to the apartments and residence halls on KSU's campus. Importantly, KSU's Student Code of Conduct will serve as the foundation for our expectations of you during your visit to Montepulciano. All students are expected to know and observe the information, policies, and procedures found in the Student Code of Conduct. Please visit <http://scai.kennesaw.edu/codes.php> to view the Code of Conduct.

NO ONE other than KSU students, faculty, or staff should enter your apartment. In conjunction with this, understand that the apartment owner, cleaning staff, Heike Wilms from II Sasso, KSU staff, and the KSU program director can visit the apartment at any time. Bed linens are changed weekly for you, but please keep the apartments clean and treat them well.

Italy has different garbage and recycling processes in place. Each day represents the type of trash you will put out on the street in the mornings. A schedule and trash bags will be given to you upon arrival, so please make sure you follow the guidelines, otherwise, the local police will give the apartment a citation and fine.

CLIMATE

It is advised to check the weather in the areas you will stay in before packing and adjust accordingly. Layered clothing is generally advised. The weather in Montepulciano is similar to the weather in Georgia. The beginning of summer can range between the 70s and 80s. Mid-summer can begin to climb into the mid to high 80s. The latter half of the summer generally ranges between the mid to high 80s to high 90s. During the night, the temperature may drop as low as the 50s but tends to stay in the 60s. Rome (and other southern regions) will often be warmer than Montepulciano, and Florence will often be more humid.

Because of the thick architectural stone, which helps to insulate buildings including the apartments, many buildings and residents of Montepulciano do not have air conditioning. To help regulate the temperature, keep your windows closed during the day and open them at night. Fans are also available to borrow from the Fortezza or purchase from the Conad.

TERRAIN

You will do much more walking and standing on a program than during a normal day in the states. While in Montepulciano for class days, students may walk an average of 2-5 miles, while students will often walk 6-9 miles on field trips (These are not hikes, by any means. Rather, walking is simply a part of the culture.). Much of the walking during field trips and within the town of Montepulciano is on uneven, sometimes steep ground. Most of the towns have cobblestone streets and can be quite hilly. Accessibility for walking-impaired individuals is limited in much of Italy. It is advised that all participants wear comfortable shoes in Italy and should avoid heels and flip-flops.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Most of the transportation for the large study abroad programs is through private bus, however, the main way to get around Italy is through the train system. Their trains are reliable, on time, and easy to figure out. There are three types of trains: Regionale Veloce, Intercity, and the Freccia trains (rossa, bianca, argento). Regionale Veloce (RV) is the slowest and makes the most stops but is the cheapest. Intercity trains will make fewer stops but will cost twice as much as the RV. The Freccia trains are high-speed, express trains and are the most expensive trains. You must validate your RV tickets before boarding the train, or you will face a fine that could cost hundreds of euros. Chiusi-Chiacciano Terme is the best train station to use for Montepulciano. To view the train schedule or buy tickets download the app or go to <https://www.trenitalia.com/>.

For information regarding the regional bus routes and times, please ask your Program Director.

Tip: Make sure to validate all RV train tickets at a green (sometimes yellow) validation machine. Neglecting to validate your train ticket could result in an expensive fine.

How to get from FCO Airport in Rome to Montepulciano

1. From the airport look for signs that say “Leonardo Express” which is a non-stop train service that connects the airport to Roma Termini train station.
2. From Roma Termini, the destination you are looking for to get to Montepulciano is “**Chiusi-Chianciano Terme.**” A ticketing agent can help you get the right trains to get to this station.
 - a. You may also need to make a connecting train route in case a train can not take you straight to Chiusi-Chianciano Terme. Regardless of the train, there will be stops in between Rome Termini and Chiusi-Chianciano Terme.
3. From the train station in Chiusi, you can either get a local bus (tickets available at the newsstand in the station) or a taxi to Montepulciano. The bus is cheap (a couple of euros), but it will take about an hour and will leave you outside the city walls with a long walk with your luggage. The taxi will cost about €50-65 but can take you into the city walls.

GROCERY STORES

Light Groceries (fruit, pasta, bread, veggies, etc.)

There are several small shops up on the Corso. Going downhill from the Fortezza, Lo Sfizio will be on the far end of the Corso on the right. In addition to selling groceries, they make sandwiches from scratch and have a wine and oil shop attached to the store. Continuing downhill on the Corso, there is another shop on the right called Panini da Rita, which sells pasta and meats and offers lunch service. La Bottega is past Piazza del Erbe and close to La Pulcinella and Saint Agostino Church, and it is a small supermarket on the left side of the Corso. The last is Il Canestro di Mozzini Franca, and it is on the right side of the street, just past Saint Agostino Church. This shop has produce, but the owner does not like people touching the fruit without permission.

Also, every Thursday from 7 am - 1 pm there is a market by the bus station "Autostazione" where you can buy produce, fresh food, clothes and more.

Major Groceries (large selections of food, school/office supplies, some clothing, towels, etc.)

Conad Supermarket - walk down the Corso, go out Porta al Prato, continue walking down to the traffic island in front of Santa Agnese church; take the soft right, sharply down the hill. The Conad is on the right. The Conad tends to be less expensive than the smaller food shops within the town. The store has lots of options for food and products if you need toiletries and other items that you may have forgotten to pack. When buying produce, you will need to wear the gloves provided, use the scale to weigh your items, and print out a price sticker.

When preparing to go to the Conad, bring your own bag to carry your groceries in. You can also purchase a reusable bag at the checkout counter for a euro or two.

PHARMACIES IN MONTEPULCIANO

There are two Farmacias (Pharmacies) in town. One is up the Corso from Piazza del Erbe about 100 meters on the left and is called Farmacia Franceschi; the other is just outside the Porta al Prato straight down the hill on the left after the Tourist Information parking lot and is called Farmacia Sorbini. Usually, if one is closed, the other is open. They can also be recognized by the green cross outside the store which is their universal symbol.

For all drugs, including over the counter, you must describe your symptoms to a pharmacist. Knowing the chemical name of your medicine will help but brand names do not. The pharmacists typically speak good English. Please note that the pharmacy can only deal with minor health problems. If you have a major health problem or emergency, please report it to your Program Director.



A photograph of a rustic stone building facade. The wall is made of light-colored, weathered stone blocks. A large, arched doorway is visible on the right side. To the left of the doorway, there is a window with a wooden frame. The wall is heavily decorated with climbing red roses. In front of the doorway, there is a wooden chair with a woven seat. A large, gnarled tree stump is placed on the ground next to the chair. A sign is hanging from the doorway. The overall scene is warm and inviting, suggesting a traditional Italian or Mediterranean setting.

PREPARATION

PREPARING FOR TRAVEL

PACKING YOUR BAGS

Our advice always is to pack for comfort and layered wear. Pack comfortable broken-in walking shoes. Please note that proper attire, such as long pants (rather than shorts) for men and pants (or a skirt) and a shirt with sleeves for women, is required for entrance into many religious institutions, especially the Vatican.

Additionally, there are a few things we recommend you DO NOT bring with you, such as valuable jewelry or other precious or sentimental items, expensive gadgets, and generally, anything you can't afford to lose. You don't want to ruin your program by worrying about your possessions.

