

# Bologna 2022-23



## Study Abroad Handbook

A useful guide to your  
study abroad experience



### **OVERSEAS STUDY**

Read this handbook now and again before you leave the U.S.  
Consult it again before you register for classes overseas.

The usefulness of this handbook depends on student input.  
If you find erroneous information, please contact [overseas@iu.edu](mailto:overseas@iu.edu).  
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## PROGRAM CONTACTS

Italy Office Address:	Indiana University-BCSP Via Malcontenti, 3 40121 Bologna, Italy
Telephone:	011-39-051-236486 (from the U.S.) 051-236486 (within Italy)
Fax:	011-39-051-274139 (from the U.S.)
Email:	<a href="mailto:ricci@bcspbologna.it">ricci@bcspbologna.it</a> <a href="mailto:dileo@bcspbologna.it">dileo@bcspbologna.it</a>
Resident Director:	Dr. Andrea Ricci 011-39-340-802-6036 (cell, from the U.S.) 340-802-6036 (cell, within Italy)
Student Services Coordinator:	Ms. Danielle Di Leo 011-39-338-543-4056 (cell, from the U.S.) 338-543-4056 (cell, within Italy)
Useful Websites:	<a href="http://bcspbologna.it/how-to-apply">bcspbologna.it/how-to-apply</a> (BCSP Site) <a href="http://unibo.it">unibo.it</a> (University of Bologna) <a href="http://comune.bologna.it">comune.bologna.it</a> (City of Bologna) <a href="http://bologna-airport.it">bologna-airport.it</a> (Bologna Airport) <a href="http://bcspbologna.it">bcspbologna.it</a> (BCSP Bologna website) <a href="http://trenitalia.com">trenitalia.com</a> (Italian train schedules) <a href="http://www.italotreno.it">www.italotreno.it</a> (Italian train schedules)

# PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

The Bologna Consortial Studies Program (BCSP) is a consortium of Indiana University, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of North Carolina, the University of Illinois, and the University of Chicago. These universities jointly set the program's academic standards. Nine other institutions including Columbia University, Barnard College, Bryn Mawr College, Cornell University, Mt. Holyoke College, Northwestern University, the University of Notre Dame, the University of Michigan, and the University of Minnesota are associate members of BCSP.

This handbook provides general information relevant for academic-year and semester students from all BCSP schools and from non-consortium schools. Contact your school's study abroad advisor regarding school-specific academic program and degree requirements, tuition and program fees, scholarships and financial aid, and contractual arrangements.

You should use this handbook and other supplemental materials now as you prepare to leave and later while you are abroad. Since many student questions are addressed in this handbook, please consult it before contacting your study abroad office or the IU Office of Overseas Study.

## ICONS IN THIS GUIDE



### Helpful Program Information

Information to help prepare you for study abroad



### Student Advice

Suggestions from study abroad returnees



### Savvy Traveler Tips

Traveling tips to get you where you're going

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR STUDYING ABROAD

The goals and objectives of a study abroad program are as diverse as the students, faculty, and administrators involved. Some goals may be common (e.g. language acquisition), while others may be more personal (e.g. becoming independent). Some goals may seem more important to some than to others (e.g. desire for academic integrity in coursework vs. desire to travel).

Study abroad programs will provide a more enriching experience if they incorporate a wide range of goals. The first step toward the achievement of these goals is acknowledging and defining them before the program begins. Once you are abroad, the process continues with a structured and cooperative approach to achieving these goals. We've begun the process by outlining some goals for your program.

### Bologna Consortial Studies Program Goals

- Competence with the Italian language; knowledge of Italian history, culture, literature and the arts
- Integration into the academic and social environment of the University of Bologna
- Immersion experience in a supportive environment
- Personal development and growth

### Program Elements that Support these Goals

- Resident staff to provide personal and academic advising
- Special courses each semester taught by University of Bologna faculty for program participants
- Attendance in University of Bologna courses with Italian students
- Coursework integrated into students' academic goals
- Cultural tours of Bologna and excursions to important but less visited sites in Italy
- Independently-arranged housing, primarily with Italian students

# Before You Go

## Documents

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### Academic Record

By June 30 for the fall/academic year program and December 31 for the spring program, Indiana University's Office of Overseas Study needs evidence from participants of completed courses with grades from the previous semester. Students need to submit this directly to the Office of Overseas Study.

### Passport & Visa

If you do not already have a valid passport, apply for one immediately. You can download an application at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/>. You can also pick up an application form and instructions at a post office. Turnaround time can be as much as 12-18 weeks, so submit your application promptly.

You are required to obtain a student visa for your stay in Bologna before you leave the U.S. A visa, which is a stamp in your passport that permits you to travel or reside in another country for a stated period of time, is issued by the country's consulate in the U.S. In early summer, the Indiana University Office of Overseas Study will send academic year and fall students documentation and instructions to apply for a student visa. For this purpose, it is essential that you have your passport by mid-May. If you are not a U.S. citizen, immediately contact the nearest Italian consulate for visa instructions. Spring semester students will have a shorter timeframe in late fall to make visa arrangements. Any questions about visa processing must be directed to the Italian Consulate.

Depending on your citizenship and the timing of your application, you will pursue the visa application process in one of two ways:

1. Group or Batch Processing (for U.S. citizens only) - Since some Italian consulates allow programs to offer a group (or batch) processing service for U.S. citizens within their jurisdiction, some schools may use the batch processing system for participants who are U.S. citizens. Check with your home school to see if this option is available to you.
2. Standard Processing - The standard process to apply for a visa requires collecting documentation (some provided by IU's BCSP and/or your home institution), scheduling an appointment with the appropriate Italian Consulate with jurisdiction (based on your permanent or school address), and going in person to your appointment to submit your application. In some cases, a student may meet a local Honorary Consul or Consular Correspondent in person to have their application reviewed and then mail the full application to the consulate (please verify process with the consulate directly). All non-U.S. citizens must apply for their visa using standard processing.
  - Schedule your appointment early because they fill up quickly.

Student visa regulations for Italy are getting more complicated and time consuming so you are advised NOT to leave the U.S. for any international travel before the program

begins. This is because you will have to surrender your passport to the consulate anywhere from several weeks to as long as two months or more before the program starts. If you must be out of the country more than a couple of days immediately prior to the program start date, there is no guarantee that the consulate will process the visa in time for your departure.

If you will be abroad prior to the start of the program, please be advised that it is nearly impossible to obtain a student visa outside of the U.S. In addition, consulates and embassies outside the U.S. are generally unfamiliar with student visa requirements as they relate to U.S. students and will often provide conflicting or incorrect information that will ultimately delay the visa application process and jeopardize your chances of obtaining a visa in a timely manner. Therefore, you should return to the U.S. to obtain your student visa.

There is a 90-day grace period in which to travel only in Schengen countries as a tourist to be used either before the visa start date or after the visa expiration date. The 90 days do not have to be used consecutively and can be distributed before or after the visa validity. Please note that the period is 90 days total for tourism purposes and must be used in Schengen territory.

When you arrive in Bologna, the program staff will help you apply for a residency permit (permesso di soggiorno). This is a rather long process, composed of multiple steps, and takes up to three months. Students should not travel outside Italy after 90 days from their arrival if they have not yet received the permit.

Fall only students who decide to extend their studies into the spring semester should be prepared to return to the U.S. over the winter break to extend their visa.

## Health Insurance

Requirements for health insurance coverage vary among the BCSP member schools. In some cases it is included in the program fee. Be certain that your policy is valid outside the U.S. and that you understand its terms and benefits. Most policies require you to pay for medical care at the time of service and then file for reimbursement. You will have to demonstrate to the Italian Consulate that you have medical insurance to obtain an Italian student visa.

In addition to the U.S. insurance that is required in order to obtain a visa, the BCSP office in Bologna will enroll you in the Italian National Health Care system (SSN, Sistema Sanitario Nazionale). The enrollment is an onsite cost (see page 9). You will be assigned a general doctor in Bologna who can prescribe medications, testing and specialist visits. The enrollment in the SSN will also cover you in case you need treatment in a public hospital emergency room or other department.

## Students with European Passports

It is highly recommended that students with EU citizenship have residency in their European country and are enrolled in the country's national health care system. If you



### Savvy Traveler Tips

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Scan a copy of your passport page and Italian visa and save it in your phone so you can have easy access to it, should you need it, while you are traveling.



are not enrolled in any European health care system, then the BCSP office in Bologna will enroll you in the SSN. You can also use the private international health insurance provided through Indiana University or your home institution, but be prepared to pay upfront and file for reimbursement.

