

Agenda for Meeting 1

- **Being safe** --- Safety is our #1 priority. See this link for important advice: <http://www.aesu.com/blog/10-safety-tips-keep-safe-abroad/>
 - 1a) We will practice **the buddy system** religiously. You will choose a buddy and always let the buddy know where you are going, and if you are going with your buddy, you will let someone else know where both of you are going.
 - 1b) Preparation is very important especially when you are travelling to a country that barely speaks English. You will need to study maps, prepare detailed plans for the trains/buses and even back-up plans in case a train gets delayed or cancelled. As budding engineers, I think you will enjoy this sort of detailed preparation.
 - 1c) Remember that travelling in Europe is not like travelling to Plainview or Dallas. If things go wrong, they will go horribly wrong because of the bureaucracy over there. So, be very careful of your passports, laptops, and phones. DO NOT TRUST anyone blindly. If you do not plan in advance, then you will be at the mercy of scam-artists at Rome train station who will speak decent English and pretend to help you.
 - 1d) If you lose your passport, it is a hell of a procedure to get new travel documents and it will involve travel to Rome – perhaps for a significant amount of time. It will mostly lead to the end of your Study abroad because there is no way you can catch up after that sort of disaster.
- **Behavior expectations**
 1. Appropriate attire
 2. TTU Code of Conduct applies to them even in Europe – they are ambassadors of USA.
 3. Most of you will be of legal drinking age in Europe – and if you treat that as a license to impress Italian dates of your drinking prowess then you will be seriously mistaken. The Italian college students do not have a binge-drinking culture and they will be horrified if someone from America did that in front of them. Most likely, you will end up getting robbed by some unscrupulous people and it might be end of your Study abroad experience (with no credits to show for it). Remember that “BEING SAFE” is our #1 priority.
 - First offense – verbal warning
 - Second offense – written warning
 - Third offense – dismissal from program
- **Travel notes**
 1. No need for COVID vaccination/testing for entry to Italy. However, if your flight goes through Spain, then follow the advice of the carrier because Spain requires COVID vaccination/testing/recovery certificate to enter Spain – *see item 6 below*.
 2. You might need to wear masks on your flight and/or train. **Bring KN95 masks with you.**
 3. The Study abroad office recommends that you purchase a refundable ticket or hold off purchasing a ticket if you are concerned about the ongoing situation in Ukraine. All of our summer study abroad programs are set to proceed at this time.
 4. **Do not book your return ticket on the day of the final exam** – see the [program schedule](#)
 5. **Do not fly to Naples!** Travel from Naples to Benevento is difficult, and you are likely to face language barriers.

6. If you take off from one country and land in another with a layover before another flight, then make sure that you have at least 3 hours between flights. This is because whenever you land in a country in the Schengen region (say Spain), you have to go through immigration and also go through security all over again before you board your flight to Italy. The country that you “enter” (say Spain) might have different COVID requirements for entry than Italy. The process of going through immigration and pre-boarding security takes time – so make sure you have ample time between flights while in transit.
7. When you arrive back in the US - say at New York, you will have to (i) go through immigration (ii) collect bags from the baggage carousel even if your bags were checked to your final destination (say Dallas) (iii) go through customs (iv) recheck your bags to the final destination, (v) go through security, and (vi) go to your gate. All this takes time. That is why I suggest a minimum of 3 hours layover at your arrival airport on the return trip back in the US.
8. You should visit <http://www.trenitalia.com/tcom-en> to find trains from Rome to Benevento, but you DO NOT have to purchase train tickets now - just focus on the flight tickets. We will discuss train travel in detail in another meeting.
9. Try different websites to look for tickets, for example, Travelocity.com, expedia.com, or aa.com. It is likely that you might see differing prices and itineraries. Once you have decided on a good itinerary, you can consult me - if you wish - to get my opinion.
10. After you have purchased your flight tickets, let me know your itinerary so that I may populate my excel spreadsheet.