When deciding what to pack, remember airline baggage rules can be complicated and vary from airline to airline. Depending on the airline, the baggage allowance is normally one 50-pound bag but please remember that many airlines now charge a fee for checked luggage. Check with your airline before departure for the most up-to-date information on baggage allowances, restrictions, and fees.

As you may be responsible for carrying your own bags for quite some distance, you should aim to bring no more than 50 pounds or one large suitcase. If you cannot carry your bags, they are too heavy. You will be responsible for carrying your luggage to your housing and many places do not have elevators. In addition, many cities in Europe are not set up with wheelchair ramps, so you may need to carry your rolling luggage.

When packing, also remember that you will be responsible for keeping your luggage with you at all times, even while you are traveling before or after the program. It is very expensive to have bags shipped home or consigned at an airport or train station. Most participants find that they can get by on much less than they brought. Plus, you will want to save room for souvenirs and other items you might purchase!

Helpful Packing Tips:

- Do not pack your passport, currency, jewelry, medication, other travel documents, or valuables in your checked luggage. Keep them in your carry-on bag and insight.
- Keep one change of clothing and a toiletry kit in your carry-on luggage in case your checked luggage does not arrive on your flight. Be sure to check airport security/TSA guidelines for carry-on items.
- Bring all the medication you need to last the duration of the program plus a little extra. Leave it in its original container and bring a copy of your prescription (this includes birth control). Bring extra contact lenses and prescription eyeglasses
- Pack versatile items of clothing that are easily layered, think “capsule wardrobe”.
- Pack flat, comfortable shoes. Montepulciano is a hill town with uneven roads.

- With numerous cultural activities, excursions, and on-site activities, you will be doing a lot of walking. Comfortable shoes are a necessity; make sure they are well broken in before you leave.
- Europeans do not generally wear sweatshirts, shorts, sweatpants, flip-flops, or jeans with holes or tears. You may feel more comfortable if you try to dress to “fit in.” Wearing dressy clothes is obviously not practical for everyday purposes, and you can get by wearing nice shirts, blouses or sweaters with pants or nice jeans.
- If you are visiting churches, please dress respectfully. Your shoulders must be covered and pants/skirts/dresses must reach the knee for entrance into these churches. An easy way to cover your shoulders in the summertime is to have a lightweight scarf with you. You can also buy a scarf there in a shop as a souvenir!
- You may want to consider bringing your favorite brand name products such as your favorite brand of shampoo or antiperspirant, pain relievers and other OTC medications, particular brands of contact lens supplies, etc. Brand name items may not be available abroad, though you can almost always find a local equivalent.
- Pack three photocopies of the photo page of your passport in your checked luggage. They should always remain separate from the actual documents.

TSA LIQUIDS RULE

You are allowed to bring a quart-sized bag of liquids, aerosols, gels, creams and pastes in your carry-on bag and through the checkpoint. These are limited to travel-sized containers that are 3.4 ounces (100 milliliters) or less per item. Placing these items in the small bag and separating from your carry-on baggage facilitates the screening process. Pack items that are in containers larger than 3.4 ounces or 100 milliliters in checked baggage.

Any liquid, aerosol, gel, cream or paste that alarms during screening will require additional screening.

Exemptions:

- Medications
- Infant and child nourishments

Inbound International Flights

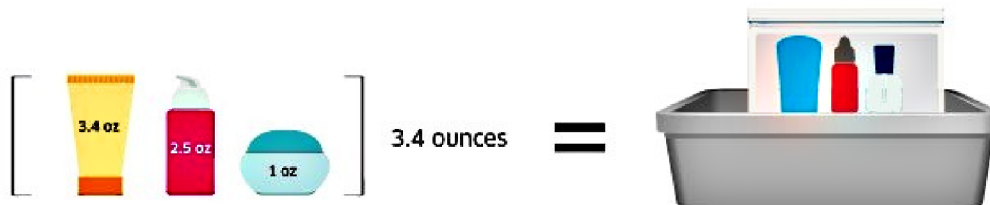
- You may carry duty-free liquids in secure, tamper-evident bags, more than 3.4 oz or 100 ml in your carry-on bag if:
 - The duty-free liquids were purchased internationally, and you are traveling to the United States with a connecting flight.
 - The liquids are packed in a transparent, secure, tamper-evident bag by the retailer and do not show signs of tampering when presented to TSA for screening.
 - The original receipt for the liquids is present and the purchase was made within 48 hours.

The items inside the secure, tamper-evident bags must be screened and cleared. Any item that alarms or is unable to be screened will not be permitted in your carry-on bag. We recommend packing all liquids, gels, and aerosols that are over 3.4 oz or 100 ml in your checked baggage, even if they are in a secure, tamper-evident bag.

For additional information on what you can bring on your flight, please visit:
<https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/all>

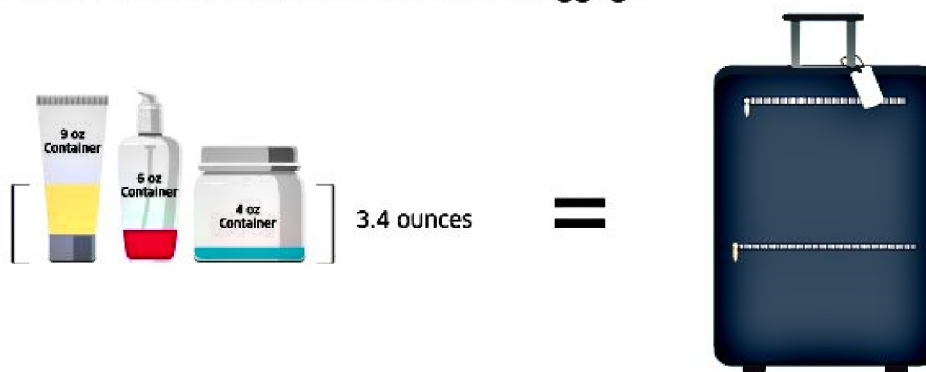
Carry-On Bag

3.4 ounces (100 ml) or smaller sized containers that fit in 1 quart-sized, resealable bag may go in carry-on and through checkpoint security.



Checked Bag

Containers that are larger than 3.4 ounces (100ml) regardless of amount inside must be in checked baggage.



CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION

To avoid any delays when passing through Customs, please be sure to keep all medications and dietary supplements in their original containers and bring a copy of any prescriptions from your doctor.

If you are taking expensive items not made in the United States (cameras, watches, etc.) with you overseas, you may want to bring the original receipts or register them with U.S. Customs before you leave the U.S. When you reenter, if you have not registered them ahead of time and do not have a receipt, you may have to pay duty on them. This pertains mostly to luxury items that are less than 6 months old.

When you reenter the United States, U.S. Customs requires you to declare all items purchased overseas. Returning residents and citizens are allowed to bring back up to \$800 worth of foreign purchases without having to pay duty. Alcohol, tobacco, and perfume are subject to stricter regulations. You will not have to pay duty on gifts mailed from Europe costing less than \$25 as long as you do not send more than a single gift to any one person on any given day. Make sure to keep all receipts for the purchases you mail home or bring with you as you may need them when you reenter.