## BCSP Statement of Medical History

All BCSP students are required to complete the BCSP statement of medical history and return it to IU's Office of Overseas Study. If you are on medication or have been diagnosed with a condition that could become serious, it is extremely important that you provide a complete medical report including symptoms to look for, recommended first aid and therapies, etc. This precaution cannot be overstated because the amount of time between admission to hospital and treatment is magnified when there are language problems and medical files are in a foreign language—English. The more information you and your physician can provide the Resident Director on your statement of medical history form, the better you can be assisted in case of need.



**STUDENT ADVICE**

Being my first time "away from home" was in itself very personally challenging, but it pushed me to find myself and figure out who I was and what I want to do with my life after college.

## Medications Abroad

If you currently take medications, talk to your physician or nurse practitioner about arrangements for continuing the medications abroad.

Any medications taken overseas should be left in their original containers and be clearly labeled. You should carry a letter from your physician describing the medical condition and any prescription medications, including generic names of prescription drugs. Be prepared for the possibility of having to see a physician abroad to authorize continued treatment during your time overseas.

Seek help if you need to start, reduce, increase or change your medication while abroad. Do not make these decisions on your own. Bologna is recognized throughout Italy and Europe for its excellent doctors, hospitals and medical research.

Pharmacies rotate being open on Sundays. You can find out which ones are open on the website <http://farmaciediturno.org> or posted on the door of your local neighborhood pharmacy. The Farmacia Comunale in Piazza Maggiore is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Farmacia della Stazione is open until 11p.m. Monday-Saturday and until 10p.m. on Sundays.

## Program Costs

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### I. BCSP Fee

The BCSP fee, which covers tuition, initial lodging in Bologna, excursions, group social activities (and, for some institutions, health insurance), is set by your home university and varies from institution to institution. The fee is paid in U.S. dollars to your school (or, for non-consortium students, directly to Indiana University).

### II. Onsite Costs

In addition to the fee paid to your home institution, you will need funds in Italy

for housing (rent, utilities, security deposit, and condominium fees), groceries, books, all personal and incidental expenses, and vacation travel. These costs vary significantly from student to student because they are based on individual spending habits and lifestyle, but in general, costs in Bologna are high. The dollar's changing value will also affect costs. Please note that due to the economy any estimates in the handbook may vary before your departure for Italy.



**One-time variable cost:**

Permesso di Soggiorno: €120 (academic year and semester)

Enrollment in the Italian Health System: €150 (semester) €300 (academic year)

**Estimated variable monthly costs:**

Housing costs: € 400 – 1,000 (academic year students)  
€ 650 – 1,000 (semester students)

Groceries & meals: € 200 – 400

Incidentals, personal expenses, travelling, books: € 500 - 800

**Vacation travel:**

Extra costs for vacation travel will vary according to each student's lifestyle and budget. Based on students' travel habits that the program has observed in the last few years, we estimated that expenses usually range between €300 and €1,000 per month.

## Managing Your Money

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The European Union monetary unit is the euro (€). The euro functions similarly to the U.S. dollar in that it is subdivided into 100 cents. There are eight euro coins denominated in 2 and 1 euros, then 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents. Each euro coin has a common European face and a face designed by each country that can be used in every monetary member country. There are six euro notes that are differently sized and colored, and come in denominations of 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. The notes, unlike the coins, do not have national sides and are uniform.

For current exchange rates, consult [the oanda.com currency converter at www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com).

1. Bring € 100 - € 200 to cover expenses over the first two or three days. Use the ATMs to periodically withdraw more money.
2. Bring a Cirrus or Plus debit card with four-digit personal identification number (PIN). With it you can withdraw funds directly from your U.S. checking account at ATMs throughout Europe at the most favorable exchange rates. This is the most popular way to obtain cash. Check with your bank about international transaction fees.

Bring a credit card with a four-digit PIN. Visa and MasterCard can be used to obtain cash advances from ATMs. The credit card company charges a fee for the service, and computes interest from the date of withdrawal. Verify both your cash advance and credit limits before you leave the US. Keep a record of all credit card numbers and emergency telephone numbers in case of theft. Keep PINs separate from cards.

## Packing

Bologna has a generally rainy autumn and a cold, damp, even snowy winter. Warm clothes are absolutely necessary. Italians are extremely fashion conscious and dress with style and flair. Students can get away with more informal clothing. In Bologna there is a variety of clothing stores for all needs, from high-end boutiques to very reasonable prices. Weekend flea markets are also popular.

Bring lightweight clothes for the warm weeks in September and June. Rely on easy to dry clothing and garments that don't require ironing, especially if you plan to travel.

Any appliance you bring should be compatible with the 220 voltage in Italy. You may need an adaptor because of the different shape of the electrical prongs used in Italy. This is easily purchased in the U.S. before departure. (i.e. Target, Wal-Mart, etc.) These can also be purchased at an electronics store in Bologna but can be more expensive.

### Pack the following:

- Clothing that is easily washed and dried (dryers are not common in Italy)
- One good outfit for special occasions
- Warm winter coat, sweaters, socks, scarves, hat, and gloves
- Raincoat and umbrella (umbrellas can also be purchased cheaply in any tabaccheria or euro store)
- Laptop computer (there is Wi-Fi connection at the hotel, BCSP office and local libraries and study rooms) and charger
- Sturdy, comfortable walking shoes (be prepared for lots of walking!)
- Shoes that will remain in good condition through rain and snow
- Sports clothes for the activities you enjoy (hiking, swimming, etc.)
- Supply of contact lenses
- One set of sheets and one towel (if you want to be extra prepared)
- Weekend bag for short trips
- Telephone and email contacts for your academic advisors
- \$200 in euros (€) to cover expenses for the first few days
- Prescription medications
- A copy of all your prescriptions, clearly typed with the generic name of the drug
- Prescription for your glasses or contact lenses



Don't bring a lot of extra clothes because you won't use them. Italians dress nicely but often wear the same outfit several times in one week.

STUDENT ADVICE

Linens and towels can be purchased at low prices at many local stores.

## Mail & Shipping

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Parcel post packages from the U.S. to Italy can be sent air mail (from 10 to 12 days, but you may experience long delays). Federal Express and UPS packages can take up to a week. If you must ship boxes to Italy, plan to have them arrive after you do. **Address them to: Your First Name and Last Name, c/o Indiana University - BCSP, Via Malcontenti, 3, 40121 Bologna, Italy.** Please note: There is no one to receive packages at the BCSP office from July 1 to August 28 and during the winter break.

**Do not provide an estimated value** for each item. Be aware that you may be charged disproportionate fees based on the value of the content. Items estimated at € 20 or less will most likely not be taxed. Contents estimated between € 20 and € 150 will most likely be taxed at 22% of their value. If you send a gift, take it out of the original packaging and remove any tags. It is important to list what is in the package and **declare the contents as used**. Do not list items as gifts and **do not insure shipments** or you will be subject to costly customs fees.

Do not expect to have prescription drugs, contact lenses or cosmetics sent from the United States. Clearing them through customs involves major difficulties and costs.

Stamps are sold at tabaccherie as well as at the Post Office. All tabaccheria are equipped with postal scales for weighing letters and small packages. However, the tabaccherie may not have stamps for sending mail to the US. Go to the Post Office to send mail internationally. Several commercial mailing companies, such as Mail Boxes Etc., have offices in Bologna where you can send packages by Federal Express or UPS.

# The Program in Bologna

## 2022-23 Calendar

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Fall arrival date .....	August 29
Fall Orientation .....	August 30 - September 2
Language & Culture Course Session I.....	September 5
Language & Culture Course Session II.....	September 27
Spring arrival date .....	January 9
Spring Orientation .....	January 10 - 13
Language & Culture Course Session I.....	January 16
Language & Culture Course Session II.....	February 14

## University of Bologna Classes

First semester courses.....	mid-Sept. - late Jan. (academic year students)
End date for fall only students.....	December 22
Second semester courses .....	early February - early June

## Examination Periods

First semester courses (for fall only students) .....	December 5 - 22
First semester courses.....	mid-January - early February
Second semester courses .....	mid May - late June

## Holidays

San Petronio .....	October 4
All Saints Day .....	November 1
Immaculate Conception.....	December 8
Christmas Holiday .....	December 24-January 6
Easter Holiday .....	April 6 - 11
Liberation Day.....	April 25
Labor Day .....	May 1
Festa della Repubblica .....	June 2
Ferragosto .....	August 15

There is no central University of Bologna calendar. The beginning and ending dates of the semester and final exam schedules vary from one department to another.

## Arrival and Orientation

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Academic year and fall semester participants must arrive in Bologna on Monday, August 29, 2022. Spring semester participants must arrive on Monday, January 9, 2023.

