



Your personal safety during your stay in Florence is a priority. While our mission is to provide academic excellence, and opportunities for intercultural exchange and outreach, we also realize that these objectives cannot be reached if you are not physically well, or not safe. Following are suggestions you should follow to have a safe semester.

**1. Drinking alcohol** is the number one threat to your safety. “Binge-drinking” impairs your judgment and causes you to behave in unsafe ways. While under the influence, you may decide to take dangerous risks such as walk home alone late a night, lose track of your belongings in a disco, or go home with someone you don’t know well. All of these behaviors seriously put your safety at risk. Further, being drunk in Italy is not considered “cool” or “fun.” Italians do not drink to get drunk, but rather may savor a fine bottle of wine with dinner. Drinking alcohol is exclusively associated with a meal, and done in moderation.

**2. Theft and pick pocketing** are common occurrences here in Italy. Be careful with your belongings. Keep careful watch on your bag and wallet at all times. Do not hang your purse or jacket with wallet on the back of a chair. Particularly problematic places are public areas such as transportation terminals (bus and train), internet cafes, tourist areas (such as the city center, and while waiting outside at museum and church entrances), restaurants, and discos.

**3. Unwanted attention** on the street or in public places is a nuisance which can happen to women here in Italy. Follow the lead of Italian women and observe how they do not respond or look in the direction of the offender. Do not talk to the person, or make eye contact; simply keep walking, and if you are followed, go into the nearest bar, restaurant, store, etc. and ask for assistance. If this occurs on a bus or train, ask the driver or ticket controller to help you. “Ciao bella” is not a compliment when heard from a passerby; always remember you won’t find the love of your life on the street.

**4. SUF emergency card** should always be with you in your wallet. The SUF emergency cellular phone number is listed on the card which can be called at anytime for emergency assistance.

**5. In general** maintain the same safe behaviors you would if you were in a large city in the United States. Florence, and Italy can give the appearance of being safer, given the different lifestyle habits and customs, however, the same crimes that happen in the States can happen here as well...use your city street smarts, and stay safe!