For more information on what you must declare, prohibited items, and tips on sending items back to the U.S., consult the following link to the U.S. Customs Service: <http://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/know-before-you-go>

ELECTRIC CURRENT

We recommend leaving all electrical appliances at home. Electricity in Europe is 220 volts which means that American appliances will not work unless they are dual voltage, or you have a voltage converter. An adapter is also needed to connect U.S. flat-pronged plugs into European round-pronged outlets. Universal voltage converters can be expensive but may be the best option if you are an avid traveler. However, they do not always work well and often American appliances are of a high wattage which can overload older electrical wiring. For smaller items like cell phones, often an adapter will work, but items like a hairdryer may have complications with any converter or adapter.

In Italy, the electric current is 220 volts and uses Type C, F, and L electrical sockets. Type C and F accept plugs with two parallel round pins, while Type L accepts plugs with three parallel round pins. We recommend you bring a universal plug adapter, as you will need it to use any electrical or electronic devices. You will also need an electricity converter for older single-voltage electrical appliances.

For more information, please see the following sites:

- <https://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/>
- <https://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets/l/>
- <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guidance/advice-for-you/when-travelling/travel-adaptor-for-italy/>

USING YOUR PHONE ABROAD

While you may not be on your phone as much exploring the wonders of Italy, you will still need a phone abroad. Group communications are usually carried out on GroupMe and WhatsApp. There are four options when it comes to using a phone abroad:

- **Use your phone only through Wi-Fi.** - You will not have access to data or to sending texts. This is a cost-effective option, but Wi-Fi can be fairly limited in Italy. The Fortezza has great Wi-Fi, and your hotel should also have Wi-Fi. However, this will limit when and where you can use your phone.
- **Buy an international plan with your carrier.** - With this option, you can keep your phone, but you must talk to your carrier to make sure your phone is operable in a foreign country and then purchase a plan with them. Plans vary greatly depending on the carrier.
- **Purchase an eSIM using an app on your phone.** - eSIMs are becoming popular to use through apps on your phone where you purchase data for a specific country, and you can add more data later on if needed for an extra cost if you run out. Check with your carrier if your phone has this as an option. (A popular app used is Airalo)
- **Unlock your phone and buy a SIM card in Italy.** - You will be able to use your current phone, but you must have your phone “unlocked” by your carrier before you leave the country. Once you are in Italy, it is highly recommended to buy a SIM at a phone store and NOT at the airport. If you buy a SIM card, you will receive your own Italian phone number, and you may have access to data, texting, and calling depending on your phone plan. This option is usually less expensive than international plans, however, you will only be able to communicate locally.
 - TIM Store in Montepulciano: Via Elio Bernabei, 27, 53045 Montepulciano SI
- **Buy a “burner phone” in Italy.** - You buy an inexpensive phone at the TIM store (address above). You will purchase a prepaid plan with it, and you can easily dispose of it when you are done with it. This is also one of the less expensive options.

DATES AND TIMES

Europeans write the date differently than Americans. Whereas we write February 1, 2022, as 2/1/22, Europeans put the day first, then the month: 1/2/22. The 24-hour clock is used most frequently throughout Europe. Instead of 6:00 PM, you will most often see 18.00. To convert from the 24-hour clock to the 12-hour clock, simply subtract 12 from all hours after noon. Times between midnight and 10 AM are written with a 0 in front of the hour (e.g. 09:45 is 9:45 AM). Another common notation is 9h45 or 9H45. In addition, Italy is in Central European Standard Time (GMT+1), so they are 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (GMT-5).

Holidays

Please check to see if any Italian holidays could affect your program, including independent travel. In the summertime, public transportation employees will often go on strike around holidays.

MONEY



MONEY MANAGEMENT

THE EURO

The euro (abbreviated € or EUR) is the currency for countries in the European Union (excluding the UK). When you first arrive, we recommend that you quickly familiarize yourself with the European currency. Keep the current exchange rate in mind but try to think in euros rather than converting to dollars.

U.S. dollars are easily exchanged abroad when using an ATM for withdrawal and generally offer the most favorable exchange rate. Dollars in cash are very difficult to exchange for the Euro and is often more expensive to exchange. If you would like, you can contact your bank for information on purchasing Euros before you travel. In any case, please note that it's prudent not to rely entirely on any single form of payment; you should carry with you a combination of ATM card, cash, debit card(s), and credit card(s). Do NOT bring traveler's checks. They are nearly impossible to use in Europe.

Exchange rates fluctuate daily. You may wish to check out the most current exchange rate at www.xe.com just prior to your departure. At the time of this guide's last update, the exchange rate is 1.08 USD to 1 EUR.

Monete (Coins). There are 100 cents in 1 euro. Coins come in denominations of 1 cent, 2 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents, 20 cents, 50 cents, 1 euro, and 2 euro.

Banconote (Bills). Euro bills vary in size and color. You may encounter denominations of €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200, and €500.

Note: commas and periods are reversed in European monetary notation. For example, 1,00 is what we would consider 1.00.

ATM WITHDRAWALS

We strongly recommend that you bring an ATM linked to your checking account in the U.S. to use at an ATM (called bancomats). This is by far the easiest way to access your money overseas, and you will receive a more favorable exchange rate. Ask your bank whether your card will work overseas and if there are any international fees. Also, ask if there is an affiliate to your bank in Italy.

In addition, you should confirm with your bank that your PIN (personal identification number) will work in Europe. Generally, any four-digit PIN will work, but you should contact them to be sure. PINs with fewer or more digits generally do not work overseas. Keep in mind when choosing a PIN that ATMs overseas do not have letters on the keypads as they do in the U.S. If you have an alphabetic PIN or a PIN of more than four digits, ask your bank or financial institution for a new PIN that you can use overseas. Check with your bank to determine your daily withdrawal limit overseas and any fees associated with using a foreign ATM (there may be European ATM withdrawal limitations as well).

CREDIT & DEBIT CARDS

Credit cards are useful in case of emergencies or for larger purchases such as train tickets and hotel rooms. Major credit cards or debit cards are widely accepted in Italy. However, local markets and roadside vendors generally do not accept them. VISA is the most widely accepted credit card in Europe followed by Mastercard. American Express is not widely accepted. Credit and debit cards with a “chip” are easily used in many countries abroad. Stores and restaurants may have logo stickers of the cards they accept posted.

Note that you may receive a less favorable exchange rate when paying by credit card or debit card than when paying by cash. In addition, your card company may charge a foreign transaction fee (generally a percentage of the total sale).

You should notify your bank and/or credit card companies that you will be traveling overseas. This will prevent them from questioning unusual activity and potentially freezing your accounts.

TIPPING

When dining on your own, service charges are included in restaurant bills, so tipping is not obligatory like in the US even though it is a kindness to give a few euros. In bars and taxis, people will round bills up to include a small tip.

Often outside seating, especially with a view, at a restaurant will charge more for the table than inside.

CULTURE



ITALIAN CULTURE

Italian culture is generally slower-paced and more relaxed than in the US. Meals are a major part of life and therefore take a long time. Service will be slower-paced as well. Most shops will also close for an extended lunch which can go into the early afternoon.

FAMILY LIFE

The family (la famiglia) is the most important aspect of an Italian's life. Their family solidarity is focused on extended family rather than the West's idea of an immediate family. There is also a deep respect for elders in the culture. Italian families have frequent gatherings (usually centered around food), often help support each other, and are the basis for their social circles. Families also have their own traditions and regularly spend quality time together.