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements to Bologna. Academic year students should look for a ticket with an open return date or a very low fee for changing the return date because you will not know until next spring the dates of your University of Bologna final exams in June. Indiana University will send you detailed instructions regarding where to go when you arrive in Bologna. Please note that program staff **recommend that your flight destination be Bologna (BLQ-Marconi Airport)**. As you will be traveling with heavy luggage, you may not want to have to carry your baggage and take the train to Bologna after a long flight. Furthermore, other destination choices may cause you to arrive in Bologna later in the night, and you will be expected to be well rested for a full day of orientation the following morning.

Your first week in Bologna will be filled with activities designed to help you get acquainted with each other and feel comfortable in your new surroundings. These will include a tour of Bologna; group meetings and activities; applying for your permesso di soggiorno; getting acquainted with University of Bologna academic procedures; written and oral language placement examinations; and other practical information.

Students' past experiences have shown that they have found it easier to adjust by staying in Bologna as much as possible and not traveling too widely outside of Italy. Students must follow official travel guidelines established by the Italian government, the Italian Health Ministry and the Emilia-Romagna Region. The staff will remind you of these restrictions that are based on the public health conditions in various sections of Italy.

You can consult conditions and restrictions that the European Union members are putting into practice (see <https://reopen.europa.eu/en> or download the ReOpen EU app).

## BCSP Program Office

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Here the Resident Director, Dr. Ricci, holds office hours, conducts academic advising and meets with students individually to answer questions and help resolve problems. The Student Services Coordinator, Danielle Di Leo, assists you with reserving your housing prior to arrival in Bologna, provides information about cell phones, health insurance, permesso di soggiorno, and helps with other student needs. Students receive their mail at the program office as well as notices of program activities, deadlines, and cultural opportunities in the area.

The office is a convenient meeting place, and it houses a modest collection of reference texts in English and Italian for background reading and classes. Alert the Resident Director of additional texts, guidebooks, etc., that could be acquired for common use.

Available for student use are PCs (with Microsoft Office and internet connections), wireless network, and a printer.

# Bologna

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Bologna—the ancient Etruscan Felsina and later Bononia to the Romans—is known as *la dotta*, for the prestige and importance of the university, *la rossa*, for both its predominant coloration and the long-standing leftist government, and *la grassa*, because of the superior quality of its cuisine and the wealth of the population. It is consistently ranked as one of the most livable cities in Italy.

Bologna's appearance testifies to its long and important history. Characteristic features include the *centro storico*, whose shape is determined by the last circle of medieval city walls, and *Le Due Torri*, the two tallest towers that remain of the more than 200 that once bristled skyward, proclaiming the wealth and power of their owners. The basilica of S. Petronio, the third largest church in Italy after the cathedral of Florence and St. Peter's in Rome, commemorates the fifth-century bishop of Bologna who is still regarded as the city's most important patron saint. The Piazza Maggiore, with S. Petronio on one side, the adjoining Piazza Nettuno, dominated by the magnificent Neptune fountain by Giambologna, and Piazza Re Enzo, constitutes one of the most gracious and beautiful promenade areas in Italy. But the miles and miles of porticoes give the city its most distinctive character, providing protection from the sun in summer and the rain in winter.

Bologna is the capital of the Emilia-Romagna region. With about 390,000 inhabitants, Bologna is just the right size, small enough to project a friendly and intimate atmosphere and large enough to support a rich cultural life of music, both modern and classical (the opera house is among the best known in Italy) and art, with museums and churches containing masterpieces, for example, by Raphael and Michelangelo, and frequent exhibitions of contemporary art. The city maintains an authentic Italian character. Bologna enjoys very high income per person and very low unemployment.

The history of Bologna has been repeatedly marked by conflict: invasions, rebellions, and turmoil instigated by fierce competition among the powerful local families. Off and on for centuries the city belonged to the Pope. It was ruled by papal legates until 1859 when it passed by plebiscite to the Kingdom of Savoy, thus to become part of unified Italy. Overlapping this ancient city, many of whose buildings and monuments still bear papal coats-of-arms, is a sophisticated and prosperous modern city with boutiques whose windows display elegantly tailored apparel and exquisitely fashioned leather goods, food shops filled with still-life arrangements of fruits and vegetables, stores that display the finest in Italian housewares, restaurants, and a thriving student scene.

Because of its position at the foot of the Apennines in the broad plain of Emilia, Bologna has been since its founding a major crossroads. Today, it serves as a railway hub, providing easy access to Florence and Ravenna or Venice, Milan, and Rome.

## University of Bologna

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The University of Bologna, located in the city center, mainly around Via Zamboni, is the oldest institution of higher learning in Europe. Established at the end of the 11th century primarily as a law school, it soon afterward developed its ancient tradition of humanistic studies. Petrarch, Copernicus and Tasso studied there. In 1988 the University celebrated its 900th anniversary with great pageantry. It has repeatedly been ranked as the most prestigious university in Italy.

# The Academic Program

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## Academic Advising

The Resident Director oversees all academic matters. Students will meet with him to determine which University of Bologna and BCSP courses they will take. University of Bologna course reviews written by former BCSP students are available in the program office. Students should use these prudently, remembering that many personal factors enter into the remarks offered by students of varying skills and expectations.

Check carefully with academic advisors on your home campus prior to departure to determine which courses or types of courses will meet your degree requirements. Use the University of Bologna website ([www.unibo.it](http://www.unibo.it)). Check various dipartimenti and scuole for course listings. The use of these listings, in conjunction with the advising sheet you submitted before departure, will result in a more effective advising session on-site. Course schedules for the academic year at the University of Bologna are not released until very shortly before classes actually begin in the fall term, so you will not be able to select courses until late September for fall and January for spring. There will be little time to write home for enrollment advice before classes begin.

All students will be required to take the BCSP Advanced Course in Italian Language & Culture offered each semester. Students should take the improvement of their fluency and accuracy in the Italian language as one of their primary goals during their year or semester abroad.

## University of Bologna Calendar

Courses for most departments begin toward the end of September or beginning of October for the fall, and end of January or beginning of February for the spring. Each scuola of the university operates according to its own calendar. There is no common Schedule of Classes containing all the information about the academic year. Not all classes begin at the same time: the schedule depends on the particular department and on the individual professor.

As you can imagine, the lack of a common schedule of classes may create difficulties when you are trying to put your schedules together and when BCSP is scheduling program courses, so flexibility is necessary.

## Course Load

Students choose a combination of BCSP courses and University of Bologna (Unibo) courses. All students will take 15 credits per semester.

Academic year students are required to take the BCSP Advanced Course in Italian Language & Culture in the fall and at least one content course at BCSP during the spring. Over the course of the year, AY students must take at least three Unibo courses (usually six U.S. credits each). Most students will typically enroll in two Unibo courses during the fall semester along with BCSP Advanced Language & Culture and one BCSP content course. This combination has been helpful in getting students gradually acclimated to the courses at Unibo.

Fall-only students and spring-only students are required to take a minimum of 15 credits, including BCSP Advanced Course in Italian Language & Culture, and at least one Unibo course. Please note that fall students need to arrange to take only those courses



at Unibo for which they may take the final exams prior to departure.

Note: Comparable figures for students on different academic calendars are 10 semester units for the academic year (five for a semester) and 40 quarter units for academic year (or 20 for a semester). Again, the course load will include a combination of University of Bologna and BCSP program courses.

Most courses at Unibo are taught in a single semester and meet six hours per week. BCSP students may enroll in courses offered by any department, across all fields of study. With the approval of the Resident Director, you will be allowed to take courses in English (offered by Unibo) especially if they are related to your major field of study.

## Grading Policies

At the end of each semester, the Resident Director sends all grade reports and course titles to Indiana University, which in turn forwards them to your home institutions, each of which has its own system for reporting program courses and grades on its transcripts.

Pass/fail policies vary by school. It is the student's responsibility to be in contact with their home school to inquire about the pass/fail policy and deadlines.

Grading scale for BCSP students: Italians use a grading scale of 18 to 30. BCSP will apply the following scale\* to these numerical grades for Unibo courses, depending on the grading policies of your home institution:

UB grade	U.S. grade equivalent*
29-30	A
28	A- or AB
27	B+ or AB
26	B
25	B- or BC
24	C+ or BC
23	C
22	C- or C
21	D+ or D
20	D
18-19	D- or D
Below 18	F

\* Note: this is a general scale and may vary slightly depending on the grading policies of your home institution. You should check with the Resident Director on-site for your specific university's grading scale.

## Incompletes

All coursework must be completed and submitted by the end of the term and prior to your departure from the host country. No incomplete grades are permitted for overseas courses. Unfinished coursework will result in a grade of F for the course. Only documented illness is considered a legitimate excuse for missing a final examination.

## BCSP Program Courses

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The BCSP offers a limited number of special courses for its students. These courses are taught in Italian by University of Bologna faculty. Although program courses are similar to those taught at the university, professors are sensitive to the special needs of BCSP students for background material which Italian students have already mastered. Each BCSP course meets for approximately three months and is equivalent to three semester credits.

