

May 23, 2024 - August 16, 2024

Requesting APA Educational Leave in Italy

CC: Franca Barricelli, Nelly Wadsworth and Kim Page

Good Afternoon All,

I plan to participate in a language exchange program in Rome, Italy from May 23, 2024 until August 16, 2024. The primary purpose of this language exchange program is to teach English classes and to learn Italian/Italian culture. I will be teaching English and receiving Italian language courses five days a week during that time. This is an unpaid position, it has more to do with the experience. I will be renting an Airbnb during this time. Although the school there offers housing, I do not wish to use shared housing with the other teachers/students.

While language teaching and acquisition is the primary purpose of the program, I also believe it will greatly benefit my position as Assistant Director of Study Abroad here at Fitchburg State University. Italy is our top sending location for study abroad (which I believe directly correlates with the Center for Italian Culture Scholarship) and it would be extremely beneficial if I were more familiar with the area and culture. This would help not only in my study abroad advising in Italy but also in Europe as a whole. When students ask questions about their short/long term study abroad programs in Italy, I will really be able to speak from experience. My role as board member of the Center for Italian Culture would also benefit me greatly for this experience in Italy.

I plan to take a weekend to visit Professor [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], the ASA staff and our Fitchburg State students in Verona. I would like to check in on the accommodations, the space we rent out at University of Verona and meet the on-site staff that runs our program every year. The Resident Director in Verona, [REDACTED], has been working with our Fitchburg State faculty-led programs for many years. We also send many students for a semester abroad to Florence University of the Arts through ASA. I plan to meet their Resident Director, [REDACTED]. I can work with [REDACTED] to see how to better prepare and support our students while abroad for their long term stay in Florence. Lastly, I would also like to meet with IES Abroad and their Rome staff for Professor [REDACTED] Education Faculty-Led Program for Spring Break 2025. [REDACTED]'s faculty-led program is completely new and requires a lot of ground work as we are requesting to get into primary/secondary classrooms in Italy.

In terms of my work load here at Fitchburg State, all of the work is already done for the summer program to Greece, it would just be dealing with any issues on-site that may occur. I have spoken with [REDACTED] and she has agreed to help with the summer orientations while I am away as well as any issues that may come up with Greece while they are on-site. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are in support

of this plan as they also see the value in this type of experience in Italy. Much of the planning has been done for our 2025 faculty-led programs and we will continue to work on them.

I am requesting the following for the time period of May 23- August 16. I am requesting a combination of accrued time and short-term education leave.

Schedule:

May 23, 2024 - June 7, 2024 - Take *accrued time*, Language Exchange starts, Learning Italian, Learning and familiarizing with the area

June 10, 2024 - August 2, 2024 Take *Short-term Educational Leave* (Language Exchange Program in addition to some Fitchburg State related study abroad work on Fridays and weekends. Including site visit to Verona to meet on-site staff and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Academic Visits in Florence ASA, IES in Rome for [REDACTED] Education Program)

August 5, 2024 - August 16, 2024 Take *accrued time*, still part of the language exchange program

I will return to OIE on August 19. I will be ready to work on our international student orientation (much of which will be done before I leave). I will continue to work on our faculty-led programs/scholarship promotion in August as well.

Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,
Nicole

Nicole Salerno, MBA
Assistant Director of Study Abroad
Fitchburg State University