RELIGION, ART, AND ARCHITECTURE

The major religion in Italy is Roman Catholicism. This is not surprising, as Vatican City, located in the heart of Rome, is the hub of Roman Catholicism and where the Pope resides. Roman Catholics and other Christians make up 80 percent of the population, though only one-third of those are practicing Catholics.

In most cities, there is a designated Catholic church or cathedral often called the "Duomo," but smaller churches and religious centers are spread throughout cities. Even if you don't have the same religious affiliation, visiting religious centers in Italy is an exciting experience because of the ornate architecture and art.

Although there are many art museums in Italy, you can usually find famous works of art in churches in situ, which means in the original place it was designed to be viewed. For example, lots of churches are painted with frescos. The most notable is the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican, painted by Michelangelo sometime between 1508 and 1512. You can also find many masterpieces by Caravaggio and Gian Lorenzo Bernini in Roman churches. Christian relics are also often found in churches and many churches are dedicated to saints.

Entry to churches is often free or with the request of a small donation that goes into the upkeep of the buildings and property.

Italy has given rise to several architectural styles, including classical Roman, Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassical. Italy is home to some of the most famous structures in the world, including the Colosseum and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The concept of a basilica — which was originally used to describe an open public court building and evolved to mean a Catholic pilgrimage site — was born in Italy.

Recent archeological work confirms that the site of Montepulciano's Fortezza Medievale, the high point of the Tuscan hill town, was the site of a tower as early as the pre-Roman Etruscan period, ca. 200 BCE.

Over time the Fortezza has served as an Etruscan Tower, Citadel, Silk Factory, High School, TV Set, and now KSU Italy's home base! Its purpose now is for KSU to use the culturally rich space with state-of-the-art facilities to transform the lives not only of our students but also of the many Georgia communities we serve.

Another Renaissance jewel of Montepulciano is the Tempio di San Biagio which sits just outside the city wall and is over 500 years old.

CUISINE

Italian cuisine has influenced food culture around the world and is viewed as a form of art by many. Wine, cheese, and pasta are an important part of Italian meals and the economy. Each region of Italy has its own unique cuisine. Northern regions tend to consume more meat than southern regions, and polenta or rice often replaces pasta on traditional menus. In northern Italy, fish, potatoes, rice, sausages, pork, and different types of cheeses are the most common ingredients. Pasta dishes with tomatoes are popular, as are many kinds of stuffed pasta, polenta, and risotto. Central and Southern regions feature pastas, game like wild boar, and sea food. Pasta comes in a wide range of shapes, widths, and lengths, including penne, spaghetti, linguine, fusilli, and lasagna. Most of the foods that Americans view as Italian, such as spaghetti and pizza, come from southern Italy. In the South, tomatoes dominate dishes, and they are either served fresh or cooked into sauce. Southern cuisine also includes fish, capers, peppers, olives and olive oil, garlic, artichokes, eggplant, ricotta cheese, and lemons.

Italy is home to some of the world's most famous vineyards. The oldest traces of Italian wine were recently discovered in a cave near Sicily's southwest coast. *Vino Nobile di Montepulciano* is one of several classic Tuscan red wines based on the Sangiovese grape variety (locally known as "Prugnolo Gentile"). It comes from the vineyards that surround Montepulciano and dates back many centuries. *Vino Nobile di Montepulciano* is known to be a favorite amongst influential Italian Kings, Popes, and Presidents, and has been celebrated throughout history as the wine of the nobles (hence its name). Whether you choose to partake in Montepulciano's wineries, or not, you can still appreciate the tradition of winemaking by visiting one of its many wineries. *Cantina Contucci*, located in Piazza Grande, offers free tours and can show you the large Slavonian Oak barrels located beneath the ground and within the stone itself.

FAMOUS ITALIANS

From Dante to da Vinci, Michelangelo to the Medici, Puccini to Rossini, and Sophia Loren to Marcello Mastroianni, Italians have been a part of our lives for centuries. Many of the world's greatest artists, musicians, and writers have sprung from the fertile creative soil of Italy, and while in Italy you will see their accomplishments everywhere.

LANGUAGE

The official language is Italian, but you will find English is spoken in most places. Bigger cities like Rome often have more people speaking English than in smaller towns. Below are some common phrases that will be helpful to you while in Italy. Fill in the additional chart with other words and phrases that you would like to know (i.e., allergies, directions, etc.).

General Phrases and Greetings	
English	Italian
Yes	Si
No	No
Hello, bye	Ciao
Good morning	Buongiorno
Good evening	Buonasera
Goodnight	Buonanotte
Goodbye	Arrivederci
Thank you	Grazie
Please	Per Favore
You're welcome	Prego
Cheers!	Salute!
Excuse me (For attention)	Scusi
Excuse me (to pass by)	Permesso
Where's the bathroom?	Dov'è il bagno?

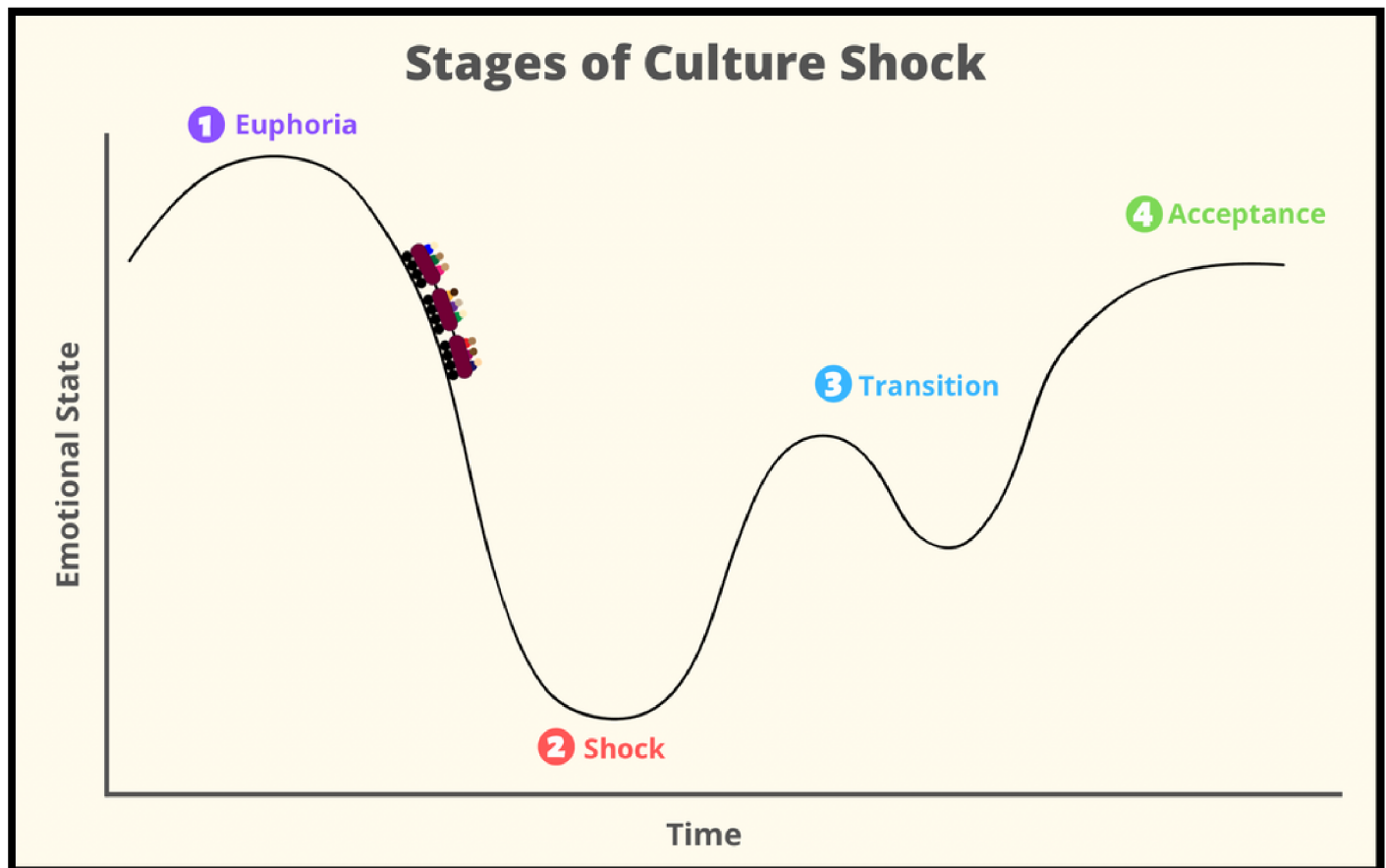
Food	
English	Italian
Tomato	Pomodoro
Chicken	Pollo
Beef	Carne
Fish	Pesce
Eggplant	Melanzana
Cheese	Il formaggio, cacio
Wine (red, white)	Vino (rosso, bianco)
Clams	Vongole
Cake	Torta
Coffee	Caffè
Bread	Pane
Garlic	Aglio
Orange	Arancio
Honey	Miele
Chocolate	Cioccolato