The Advanced Language & Culture course (fall and spring) is dedicated to the improvement of students' skills in Italian language, vocabulary, and syntax for daily conversation and introductory academic writing. An intensive course with numerous writing exercises and extensive oral practice in class, "Advanced Language & Culture" must be taken by all students.

For all of the BCSP course syllabi and descriptions, please see:

<http://www.bcsppologna.it/academics/syllabi/>

## Italian University Structure

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Part of the BCSP program experience will be learning to operate in the much less centrally organized Italian university system. In the U.S. students take courses in several disciplines each semester, and rely on a university-wide schedule of classes distributed well in advance of the academic year to plan courses. The absence of such a schedule in Italy may give the impression that the University of Bologna is disorganized and chaotic. It is important to realize that Italian students specialize early in their academic careers and typically take a fixed sequence of courses in a single discipline. They are unlikely to experience scheduling conflicts even if their professors wait to announce which courses they will teach just before classes begin, or set class meeting times and exam schedules individually. Because the departments operate independently, the university does not function according to a single calendar. Classes in different disciplines do not begin at the same time or on the same date.

You will have to take the initiative in locating class schedules. Information about class offerings is available 2-4 weeks before classes begin. All schedules are posted on the university's website.

Most Italian faculty use a formal lecture format but some encourage student discussion or questions in class, especially in small seminar classes. Instructors expect to be addressed as Lei, and greeted with Buon giorno or Buona sera, never Ciao.

## Two-Part Courses

Some University of Bologna courses are divided into two parts: a *parte generale* and a *parte monografica*. The *parte generale* and the professor for each course change rarely, although the content and direction of the *parte monografica* can change radically from year to year. Classes usually meet three times weekly for a total of six hours.

The division between the two parts is most clear-cut in the Department of Italianistica where many, if not all, BCSP students enroll in a course (or courses). For the general part of the course, you will first consult with the professor to select books you will master for the final exam. Then, while studying those texts on your own, you will also attend seminars/review sessions taught one or two hours a week by an assistente on the general material. For the monographic portion of the course, you will attend lecture classes on a concentrated subject with the professor six hours a week for one semester, and write a paper, which will be corrected by the professor and discussed at the final exam. During the final oral exam (which covers both the seminar and monographic portions of the course), the paper is usually the starting point for questions.

## Oral Exams

Although some courses also require written papers, the course grade in many University of Bologna classes rests on a brief final oral exam. It is critical, therefore, to determine early in the term what material the professor expects you to master for the exam. Professors do not distribute a syllabus with day-by-day reading assignments or homework. Meet with your professors early in the course to determine specific course requirements. Some professors require you to master a manual or general textbook in addition to material covered in lectures, and still others enumerate specific texts over which you will be tested.

## Pacing Yourself

Without daily assignments you will be tempted to postpone coursework. It is important to begin reading seriously from the beginning of the course. Trying to cram a semester's worth of university-level reading in Italian into the last weeks can be traumatic. You will find most University of Bologna professors helpful and accessible during their office hours (*ore di ricevimento*).

## Libraries

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The extraordinary resources of the University of Bologna's main library (via Zamboni), the Archiginnasio (Piazza Galvani), the Sala Borsa (Piazza Maggiore), and numerous departmental libraries are linked and accessible via the city-wide online catalogue known as the Polo ([sol.unibo.it](http://sol.unibo.it)). Students should keep in mind that many books cannot be checked out. Rather, many works they will use during their studies must be consulted in the library. Brief loan periods are available for students with a valid university ID; However, the number of books is normally limited to three at a time.

Some students find the small departmental libraries scattered throughout the city easier to use once they learn the sometimes limited schedules for these collections concentrated in particular areas of interest (art history, Italian literature, political science). The BCSP office has a small collection of frequently consulted reference works and some primary and secondary source materials.

## **Computers & Email**

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The BCSP office has computers (running on Windows) connected to the internet and a printer for student use.

The BCSP office is also equipped with free wireless service which allows you to use your own laptop to connect to the internet. Computers must be switchable to 220 VAC, that is built with their own internal or powerpack conversion capacity, handling both volts and cycles.

The University of Bologna will provide BCSP students with free email accounts. Many University of Bologna buildings and libraries are provided with wireless service.

# Life in Bologna

## Housing

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For historical reasons, the University of Bologna does not have a campus similar to an American university. University buildings are located in various sections of the city. However, Bologna is a medium-size city that is easy to navigate by foot, bike or bus with easy access to university classes. Local students usually live in shared apartments that are a 10 to 30 minute walk from their classes. And they do most of their own cooking at home or eat out. All neighborhoods have fresh fruit and vegetable markets, supermarkets, restaurants, cafés, stores, gyms, and theaters.

BCSP students live in apartments or apartment-style residences with a mix of Italian, international and/or BCSP students. The housing options are located either in the city center or within walking distance to the center. It is easy for BCSP students to meet up with each other in the city or at the BCSP office. BCSP students often say how happy they are to widen their social circles through their friends' Italian roommates. While it's possible to meet Italian and international students in class, living with Italian peers provides another more constant and familiar way to improve language skills, be involved in the culture, and integrate into the academic and social environment in Bologna.

Upon acceptance to the program, IU's Office of Overseas Study sends students a housing provider overview and, after reviewing their options, students are asked to submit a preference form to the BCSP office in Bologna. Students are highly encouraged to arrange housing from the U.S. as soon as they receive the overview. Housing providers generally work first-come, first-served and do not hold aside places for BCSP students. The BCSP staff helps put housing providers and students in touch with one another so that the process of confirming housing may begin. The process typically consists in paying the security deposit by bank wire and signing a contract proposal. The BCSP staff is always available for linguistic and cross-cultural support for both the student and the housing provider. BCSP students have had positive previous experiences in the housing being offered.

At the start of orientation, BCSP arranges accommodation in a hotel near the office to give students time to settle into the city and make arrangements for moving in. Apartments are furnished but students need to shop for personal items such as sheets, towels, blankets, and some kitchen supplies. As a student-friendly city, Bologna is full of inexpensive home-accessories stores. Apartments are normally equipped with washing machines, clothes drying racks (since dryers are not common in Italy), and internet connection.

## Cell Phones

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The program will assist you with obtaining an Italian phone number as soon as you arrive. If your phone is locked by your U.S. provider, you will have to purchase a new one in Bologna or have your provider unblock your phone. We advise to check with your provider before your departure. Having an Italian number is a critical means of communication with your housing provider, medical and safety services, the BCSP staff and your peers. This is required by the BCSP Emergency Procedures.

## Food

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The food in Bologna is among the best in all of Italy, and it is difficult not to eat well.

There are inexpensive eateries like pizzerie, self-service restaurants, and bars serving panini. See our "Guide to Living in Bologna" for more detailed information available online at ([https://www.bcpspbologna.it/docs/Guide\\_to\\_Bologna.pdf](https://www.bcpspbologna.it/docs/Guide_to_Bologna.pdf)). Also, try the fairly inexpensive trattorie, rosticcerie and tavole calde in Bologna's various neighborhoods. In nearly all sit-down eating establishments a cover charge is added to the check. Tipping is not expected.

## Grocery Shopping and Recycling

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Bologna has many grocery and department stores: UPIM, Coin and OVS (department stores), PAM, Coop, and Conad (for groceries). The market off Via San Vitale in Piazza Aldrovandi has good prices on fruits and vegetables, as do the downtown markets (Mercato di Mezzo in Via Caprarie), and the Mercato delle Erbe (Via Ugo Bassi).

Hours of store operation vary, but most are open all day, until 7:30 p.m. Carrefour Express (Piazza di Porta Castiglione 14, near the entrance to the Giardini Margherita) is the only supermarket in the city center open 24 hours.

Food is sold by the hectogram (etto, about 1/4 pound) or kilogram (2.2 pounds). In some stores you must purchase plastic shopping bags; save them for reuse. Bring a tote bag or shopping cart to avoid having to buy bags.

Paper, plastic, aluminum cans and glass are recycled in Bologna. You can identify these containers throughout the streets of the city.

## Personal Shopping

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Bologna, like all Italian cities, offers a wide variety of shopping options for clothes, shoes or accessories. In central Bologna you can find everything from flea markets to old, charming, family run shops alongside new, cutting edge, high fashion couture houses. Outside of the center, you can find American-style malls.

Be advised that most stores will not accept returns. Some stores accept returns within 15 days, usually for store credit. Otherwise, there is no option to return merchandise.

## Medical Care

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Bologna is known for its sound and innovative health care system. Its university clinic (Ospedale Sant'Orsola) is one of the top European medical institutions. The BCSP office has the names of competent doctors, dentists, and psychologists if you need help. Some speak English. The Resident Director and Student Services Coordinator are available to accompany you to medical facilities whenever necessary.

## Banking

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It is impossible to open a bank account without residency in Italy. Students typically rely on withdrawals at ATMs from their home bank accounts. If students need to pay rent by bank wire, they should order the wire from their U.S. bank account or look into using services such as <https://transferwise.com/it>.

Banks are open 8:20 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and many re-open in the afternoons from 2:40 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. They are all closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

## Public Transportation

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Bologna has an excellent bus system. A single ticket (corsa semplice) costs € 2 (if purchased on board the bus) or € 1,50 (if purchased in a tabaccheria before boarding the bus). The City Pass (one ticket worth 10 rides) costs € 14. There are two apps from which you can buy a ticket: Roger and Muver..

The ticket, valid for 75 minutes on any number of buses, must be machine-stamped as you enter the bus; if a controllore catches you without a ticket (or a stamped ticket), fines range from €60 to €200. Tickets can be purchased on board (from the red machines) or from tabaccherie.

Buses are crowded during peak hours: early morning, lunch hour, and evenings. Expect to stand at these times. Senior citizens and people with disabilities should always be given seats. When you need to get through the crowd to get off at your stop, ask "permesso," "scusi," or "scusatemi". Stops are called by pressing red buttons located on grab bars.

TPER, the bus transportation service in Bologna, offers a discounted monthly pass to under 27 year olds. The University of Bologna, in collaboration with TPER, offers students a € 10 bus pass for the academic year. Instructions to obtain the pass are posted to the BCSP office bulletin board.

For more information about bus routes and timetables visit the TPER website: <https://www.tper.it>

## Working & Volunteering in Italy

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Opportunities for non-credit internships and volunteer positions are frequently available for students who desire to integrate more fully in the Italian culture. Recently, students were placed in internship roles in museums, local schools, law firms, and city

international economic development offices. Many families seek English tutors and babysitters, and businesses value native English speakers who are competent in Italian.

Students should let the BCSP staff know if they are interested in an internship or volunteer opportunity. Students are permitted to work up to 20 hours per week on their visa status.

## Social Activities

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During the year BCSP will arrange excursions to cities of interest such as Ravenna, Urbino, Padova, Florence, Sansepolcro, and other off the beaten track locations. These trips usually include a guided tour and a group meal at a restaurant typical of the area. Trips are included in program fees. There is no refund for those who do not participate. The program also organizes dinners, Thanksgiving dinner, an exchange student mixer and other social activities.

Bologna offers a great variety of musical, artistic, literary and cultural events, which are well publicized through websites such as [www.bolognawelcome.com](http://www.bolognawelcome.com). The BCSP office also posts information about events on its bulletin board. Students receive discounts at opera and movie theaters.

## Travel

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### Trains

In general, Europe has an excellent railroad system that is fast and reliable. Tickets are available at first- and second-class prices. Check the websites [www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com) and [www.italotreno.it](http://www.italotreno.it) for ticket information and itineraries.

There are a few different types of trains in Italy. Le Freccie, the alta velocità or high speed, requires a seat reservation. The trip between Bologna and Florence takes thirty minutes; Bologna and Milan one hour; Bologna and Rome two hours and fifteen minutes. The local trains (Regionale), the least expensive, do not always require a reserved seat and make frequent stops. The trip between Bologna and Ravenna is one hour, Bologna and Ferrara thirty minutes. Regionale tickets without a seat reservation must be machine stamped before boarding the train. The machines are easy to find; they are yellow and distributed throughout the stations.

A student may sign up for the Carta Freccia, a "frequent traveler" card, which entitles the holder to ticket discounts.

At all times on board trains, keep credit cards, cash, and passports in a safe place, such as a money belt or pouch around your neck.

### Automobiles

Only Italian citizens and foreign residents may have a driver's license in Italy. Renting a car in Europe can be expensive, and gasoline costs more than in the U.S. because it is measured by the liter, not by the gallon.



## **Bicycling**

Many students purchase used bicycles in Bologna. The city center is easily navigated by foot, but navigating the streets between classes is faster and easier by bike. Other bike friendly cities in the Emilia Romagna region include Ferrara and Parma. Bikes may be transported on some trains. Check the Trenitalia and Italo websites for more information.

## **Hostels**

Youth hostels provide clean, inexpensive, albeit spartan accommodations throughout Western Europe. See <https://www.hiusa.org>.

## **Air Travel**

The Aeroporto Guglielmo Marconi (airport code BLQ) is an international airport served by many European and international airlines ([www.bologna-airport.it](http://www.bologna-airport.it)). You can reach the airport by taxi (051 4590 or 051 372727) or using the [Marconi Express](https://www.marconiexpress.it/) (<https://www.marconiexpress.it/>).

# Safety & Responsibility

BCSP will work to protect your health and safety overseas, but you must take responsibility for the results of your decisions, choices and behavior. Before the program, read carefully and consider the information given to you by your study abroad office regarding your health and any special needs; and together with your family, review your university's safety and responsibility guidelines. You are also encouraged to consult the State Department Consular Information Sheets and Travel Warnings at <http://travel.state.gov> and the Centers for Disease Control website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and to enroll in STEP (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, <https://step.state.gov/step>). While BCSP can provide information about health and safety issues, we cannot eliminate all risks from a study abroad environment or ensure that U.S. standards of due process will be applied in legal proceedings outside this country.

## Legal Issues

### Student Responsibilities

By your signature on the BCSP Agreement and Release form, you have agreed 1) to respect the laws and customs of the host country, your university's Code of Student Ethics, and all other reasonable standards of conduct promulgated by BCSP, its agents and consortium partners, and 2) to participate fully in the academic program by attending classes and remaining at the host institution for the full semester or academic year for which you are enrolled. You have acknowledged that if the Resident Director, with the concurrence of the Managing Director of BCSP, determines that your conduct is detrimental to the best interests of the program or the BCSP and its member institutions, your participation in the program may be terminated.

The University of Bologna has the primary responsibility for discipline in connection with violations of its regulations. Although university officials may consult with BCSP representatives concerning student misconduct, final disposition rests with the University of Bologna and in extreme cases may also become a matter of concern to the Italian government. For example, student demonstrations that start out on a peaceful basis can rapidly escalate into confrontations with the police.

### Illegal Drugs

Avoid illegal drugs. Drugs can impair your judgment in situations that require increased awareness. In Italy, possession brings three years in prison; trafficking, three to eight. Persons arrested on drug charges are not eligible for bail. Neither the University of Bologna nor U.S. officials can intervene.

## Safety Issues

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Please be especially alert to the following aspects of living abroad, which may not at first appear to you as safety or health issues:

## **Alcohol**

One of the best ways to protect yourself abroad is to avoid excessive drinking. Although alcohol may be more accessible at your program site than in the U.S., if you drink alcohol at all, do so in moderation. Not only may inebriation be culturally offensive, more importantly, it can impair your judgment in critical moments when you most need to be alert (e.g. driving, finding your way home late at night, socializing with strangers, etc.).

## **Hazardous Activities**

Students abroad sometimes participate in new activities in which they are not well-practiced or proficient. Be cautious if you're attempting any activity that has an element of danger or risk, particularly if you are far from assistance. These activities can include but are not limited to rock climbing, cliff jumping, snorkeling, bungee jumping, skydiving and skiing. Most international or Italian health insurances will not cover medical expenses incurred by injuries in extreme sports or through the use of drugs and alcohol.

## **Emotional Health**

You are likely to experience some form of culture shock during your time abroad, but this should not be confused with a serious emotional crisis. If you feel withdrawn or detached and cannot cope with your environment, ask the program director on-site for guidance and/or a recommendation for a skilled health care provider.

We urge you to disclose any special conditions on your medical form so that the staff can assist you with making appropriate contacts with health and therapy providers in Bologna. Should a condition emerge during the program, share this with a BCSP staff member.

Any medication that you take for a mental health condition should be listed on your medical form. You should also continue taking your medication abroad since any interruption in medication can produce serious consequences.

## **Political Disturbances**

In the event of anti-American activity abroad, maintain a low profile. etc.) Do not approach unattended packages in public places. Be cautious and report any unclaimed object. Avoid protests.

Be sure to stay in frequent touch with the staff during periods of political unrest or turmoil. It is critical for you to keep your cell phone on, battery charged and with credit for calls and texting, so that the staff can reach you with instructions or information.

## **Sexual Harassment or Sexual Assault**

If you feel you may be the victim of sexual harassment or assault, you may wish to consult the program staff. They can help you sort out the difference between unacceptable harassment and culturally acceptable behavior, which is nonetheless uncomfortable for you. In the case of sexual harassment or assault, you may want to file a report at the local police station with the assistance of the program staff on-site. There are Title IX campus reporting requirements at your home institution that staff will have to follow as long as they are in keeping with European data protection rules under GDPR. Staff will discuss these details with you after you report an incident to them.