CULTURE SHOCK

Changes in normal routine including a new environment, diet, or cultural norms can all have subtle or even noticeable impacts on an individual's health. Disorientation due to a new environment can challenge individuals to step outside of their comfort zones and embrace new ways of thinking or doing, but it can also be a source of stress and anxiety.

To help prevent or lessen the effects of culture shock, set a communication plan with your family and friends to talk regularly to feel connected with them. Students can also feel culture shock when they are not engaged with the group activities or with their study abroad peers. Most students who study abroad don't know anyone traveling on the same program and are often feeling similarly to how you might be. Also, communicate your feelings to your faculty who may also have tips and can help guide you to resources to overcome the culture shock or stress.

For individuals needing assistance with adjusting to a new environment, again, it can be good to reconnect with home and talk with loved ones. However, if you feel like you need or would like additional or professional support, please feel free to contact your program director or CISI to arrange an appointment(s) with a mental health professional.





CISI INSURANCE

CISI INSURANCE

Students and faculty or staff leading education abroad programs are registered for the university's student policy automatically by the Education Abroad Office.

USING THE INSURANCE

For questions prior to departure, including identifying providers, obtaining information on setting up appointments in-country for preexisting conditions or continued care abroad, legalities or availability of certain medications or equivalencies in-country, etc., please contact CISI directly via:

- Logging in to your CISI account at mycisi.com
- Using the CISI Traveler App
- General Questions Inside the U.S., call (+1) 800.303.8120, x5130
 - Outside the U.S., call (+1) 203.399.5130
- Emergency Assistance Inside the U.S., call (+1) 855.327.1411
 - Outside the U.S., call (+1) 312.935.1703
- Email medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us

You will need to provide your ID number as well as verify personal identifying information such as your date of birth.

While travelers can pursue treatment at any local medical facility or with any licensed medical provider, note that CISI has preferred providers you can use to set up a guarantee of payment. You will need to contact CISI in advance of care.

Note that international insurance does not work like insurance here in the United States. If you simply walk into a clinic and show your insurance card at the time of service, most providers will not know what to do with the card and may say they cannot accept it. This is why it is beneficial to contact CISI in advance if you know you will be seeking treatment. They can work on the back end to identify a provider, set up an appointment, and pay the provider directly on your behalf.

If you opt to seek treatment prior to contacting CISI or if you wish to use a different provider and pay out of pocket, please keep all receipts and documentation so that you may seek reimbursement.

For emergency medical assistance while abroad, please first contact the local emergency services and then contact (+1) 312.935.1703 or call the KSU 24/7 International Emergency Phone at (+1) 470.578.6666.

Filing a Claim

In order to file a claim for reimbursement of charges paid out-of-pocket, be sure to keep all receipts and any additional documentation related to your out-of-pocket medical expenses. You can find a claim form by logging in to your CISI account at mycisi.com or emailing globalsafety@kennesaw.edu.

HEALTH & SAFETY

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL SAFETY & SECURITY



INTERNATIONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY

While travel is exciting and full of fun, we also want everyone to be safe and prepared. Please always be cautious in unfamiliar environments and trust your gut.

The mission of the Office of International Safety & Security is to support safe international travel experiences for Kennesaw State University students, faculty, staff, and associates.

This is done by:

- Monitoring worldwide events, analyzing global intelligence, and disseminating important travel advice
- Assisting in the development of study abroad programming and non-credit bearing international experiences with a focus on health, safety, and security
- Conducting risk assessments, pre-departure briefings, and trainings
- International Risk Management Advisory Board (IRMAB) in reviewing requests for travel to high-risk destinations
- Overseeing travel registration and supplemental insurance enrollment process for international travelers
- Serving as the 24/7 first responder for university-sponsored travelers experiencing an emergency while traveling abroad
- Coordinating emergency response with Kennesaw State University's international insurance and assistance providers

IN-COUNTRY (WHILE ABROAD)

If experiencing an international emergency, think local first! All travelers should have access to the following information (Recommend saving to contacts in phone):

Contact the Local Emergency Response

- Local Police (Italy): 112
- General Emergencies: 113
- Medical Emergencies: 118
- Fire: 115

Contact Your Program Director

24/7 KSU International Emergency Phone Line

- (+1) 470.578.6666
- Identify yourself as a KSU traveler abroad to be routed appropriately

CISI Travel Insurance

- (+1) 203.399.5130
- Call to set up a medical appointment or to obtain a guarantee of payment

COVID-19 STATEMENT

Travel and living abroad at this time poses new and different challenges. Kennesaw State University recommends that only students who are fully prepared to remain aware of the changing situation in their host environment, and who agree to take responsibility to ensure that they are acting in accordance with the rules, regulations, and recommendations of their host communities participate in programs at this time.

Due to the rapidly changing and unpredictable global and local response to COVID-19, Kennesaw State University's policies and procedures and the host government, local and national, rules and regulations, and specific program offerings are subject to change at any time. Participants in Kennesaw State University Education Abroad programs are advised to stay aware of local rules and regulations regarding COVID-19 and take full responsibility for acting in accordance with those rules and regulations.

We encourage students to review the **COVID-19 Participation Agreement** found in your education abroad program application.

ITALY COVID-19 GUIDANCE

For the most up-to-date COVID-19 guidance, please visit the U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Italy COVID-19 Information page at <https://it.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/>

OPPORTUNISTIC CRIME

While Italy is a friendly place, remember you will be in big cities and major tourist areas at times. These cities can attract petty criminals. Always be aware of your surroundings, and never leave sight of your belongings. Areas with lots of people could present the opportunity of pickpockets. Do not keep belongings in your back pockets and always keep purses zipped closed. Try to keep all belongings in front of you and never leave your belongings unattended.