## Dating and Sexual Behavior

A survey on dating and sexual behavior while abroad was conducted of IU study abroad returnees. Although each person will make individual choices regarding relationship(s) while abroad, knowing the experiences of some of your peers might provide some useful insights.

In terms of whom students date, they report dating more host nationals than program participants, and men seem to be involved in a greater number of relationships than women. Students also reported that sexual norms differed from the United States. It is important to understand the norms of the country where you will be studying. You can learn about these through various sources - books, guidebooks to some extent, discussions with program staff, host nationals, and observing the behavior of others. Many students reported that their relationships abroad gave them access to a greater understanding of the culture in which they lived. Others reported that by not engaging in serious relationships they were able to gain more since they could focus on other activities. Consider all these issues if you plan on being involved in a relationship, sexual or otherwise, while studying abroad.

The survey also indicates that the patterns students form while at IU in terms of (a) being sexually active or not, and (b) using methods of pregnancy prevention and STD protection largely carry over when they study abroad. If you anticipate being sexually active while abroad, consider bringing a supply of the pregnancy and STD prevention protection you currently use.

Use social media and dating apps with caution. Never meet a stranger you met online in a private place. If you have questions about Italian social or dating culture, talk with the BCSP program staff.

## Travel Safety

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### Air Travel

Increased security measures at airport facilities and on aircrafts will require that you take additional precautions when flying. You should be prepared to comply with multiple document checks, baggage searches, and inquiries. Be patient — these steps are being taken for your protection.

Packing: Examine everything that you normally pack in your suitcase and evaluate whether an object could be scrutinized by airport security. (This includes items found in manicure kits, etc.) Consider removing anything that could be perceived as threatening, or may raise suspicion at a security-screening checkpoint. No knives of any size will be accepted. Avoid over-packing so that carry-on luggage and checked suitcases can be opened and closed with ease.

Airport etiquette: Arrive at the airport early (at least two to three hours before scheduled departure). Be sure to have your ticket, paperwork, permesso di soggiorno and passport available.

In transit: Maintain your sense of awareness and keep your possessions with you at all times.

Upon arrival: Have your luggage receipts available for verification when retrieving luggage.

## Motor Vehicle Travel

Everyday traffic accidents are the main cause of injury to students traveling abroad. The road-safety standards and risks for Western Europe are similar to those in the U.S., but the more adventuresome a destination you choose, the more primitive the roads, vehicles, emergency medical resources, safety equipment, and licensing standards inevitably become. In developing countries you may be exposed to narrow, winding roads with no guardrails on hairpin turns, poorly maintained vehicles, and dangerously overcrowded buses. Even in developed countries drivers may be more aggressive than in the U.S., and speeding and passing may be more common.

- Keep track of local holidays that increase traffic. Exercise the same caution you would on a holiday weekend in the U.S.
- Don't rent or ride in a car without a seat belt.
- Demand that taxi and bus drivers drive safely. "Slow down," "Stop," and "Let me out," are three of the most powerful phrases you can learn.
- Do not hitchhike. You risk accidents, theft, and personal assault.
- Think carefully before renting motorcycles or motor scooters since they pose serious safety risks. Check with your home institution's policy on such rentals.

The Association for Safe International Road Travel ([www.asirt.org](http://www.asirt.org)) offers statistics, tips and articles about road safety around the world.

## Pedestrian Travel

- Avoid crowded areas where you are most likely to be robbed: crowded subways, train stations, market places, festivals. Don't use narrow alleys or poorly-lit streets.
- Avoid travel alone at night.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will jostle you, ask for directions or the time, point to something spilled on your clothing, or distract you by causing a disturbance. Vagrant children may create a distraction while picking your pocket.
- Try to seem purposeful while you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know what you are doing. Go into a store, restaurant, hotel, or other identifiable place, to ask for directions or to use a phone.

## Train Travel

Well-organized, systematic robbery of passengers on trains along popular tourist routes is a serious problem. It is more common at night and especially on overnight trains.

- Lock your compartment or take turns sleeping in shifts with your traveling companions. If that is not possible, stay awake.
- Don't accept food or drink from strangers.

# Preparing for Change

## Self-Reflection

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You naturally expect to learn a great deal about Italian history and culture while you are abroad, but you may also grapple with personal issues while you are away from home. All students experience growth and change during this period of self-awareness, but some of you may face unique challenges and adaptations abroad. Living abroad can mean leaving behind important social, physical and legal supports that you will not find in Italy; but most of you will find Italy comfortable and welcoming. For bibliography and more information on the topics described below, consult your study abroad administrators.

## Different Abilities

The passage of legislation such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act has spurred schools in the U.S. to accommodate students with varying abilities. Other countries are not bound by U.S. legislation and physical facilities and academic resources vary significantly from one overseas site to another.

The BCSP endeavors to provide reasonable accommodation for students with documented disability conditions (e.g. physical, learning, etc.), but only if you disclose your needs to us well before the program begins. If you are currently receiving disability-related accommodations at your home school or anticipate needing them at your program site, send documentation that confirms the disability, information about the accommodation currently provided, and details about accommodation requested abroad. The BCSP will then be in a position to work with you to seek appropriate responses for your needs.

## Race/Ethnicity

U.S. citizens often identify strongly with their family's cultural and ethnic heritage and refer to themselves as Asian-American, Italian-American, African-American, or Hispanic-American. In other countries such ethnic differences are often overlooked, and U.S. students report that for the first time they have been identified (and have identified themselves) as simply "American."

Race and ethnic relations vary widely from country to country. Ask your study abroad office to put you in contact with a student or faculty member who has experience with race and ethnicity issues in Italy.

## Sexual Orientation

Living in another culture provides an opportunity for self-exploration and individual growth. You may question your sexual identity for the first time while you are abroad, or you may already have identified yourself as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. In any case, it is important to know the attitude of the host country toward sexual orientation issues. The Gay and Lesbian Legal Guide for Overseas Travel gives a brief summary of how homosexuality is viewed in each country worldwide. An excellent website on gay,

lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues is located at <https://overseas.iu.edu/planning/expectations/identityresources.html>. If you have concerns about this issue, contact your study abroad office and the program staff abroad regarding the situation in Italy.

## Personal Adjustment

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Part of your success abroad will depend on how well you have prepared the logistics covered earlier in this handbook, but it is even more important for you to prepare yourself for cultural adjustments and personal growth.

### Your expectations

Take a personal inventory of your expectations. What do you hope to get out of the experience overseas? Identify your goals—in terms of language acquisition, academic growth and career. How are you going to achieve them? How will you track your personal growth during this experience? Outlining your goals now and then keeping a journal abroad will help you map both your inner and outer journeys. Indeed, daily writing, which attempts to interpret and reinterpret the cross-cultural meanings of your experiences, may be your most powerful learning tool.

### After You Return

Give some thought to the way you will integrate your experiences abroad into your life back in the U.S. Once you have successfully integrated into Italian culture you will need to be intentional about picking up the threads of your American life after the program ends. Some advance planning will make the process smoother.

## American Identity

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Before you can understand another culture, you should understand your own. What does it mean to be American? What characteristics, values and attitudes define American culture? What generalizations can you make about American attitudes towards education, gender, family, money, politics, race, relationships, religion, success, time, work? How do American values affect your attitudes toward others, your friendship patterns, your work habits, the way you spend your time and money? How do Americans measure success in life? What role does tradition play in our culture? A clear understanding of what is characteristically American (and the many variations) will give you a better chance of appreciating similarities and differences in another culture.

How flexible are you? Once you have identified your American values, patterns and habits, think about the strategies that will help you adjust to different ways of dating, dressing, eating, shopping, banking, relating to professors, and studying.

### Learn about the United States

Every student abroad is inevitably put in the position of having to explain (or even defend) the home country's political or economic system or its stance on global issues. If you begin now to keep abreast of the U.S. role in global activities, you will be more articulate when you are questioned about U.S. policies and reactions to world issues. In addition, students often report that they wish they had brushed up on such basics as how a bill becomes a law in the U.S. or the composition of the European Union before

going abroad.

Remember, however, that you probably don't want to get into a hostile debate with questioners or automatically defend everything that is American. What are some strategies for deflecting potentially hostile questions so that they lead to conversations in which everybody listens and everyone learns?

## Your Appearance

Carefully consider how you will dress. American students often comment that their clothing gives them away instantly as foreigners and can make them more vulnerable to derogatory remarks and as potential targets for petty thefts. While you shouldn't expect to buy a new wardrobe while abroad, you may want to plan to wear items of your own clothing that fit in better with the local culture. You'll discover that shorts, halters and skimpy tops are mainly worn near seaside towns, rarely in urban centers except by tourists. You'll also discover that casual lounging clothes—including oversized t-shirts with humorous logos and sweat/yoga pants that are very common on college campuses—are not worn in big cities abroad or at urban universities. And before you do what many cultures might interpret as 'revealing' clothing observe what native citizens who are your age in that country are wearing. You may also discover that flip-flops and sneakers are not necessarily the norm for footwear outside of the U.S., at least not for all occasions. Part of the acculturation process is trying to blend in so that you minimize your role as an outsider. Be prepared to be as flexible about your clothing as you are about other aspects of your behavior.

## Cultural Differences

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Acceptable behavior in the U.S. may cause embarrassment, frustration or amusement in Italy. American women, for example, often discover that Italian males display what would be considered very aggressive behavior and that female responses considered to be merely polite here—direct eye contact, smiling, saying "Hi" as you pass on the street—can be interpreted as "come-ons" in Italy. For some women, the best technique is to ignore or pretend not to hear the unwanted advances, while moving purposefully and soberly toward a destination. For safety's sake, follow the same self-defense precautions you use in any large U.S. city: walk with a companion after dark, avoid deserted or dangerous areas, refuse rides from people you do not know, etc.

It is very bad form in Italy to show signs of overindulgence in alcohol. Shopkeepers and waiters should be addressed formally, as Lei, and greeted with Buon giorno or Buona sera, not Ciao.

An excellent introduction to cultural differences is *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*, 4th edition by L. Robert Kohls (2001).

## Learn about the host country

Learn as much as possible about Italy before you go, since understanding the culture will facilitate your adjustment to living there. How do you plan to inform yourself about Italy before arrival? Taking courses is one method, but you can also independently explore histories, periodicals, novels, travel books, movies, blogs, and vlogs that inform you about the differences in daily life you will encounter overseas. Be careful when talking about history, family, and religion. Jokes about fascism, and family are sensitive



topics in Italian culture.

## Gender Roles

Both male and female students abroad will discover that growing up in the U.S. has prepared them for different roles in society than the ones their contemporaries in other countries expect. Many events in recent decades have heightened U.S. awareness of gender stereotypes, sexism and the limitations of traditional male-female roles. However, it may not be politic to suggest to your host country friends that U.S. patterns are appropriate for their culture. Instead, look at gender difference in the host culture from its historical and sociological perspective. Since you will be viewed according to the gender expectations of the host culture, you may feel uncomfortable at times. This is particularly true for female students who may find themselves the targets of unwanted attention.

## Religion

Few countries have the religious diversity and pluralism that you find in the U.S. and few have such a strong tradition of separation of church and state. As a result, you may be struck by the number of public holidays that are based on a religious calendar and the extent of public prayer and public religious ceremonies. You will have to probe to understand the relationship between the external, ritual manifestations of religion and individual beliefs or the role of religion as a political element or an active social force.

If you wish to be affiliated with a religious community abroad, check with your local place of worship for contacts or discuss your interests with program staff overseas. Former students may also be able to advise you regarding your options.

## Culture Shock

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"Culture shock" is the term used to describe the disorientation that every student experiences to some degree when spending an extended period in a new culture. The common symptoms include homesickness, boredom, withdrawing from the culture by spending excessive amounts of time alone or with other Americans, excessive sleeping, compulsive eating, irritability, stereotyping of or hostility toward host country nationals, weepiness or even some psychosomatic illnesses.

Although you will probably experience some degree of culture shock, you certainly won't have all these symptoms. If you recognize what is happening, keep busy, and ask friends and the BCSP office staff for help when you need it, culture shock will not last long.

During your period abroad, you may move through several natural stages of cultural adaptation. These include:

- 1) Initial euphoria. When you first arrive in the new culture, everything seems wonderful and exciting, and you are struck by how similar people around the world can be.
- 2) Irritation and hostility. Your focus changes from the similarities between cultures to the differences, and the differences become irritating and frustrating. Small problems loom as major catastrophes.

3) Gradual adjustment. The crisis of adjustment passes. The new culture seems more familiar and you move more confidently in it. You make friends. You learn to interpret some of the subtle cultural clues and cues.

4) Adaptation and biculturalism. You are able to function in two cultures with confidence. You are so well adapted to the new culture that returning to the U.S. will provoke a “reverse culture shock.”

There are several ways you can minimize the impact of culture shock:

1) Make a point of learning as much as you can about Italy before you go—its history, art, literature, current politics. Explore periodicals, novels, travel books, and media that inform you about the differences in daily life you will encounter overseas. Understanding the culture will facilitate your adjustment to living there.

2) In Bologna, look for the reasons behind the things in Italian culture that are different. Relax your grip on American culture; ours is not the only way of doing things.

3) Resist looking down on or making jokes and comments about Italy or Italians. Avoid others who do so.

4) Identify an Italian who is sympathetic and understanding and speak to that person about your feelings.

5) Have confidence in yourself and in the good will of the Italians. Maintain confidence that your semester or year in Italy will be a positive experience.

## Re-Entry: Reverse Culture Shock

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Once you have adapted to life in Italy, coming home will require readjustment to U.S. culture. You will have to integrate what you have learned abroad into your U.S. life. You will cope with re-entry at various levels:

1. Family: You may be expected to fit back into your family but find it difficult to communicate effectively because they have not shared your international experiences. They may have difficulty adjusting to your new independence and changed values.

Strategies: Try to share your experience with your family (photos, stories, blogs, etc.) and let them know how much you appreciate the chance they have given you to grow in new ways by studying and traveling overseas.

2. Friends: You and your friends may no longer be as close. Be sensitive about discussing your experience with them. You may also miss the new friends you made in Italy.

Strategies: Ask and listen to what your friends experienced while you were in Bologna. Ask them to bring you up to date on local events. Try to do new things together to get the relationship on a new footing. Maintain contact with your Italian and BCSP friends.

3. School: You are likely to look at your home campus in a new light, and you may miss being part of a close-knit group of BCSP students.

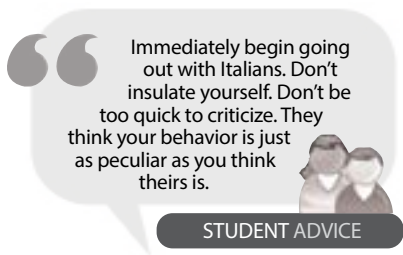
**Strategies:** Talk over your academic experience with your advisor, especially if you are considering new career goals. Make contacts with international students on your campus through your school's office of international student services. Contact the study abroad office and volunteer to talk to students who plan to study abroad. Seek out other students on campus who have studied overseas. Investigate the possibility of living in an international dormitory or take part in activities for international students.

4. **Country:** Aspects of the U.S. may no longer be entirely to your liking and you may have the sense that you no longer fit in. You will probably evaluate ideas and events in the context of the broader cultural perspective you acquired in Bologna.

**Strategies:** Recognize that we all tend to look past the shortcomings of our home culture when we are away, and to criticize it based on changed perceptions when we return. Seek out others on your campus who are interested in international and intercultural matters. Keep up your interest in Italy through newspapers, literature, music, friends, etc.

5. **Self:** You have become accustomed to a level of activity and anticipation that your home and campus probably cannot match. It is natural to feel a little restless or a bit depressed for a while after your return.

**Strategies:** Recuperate from the physical journey. Think over the ways you have changed: Which of those do you like? What did you learn about yourself? How have your family and friends reacted to the new you? Keep a journal so you can see your thoughts evolve. Talk with other returning students.



Immediately begin going out with Italians. Don't insulate yourself. Don't be too quick to criticize. They think your behavior is just as peculiar as you think theirs is.

**STUDENT ADVICE**

# Appendix A

## BCSP Safety & Responsibility Guidelines

No set of guidelines can guarantee the health and safety needs of each individual involved in a study abroad program, but the following address issues of general concern and the responsibilities of all parties. It is not possible to account for all the inevitable variations in actual cases, so those involved must also rely upon their experience and thoughtful judgment while considering the unique circumstances of each situation.