Big cities and tourist areas will sometimes have street vendors trying to sell you items, and they may make it difficult for you to give back the item or product and make you pay the cost of it. Don't accept things from strangers and make sure anything purchased is from a legitimate seller or business.

Crime Mitigation Strategies

- Many crimes are a factor of three elements: Desire, Ability, and Opportunity. By minimizing Opportunity through the employ of good crime mitigation strategies in conjunction with situational awareness, travelers can help promote their own personal safety and welfare while abroad.
- In many destinations, foreigners are assumed to be wealthy (Desire) and may pose a prime target for petty theft. In addition to maintaining situational awareness, a good way to minimize your risk of theft is by avoiding public displays of wealth. Leave valuables at home, especially if you do not need them. A simple wristwatch can easily function in lieu of a smartwatch for the purposes of telling time. Similarly, designer luggage may be a cue for opportunistic baggage handlers, taxi drivers, or others targeting foreign arrivals at airports. Employ Situational Awareness and be cognizant of your belongings at all times.
- Also, employ security measures when using ATMs. Criminals often target individuals using ATMs to withdraw funds, tamper with ATMs to receive information from ATM users or, in some countries, target the physical ATM machines themselves. It is best to use ATMs in secure locations and always take precautions to prevent others from viewing PIN numbers or other important information.
- Separate your documents and keep duplicates of important paperwork, such as a photocopy of your passport and visa (if applicable). Leave a copy of your credit or debit card information with someone you trust at home if you lose your cards and need to cancel them. Similarly, keep cash, credit cards, or transit cards in separate locations. If your hotel has a safe, use it to store valuables during the day while you are out and only take what you anticipate needing.
- Phone case wallets, while popular and convenient, are not well suited for use while traveling abroad. Smartphones are very popular targets for thieves, and it is common in metro areas in some countries for individuals on mopeds to target exits or entrances to subways or other metro stations for individuals using these devices whilst emerging for drive-by grab-and-go opportunities.
- It is recommended to have a small wallet for day-to-day use for storing small amounts of cash which can act as a "mugger's wallet" if you are approached by an assailant. If approached by an assailant, do not assume that the individual is unarmed or rational; instead, comply with demands to hand over a bag or wallet. Do not resist or attempt to fight back. Items can be replaced and credit cards canceled; they are not worth the risk to your safety.

Situational Awareness

Situational awareness consists of being aware of one's own surroundings and environment, identifying and assessing potential threats or dangerous situations. It is a mindset that can be adopted by anyone who wishes to proactively mitigate their risks and take control of their safety and wellbeing.

When traveling to a new environment, you may not have some understanding of the resources or lay of the land as locals do. It takes a while to build up familiarity to be able to gauge what may be normal or unusual, or whom to trust. During these times, it is best to keep your situational awareness higher than you might on a day-to-day basis at home.

Upon arrival, get to know the lay of the land and build an emergency action plan; that is, establish a plan for communicating with others and know local emergency resources.

- Do I know the local version of 911?
- Do I know how to contact my program leader/travel companions (if applicable)?
- Do I know how to contact CISI?
- Do I know where my nearest embassy or consulate is?
- Do I know where the local medical facilities are? The pharmacy?
- Do I know where the local police station is?
- Do I have copies of my important documents (i.e., passport, visas, insurance card)?

A few key elements to employ while practicing situational awareness are as follows:

- Recognize that threats to your personal health, safety, and security do exist. This is true even while traveling in locations considered “safer” than others.
- Understand that you are ultimately responsible for your own security. Resources of governments and first responders are finite, particularly during major events. Look out for yourself as well as engage in bystander intervention by looking out for the well-being of any travel companions.

Trust your gut. Your subconscious can often notice subtle signs of danger that you may not be able to fully articulate or comprehend consciously in a given moment. It may be inconvenient to trust your intuition, but if you suspect you may be in danger, following your instincts can help you avoid a more serious complication or situation.

EMERGENCY PROTOCOL

Medical Emergencies

In the event of serious illness, injury, accident, or other medical emergencies:

1. Contact 112 (the local equivalent of 911) or go directly to the nearest clinic or hospital
2. Contact the supplemental international insurance provider, CISI at (+1) 312.935.1703
 - a. Be prepared to provide your name, policy number, the address, and phone number of the medical facility along with the treating physician's name (if known)
 - b. CISI will evaluate your case to determine if adequate care is available
 - c. CISI may be able to arrange direct payment to the facility. However, if they are unable to arrange to pay the provider or medical facility directly, travelers will be reimbursed for treatment costs.
 - d. Notify your program director at the earliest opportunity.
 - e. If you are unable to contact your program director, contact the KSU 24/7 International Emergency Phone at (+1) 470.578.6666. Identify yourself and explain that you are experiencing an emergency abroad to be routed appropriately.

Safety Emergencies

In the event that a traveler has been a victim of a crime, discrimination or harassment, etc.:

1. Participants should contact their program director at the earliest opportunity.
2. If you are unable to contact your program director, contact the KSU 24/7 International Emergency Phone at (+1) 470.578.6666. Identify yourself and explain that you are experiencing an emergency abroad to be routed appropriately.
3. U.S. Citizens can also contact the U.S. Department of State's American Citizens Services for assistance in a safety emergency.
 - a. Visit the U.S. DOS emergency abroad webpage to locate the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate, obtain contact information for the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate, and to read more emergency information.
 - i. From overseas: (+1) 202.501.4444
 - ii. From inside the US: (+1) 888.407.4747

Security Emergencies

In the event of a security incident such as terrorism, natural disaster or political insecurity, etc.:

1. Monitor local media and follow directives of local emergency personnel.
2. Be prepared to shelter in place or move to a safe location.
3. Participants should contact their program director at the earliest opportunity.
4. If you are unable to contact your program director, contact the KSU 24/7 International Emergency Phone at (+1) 470.578.6666. Identify yourself and explain that you are experiencing an emergency abroad to be routed appropriately.
5. U.S. Citizens can also contact the U.S. Department of State's American Citizens Services for assistance in a safety emergency.
 - a. Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or visit the U.S. DOS emergency abroad webpage to locate the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate and to read more emergency information.
 - i. From overseas: (+1) 202.501.4444
 - ii. From inside the US: (+1) 888.407.4747

Shelter in Place

During times of political unrest or widespread transmission of disease, travelers may find themselves in a situation where they have to remain where they are for a period of time. This is referred to as “sheltering in place.”

If you must shelter in place:

- Acquire safe food and water supplies to last you several days (ideally two weeks) in case of acute shortages.
- Keep copies of important documents, prescriptions and medications, cash, electronics, and phone chargers handy in a “go bag” in case the situation improves and you are able to leave the vicinity.
- Connect with the embassy of your nationality. If you haven't done so already, sign up for the U.S. Embassy's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive updates directly from the Embassy (you can sign up for STEP even if you are not a U.S. citizen).
- Monitor local news and reputable international outlets for updates.
- Add important numbers such as the KSU International Emergency Phone as well as local equivalents of 911 to your phone.
- Monitor updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of State.