### A. Responsibilities of the BCSP

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1. Conduct regular assessments of health and safety conditions for BCSP, including program-sponsored accommodation, events, excursions and other activities, prior to program. Monitor possible changes in country conditions. Provide information about changes and advise participants and their parents/guardians/families as needed. Develop and maintain emergency preparedness and crisis response plans.
2. Provide guidelines for program directors and staff with respect to managing emergencies abroad.
3. Provide orientation materials to participants prior to departure for the program and on-site, which include appropriate information on health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country. In addition to dealing with health and safety issues, the orientation should address potential health and safety risks, and appropriate emergency response measures. Ask students to share this information with their parents/guardians/families so they can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation, and behavior while on the program.
4. Consider health and safety issues in evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in BCSP.
5. In the participant screening process, consider factors such as disciplinary history that may affect the safety of the individual or the group.
6. Provide students with information on the role of and assistance provided by the on-site resident director or program coordinator.
7. Discuss with students, following their selection but prior to their participation in BCSP, individual health and disciplinary history issues that may affect the safety of the individual or the group.
8. Verify that students have adequate health insurance coverage, or assure that participants receive information about how to obtain coverage. Adequate health insurance coverage is necessary to obtain a student visa. Policies should include emergency evacuation and repatriation. Students will be required by Italian law to

purchase additional hospital insurance within Italy.

9. Direct on-site program staff to provide information for participants and their parents/guardians/families regarding available medical and support services, and to help participants obtain the services they may need.

10. Hire vendors and contractors (e.g. travel and tour agents) that have provided reputable services in the country in which the program takes place. Advise such vendors and contractors of the program sponsor's expectations with respect to their role in the health and safety of participants.

11. Communicate applicable codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. Take appropriate action when participants are in violation.

12. In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health and safety circumstances, maintain good communication among all program sponsors.

13. Provide these guidelines to participants and their parents/guardians/families regarding when and where the responsibility of BCSP ends, and the aspects of participants' overseas experiences that are beyond the control of BCSP. In particular, BCSP generally:

- a) Cannot guarantee or ensure the safety of participants or eliminate all risks from the study abroad environment;
- b) Cannot monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants;
- c) Cannot prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous or unwise activities;
- d) Cannot ensure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings or provide or pay for legal representation for participants;
- e) Cannot ensure that home-country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country;
- f) Cannot fully replicate home campus support services at the overseas location;
- g) Cannot assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed or otherwise engaged by BCSP, for events that are not part of the program, or that are beyond the control of BCSP and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.

## **B. Responsibilities of Participants**

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Students can have a major impact on their own health and safety abroad through the decisions they make before and during the program and by their day-to-day choices and behaviors.

### **Participants should:**

1. Participate fully in all orientations before departure and on-site, and read and carefully consider all information provided by BCSP that relates to safety and health conditions in host countries.

2. When applying for or accepting a place in a program, consider carefully their health and other personal circumstances, and assume responsibility for them after acceptance.
3. Make available to BCSP accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that are necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
4. Obtain and maintain supplementary health insurance coverage and liability insurance, if necessary, and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
5. Inform parents/guardians/families, and any others who may need to know, about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed on an ongoing basis.
6. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of academic and ethical conduct, and emergency procedures of the program, and obey host country laws.
7. Once on-site, be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals.
8. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining health and law enforcement services in the host country.
9. Avoid substance use of all kinds.
10. Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well-being, especially when traveling away from the program site.
11. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well-being of others, and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
12. Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.

## C. Recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families

Parents, guardians and families can play an important role in the health and safety of participants by helping them make decisions and by influencing their behavior overseas.

### **When appropriate, parents/guardians/families should:**

1. Through their student participants, obtain and carefully evaluate health and safety information related to the program, as provided by BCSP and other sources.
2. Be involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular program.
3. Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
4. Be responsive to requests from BCSP for information regarding the participant.
5. Keep in touch with the participant.
6. Be aware that some information may most appropriately be provided by the participant rather than the program.

These guidelines are based on those recommended by the Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad (May 2002), as approved by Indiana University's Overseas Study Advisory Council.

# Appendix B

## HIV/AIDS & Traveler's Health

### Description

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AIDS is a serious disease, first recognized as a distinct syndrome in 1981. AIDS represents the late clinical stage of infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which progressively damages the immune system. Without an effective immune system, life-threatening infections and other noninfectious conditions related to failing immunity (such as certain cancers) eventually develop.

### Occurrence

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AIDS and HIV infection occur worldwide. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS estimates that, as of the end of 2013, nearly 35 million persons were living with HIV/AIDS worldwide. Although the most globally affected part of the world remains sub-Saharan Africa, in recent years, the steepest increases in HIV infection have occurred in Eastern Europe, Central, South and Southeast Asia. Many countries lack comprehensive surveillance systems, and despite improvements, the true number of cases is likely greater than officially reported, particularly in developing countries. Because HIV infection and AIDS are distributed globally, the risk for international travelers is determined less by geographic destination and more by behaviors that put them at risk for becoming infected, such as sexual and drug-using behaviors.

### Risk for Travelers

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The risk of HIV infection for international travelers is generally low. Factors to consider in assessing risk include the extent of direct contact with blood or other potentially infectious secretions and the extent of sexual contact with potentially infected persons. In addition, the blood supply in developing countries might not be adequately screened.

### Prevention

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Travelers should be advised that HIV infection is preventable. HIV can be transmitted through sexual intercourse and needle- or syringe-sharing; by medical use of blood, blood components, or organ or tissue transplantation; through artificial insemination; and perinatally from an infected woman to her infant. HIV is not transmitted through casual contact; air, food, or water routes; contact with inanimate objects; or by mosquitoes or other arthropod vectors. The use of any public conveyance (e.g. an airplane, an automobile, a boat, a bus, or a train) by persons with AIDS or HIV infection does not pose a risk of infection for the crew members or other travelers.

Travelers should be advised that they are at risk if they:

- Have sexual contact (heterosexual or homosexual) with an infected person.
- Use or allow the use of contaminated, unsterilized syringes or needles for any injections or other procedures that pierce the skin, including acupuncture, use of illicit drugs, steroid or vitamin injections, medical or dental procedures, ear or body piercing, or tattooing.
- Use infected blood, blood components, or clotting factor concentrates. HIV infection by this route is rare in countries or cities where donated blood and plasma are screened for antibodies to HIV.

Travelers should be advised to avoid sexual encounters with persons who are infected with HIV or whose HIV infection status is unknown. Travelers should also be advised to avoid sexual activity with persons who are at high risk for HIV infection, such as intravenous drug users, commercial sex workers (both male and female), and other persons with multiple sexual partners. In countries with high rates of HIV infection, many persons without these risk factors may be infected and be unaware of their status.

Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, prevent transmission of HIV. Travelers who engage in vaginal, anal, or oral-genital sexual contact with a person who is HIV-infected or whose HIV status is unknown should use a latex condom. Persons who are sensitive to latex should use condoms made of polyurethane or other synthetic materials. Some areas may have a limited supply and selection of condoms, or available condoms may be of inferior quality. Persons traveling to these areas who engage in sexual contact with persons who are HIV-infected or whose HIV status is unknown should carry their own supply of condoms. When a male condom cannot be used properly, a female condom should be considered. When no condom is available, travelers should abstain from anal, vaginal, and oral-genital sexual contact with persons who are HIV-infected or whose HIV status is unknown. Barrier methods other than condoms have not been shown to be effective in the prevention of HIV transmission. Spermicides alone have also not been shown to be effective, and the widely used spermicide nonoxynol-9 can increase the risk of HIV transmission.

In many countries, needle-sharing by intravenous drug users is a major means of HIV transmission and transmission of other infections, such as hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Travelers should be advised not to use drugs intravenously or share needles for any purpose. Travelers should also be advised to avoid, if at all possible, receiving medications from multidose vials, which may have become contaminated by used needles.


In many developed countries (e.g. Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, western European nations, United States), the risk of transfusion-associated HIV infection has been virtually eliminated through required testing of all donated blood for antibody to HIV. In the United States, donations of blood and plasma must be screened for HIV-1 and HIV-2 antibodies, the HIV-1 p24 antigen, and traces of HIV genetic material that may indicate infection. Developing countries may have no formal program for testing blood or biological products for contamination with HIV. In those countries, travelers should (when medically prudent) avoid use of unscreened blood-clotting factor concentrates or concentrates of uncertain purity. If transfusion is necessary, the blood should be tested, if at all possible, for HIV antibody by appropriately trained laboratory technicians using a reliable test.

Needles used to draw blood or administer injections should be sterile, single use, disposable, and prepackaged in a sealed container. Travelers with insulin-dependent



diabetes, hemophilia, or other conditions that necessitate routine or frequent injections should be advised to carry a supply of syringes, needles, and disinfectant swabs (e.g. alcohol wipes) sufficient to last their entire stay abroad. Before traveling, such persons should consider ~~requesting documentation of the medical necessity~~ for traveling with these items (e.g. a doctor's letter) in case their need is questioned by inspection personnel at ports of entry.

This information was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travelers Health Yellow Book (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/yellowbook-home>).

 **Helpful  
Program  
Information**



National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral  
Hepatitis, STD & TB Prevention  
1-800-232-4636

Indiana University's  
Health Center  
812-855-7688