Medical assistance while sheltering in place:

- If you are in need of mental health assistance, please contact the international insurance provider, Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI), to locate mental health providers. CISI can also connect you with remote mental health providers if there is a lack of providers nearby or if you have limited ability to connect with a provider in-person. We encourage you to stay connected (by phone, chat, etc.) with your social networks, including parents, family members, and friends, to share how you're feeling and get support.
 - CISI Contact Information
 - (Toll-free): 855-327-1419
 - (Accepts collect calls): +1-630-694-9794
 - Email: medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us
- If you need medical attention or do not have enough prescription medication to last until you are able to depart the country, contact CISI immediately to identify and locate a reputable local source for medical care. You can also lookup medical providers using the International Provider Search tool by logging in to your "myCISI" account at <https://www.culturalinsurance.com>

In case of emergency, seek medical attention at the nearest hospital.

REPLACE A PASSPORT ABROAD

If you need to replace lost or stolen documents, American citizens should visit the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate to apply for a replacement passport in person.

- Research online to determine if you need to schedule an appointment or to check for dedicated hours.
- If your passport was stolen, you may wish to file a police report if you have sufficient time prior to departure.
- Be prepared to complete and bring a DS-11 form, a passport photo, and a replacement fee. Some but not all embassies offer the ability to obtain passport photos onsite for a small fee, however, bringing the passport photo with you ahead of time can help speed up the process of obtaining a replacement passport.
- Additional items to bring to your passport replacement appointment:
 - Travel itinerary (e.g., airplane ticket)
 - Form of identification (e.g., driver's license)
 - Evidence of US citizenship (e.g., photocopy of your missing passport)
 - Statement regarding your lost or stolen passport, if you've obtained one
- Individuals of other nationalities should check with the nearest consulate or embassy of their citizenship to verify the procedure for replacing a lost or stolen passport.

HEALTH ABROAD

Jet Lag

Jet lag occurs when an individual's circadian rhythm is disrupted, often by changing multiple time zones in a relatively short period of time. Identifying symptoms and following a few tips in advance can help you manage your experience and help restore a natural balance more quickly upon arrival in-country.

Symptoms of jet lag include interrupted or disturbed sleep patterns, difficulties with concentration or physical dexterity, or even irregular appetite. To combat jet lag:

- Get enough sleep. Being well-rested is best to prepare for and combat jet lag.
- Stay hydrated on the flight. Pressurized cabins, low humidity, and increased altitude mean that dehydration occurs at a faster rate in the air than on the ground. Caffeine and alcohol contribute to dehydration, so limit your intake of these in flight.
- Stay active on the flight. Engage in stretches or take periodic breaks to stand up or walk about the cabin (assuming safe to do so). Movement can help improve circulation and combat tiredness.
- Stay current. Know what the time will be at your destination and set your watch ahead of time to help you mentally prepare for the time difference. You may also wish to realign your body's sleep and eating habits with those of your host country as soon as able upon arrival.
- Employ situational awareness. You may be drowsy for several days following arrival but be sure to stay alert while exploring your new environment.

Please see the CDC resource on Jet Lag to learn more.

Weather Exposure

Some locations are associated with an increased risk of sun, heat, wind, or cold exposure. All travelers are advised to research the climate of a location and pack accordingly for both the destination and any intended activities. For more information, please visit the CDC resources on Cold Climates or Hot Climates.

Low latitudes and high altitudes contribute to an increase in sun exposure. Certain medications can make individuals more susceptible and sensitive to sunlight. It is recommended that travelers at increased risk for complications caused by sun exposure or exposure to the elements take precautions such as minimizing exposed skin or using sunscreen which protects against both UVA and UVB rays.

Please see the CDC resources on Sun Exposure to learn more.

Additional health information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travelers' Health: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/>
- CDC Travel Notices: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>
- World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/>
- International Association for Medical Assistance for Travelers (IAMAT): <https://www.iamat.org/>

ALLERGIES

During transit, travelers with severe allergies can and are encouraged to notify the airlines of any needs, however, there are no standard requirements to which airline carriers must adhere. Some airlines may offer special meals, avoid serving nuts or create a buffer zone. Travelers with specific concerns can take steps such as traveling with non-perishable food to eat during their time abroad, keeping in mind that some countries have strict regulations on food items that are allowed to enter the country. Be advised that similar products manufactured in other countries may not contain the exact same ingredients.

Travelers should also pack any necessary medications in carry-on luggage. If traveling with an emergency epinephrine auto-injector, make sure it is accessible and not stored in an overhead bin.

In the event that a traveler has a severe or life-threatening allergy, it is highly recommended to carry a medical ID or translation card with information about the allergen written in the local language. It is additionally a good idea to know how to verbally communicate your allergy in the local language, when possible.

Be advised that allergists or specialists may be limited in your intended destination(s). Contact CISI directly to identify medical resources available to you.

If you have any allergies or restrictions please inform your program director, so they are aware and can help limit exposure if necessary.

Environmental

Travelers who suffer from environmental allergies should do additional research on the potential exposure to allergens in the destination country prior to travel. Air quality and pollution may be major factors impacting the quality of life in some regions and should be taken into consideration with those who have sensitivities to airborne pollutants. Resources such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and AQICN among others can provide air-quality metrics for a variety of cities and countries around the world.

Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

Travelers who suffer from food allergies or have dietary restrictions for medical reasons should do additional research on the potential exposure to allergens in the destination country prior to travel.

Researching the local cuisine as well as common food preparation and ingredients is a key step travelers with dietary restrictions or preferences should conduct in advance of travel. If you are a participant traveling on a Kennesaw State University experience, be sure to convey any significant dietary requirements, restrictions, preferences, or allergens to your program director early so that every effort may be made to accommodate your dietary needs.

Travelers with specific concerns or dietary needs can take steps such as traveling with non-perishable food to eat during the time abroad, keeping in mind that some countries have strict regulations on food items that are allowed to enter the country. Be advised that similar products manufactured in other countries may not contain the exact same ingredients.

Travelers with eating disorders or disordered eating are encouraged to speak with their healthcare provider(s) to discuss their travel plans and itinerary, as well as research and review the role of food in the culture along with local diet and food preparation. Some accommodations and locations may not have the option for travelers to prepare their own meals.

TRAVELING WITH MEDICATION

Individuals traveling with any medications should research the legalities and availability of their medication(s) in their intended destination. Different countries enforce different limits on the amount of a given medication(s) entering the country. It is the responsibility of the traveler to conduct their own research ahead of travel.

CISI is one resource that travelers may utilize ahead of departure for questions related to traveling with medications. The host country's Embassy or Consulate may also have additional information or forms to complete for importing specific quantities or kinds of medications.

Prescription Medication

While traveling, medications should be kept in the original containers. While pharmacists abroad will not honor prescriptions written by a physician from the United States, travelers should also have a copy of the prescription along with a description of the medication and dosage information. It is the responsibility of the traveler to research what, if any, additional documentation may be needed.

During a pre-travel consultation, travelers should consult with their medical provider regarding how to make necessary adjustments due to travel and time zone changes in order to maintain the usual dosage and pattern of taking medication while abroad.

Medication should not be sent in advance. Instead, it should be packed in carry-on luggage for ease of access during transit, as well as in the event that checked bags are delayed for any reason. In the event that medication needs to be replaced or a prescription filled while abroad, please be advised that you will first need to schedule a medical appointment to obtain a prescription written by a treating physician licensed in-country. Contact CISI to schedule a routine medical appointment and to inquire about options for establishing direct pay or securing a guarantee of payment.

Equivalencies

Some medications may be unavailable, limited in availability, or available in different dosages in your destination country. Prior to travel, it is recommended to research what the available equivalent medication is in-country rather than assume the medication will be available or known by the same name in another country. CISI is one resource that travelers may utilize ahead of departure for questions related to medical equivalents abroad.

Medical Storage and Supplies

Travelers requiring medical refrigeration or other storage accommodations should be disclosed to your program coordinator early in the process so that reasonable housing accommodations can be arranged.

Travelers who are actively managing a health condition necessitating access to medical supplies and devices or periodic testing should research whether or not they will have access to said supplies while abroad. Contact CISI for questions regarding pre-arranging medical appointments or services, including the availability of specialists in the destination, or for inquiries related to locating or transporting medical supplies.

ROUTINE & MENTAL HEALTHCARE ABROAD

Routine Healthcare Abroad

The CISI supplemental international insurance does cover treatment for the most commonly reported health issues such as gastrointestinal illnesses, dehydration, the common cold or flu, and minor injuries. Most of these cases constitute outpatient care with a local doctor, a local clinic, or the emergency room at the nearest hospital. It is encouraged to seek rather than defer care should you wish to consult a medical expert related to routine health concerns.

To make an appointment for non-urgent or routine care, contact CISI to identify a local provider and inquire about the capacity for direct pay, or to obtain a guarantee of payment. See *Using the Insurance* for more information.

Mental Healthcare Abroad

Changes in normal routine including a new environment, diet, or cultural norms can all have subtle or even noticeable impacts on an individual's health. Disorientation due to a new environment can challenge individuals to step outside of their comfort zones and embrace new ways of thinking or doing, but it can also be a source of stress and anxiety.

For individuals needing assistance adjusting to a new environment, it can be good to reconnect with home and talk with loved ones. However, if you feel like you need or would like additional support, please feel free to contact CISI to arrange an appointment(s) with a mental health professional.

If you are currently managing your mental health and are planning to travel abroad, discuss your plans with your current mental health professional. Work with your provider to develop a plan to manage your mental health during your time abroad. Be sure that your health management plan includes considerations for continuing medical treatment or care abroad. Once enrolled with CISI, the supplemental insurance will be an invaluable resource to source medical professionals, including mental health experts, in your intended destination.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE INFORMATION

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) is responsible for communicating important information about travel destinations that is relevant to U.S. citizens traveling abroad.

They communicate this information in two key ways:

- Travel advisories
- Security messaging and STEP notifications

In January 2018, the DOS transitioned from a travel warning and alert-based system in which guidance was only provided for select countries or regions, to an all-encompassing advisory system in each country. Travel Advisories follow a consistent format and use plain language to help U.S. citizens find and use important security information. Travel Advisories apply up to four standard levels of advice, describe the risks, and provide clear actions U.S. citizens should take to help ensure their safety.

To see a complete list of Travel Advisories for every country in the world and to learn more please visit the DOS website. The designated level for a particular country may change over time based on local conditions or regularly scheduled reviews.

DOS Travel Warnings

Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions: This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.

Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution: Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Level 3 - Reconsider Travel: Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Level 4 - Do Not Travel: This is the highest advisory level due to the greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. The Department of State advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country or leave as soon as it is safe to do so. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Risk Indicators

Travel Advisories at Levels 2-4 contain clear reasons for the level assigned, using established risk indicators and specific advice to U.S. citizens who choose to travel there. These are:

C – Crime: Widespread violent or organized crime is present in areas of the country. Local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.

T – Terrorism: Terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.

U – Civil Unrest: Political, economic, religious, and/or ethnic instability exists and may cause violence, major disruptions, and/or safety risks.

H – Health: Health risks, including current disease outbreaks or a crisis that disrupts a country’s medical infrastructure, are present. The issuance of a Centers for Disease Control Travel Notice may also be a factor.

N - Natural Disaster: A natural disaster, or its aftermath, poses danger.

E - Time-limited Event: Short-term events, such as elections, sporting events, or other incidents that may pose safety risks.

O – Other: There are potential risks not covered by previous risk indicators. Read the country’s Travel Advisory for details.

K – Kidnapping or Hostage Taking: Criminal or terrorist individuals or groups have threatened to and/or have seized or detained and threatened to kill, injure or continue to detain individuals in order to compel a third party (including a governmental organization) to do or abstain from doing something as a condition of release.

Travel guidance on the DOS advisory contains several standard sub-categories:

- Embassies and Consulates
- Destination Description
- Entry, Exit, and Visa Requirements
- Safety and Security
- Local Laws & Special Circumstances
- Health
- Travel and Transportation

Additionally, specific regions within a country may possess a higher-level advisory than the assigned country-wide level. It is important to read travel advisory information carefully, as context and details matter.

Security alerts and messages are posted by the local U.S. embassy or consulate and are shared through STEP.

Travel advisories can change at any time. You can find the complete list of Travel Advisories here: www.travel.state.gov/traveladvisories

ENROLLING IN STEP

All travelers are strongly encouraged to enroll in the U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive important security updates during their international travels. Oftentimes this advice relates to planned protests, union strikes, or other events which can impact logistics and travel itineraries.

Communications with headings such as “Message for U.S. Citizens” typically relate to administrative updates.

Communications with headings such as “Security Message for U.S. Citizens” alert travelers to security situations to which they should be aware and provide specific guidance on areas to avoid.

Communications with headings such as “Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens” warn of imminent threats to safety or security and contain instructions and specific actions travelers should take to remain safe.

ON CALL INTERNATIONAL

On Call International helps Kennesaw State University fulfill its duty of care to travelers by providing pre-departure travel briefings as well as in-country security alerts to registered travelers abroad. On Call International provides travel security briefings to registered travelers 48 hours prior to departure based on the itinerary information provided. Program briefings include information related to safety and security advice, practical travel advice, local etiquette, weather conditions, cultural information, and more. On Call International also sends security alerts to travelers about incidents in the reported destination that may impact the traveler. These alerts can range from notices about demonstrations or strikes that enable travelers to assess their daily itinerary and make any logistical changes necessary to notifications and updates pertaining to major security incidents.

To receive the maximum benefit from On Call International, make sure that you have supplied an accurate itinerary. Participants of university-sponsored international group experiences or university travelers booking flights through Concur will be automatically registered by the Office of International Safety & Security.

However, faculty and staff traveling for business who purchase airfare or make arrangements outside of Concur will need to email their itinerary information to trips@oncallinternational.com. Please cc globalsafety@kennesaw.edu. Similarly, all KSU travelers who embark on side-trips outside of their registered travel should notify On Call International of their additional travel by emailing their itinerary information to trips@oncallinternational.com. Please cc globalsafety@kennesaw.edu.

To expedite the process of registering your travel, please state in your email that you are a KSU traveler and provide the following information:

- Flight itinerary
- Train/bus itinerary (if applicable)
- Accommodations



**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**

GLOBAL EDUCATION
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