

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH  
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM FACULTY  
REGARDING THE FLORENCE SEMESTER**

1. *What courses should I offer while in Florence?*

For the most part, faculty can teach any upper-division GE course in Florence which has some relevance to the setting, that is, either to Florence itself or to Italy more generally. Courses might also have a more broadly European perspective. In addition, you will serve as the faculty of record for the Italian Language and Culture course. This is a beginning Italian language course that is taught by an adjunct professor in Florence and includes cultural experiences. You will also supervise students who choose to do an internship in Florence (see number 3 below for more information).

2. *Must the courses I teach be applicable to students' General Education requirements?*

The short answer is "yes." Our experience over the years is that this is what students are looking for, and so they sign up for these courses in greater numbers than non-GE courses (although some GE courses might double-count for the major). Because of the new General Education Executive Order, in order to be considered for this position, you should propose courses that have been approved for upper-division GE credit in category B, C, or D. To learn about the current Florence Semester program, [see our website](#).

3. *How many courses do I teach?*

As mentioned above, Florence Semester faculty teach two lecture/seminar courses while in Florence. They also serve as faculty of record for the Italian Language and Culture course taught by a Florence-based instructor. In coordination with our Florence service provider, the instructor works with faculty to bring in speakers on relevant topics having to do with Florence or Italy. The Italian Language and Culture class is a mandatory course for all students participating in the Florence Semester program. The faculty member will also be the instructor of record for an internship course in Florence or allow individual students the option to engage in a directed studies course in their field, when needed. Finally, it is important to note that students are not allowed to add or drop courses once they are in Florence.

4. *What kind of a teaching schedule will I have in Florence?*

Each academic course offering will be taught two days a week. The Italian Language and Culture class three days a week and involves field trips. Faculty are expected to accompany students on these field trips.

5. *I've heard there are internships and community service opportunities available to students while in Florence. How does that work?*

Our service provider has specialized staff to assist students who want to participate in internships or community service while in Florence. Students should have upper-division standing, check with their department for any specific requirements, and register for the class here at CSULB before leaving. Internships usually run three days a week from 1:00 to 6:00 pm in professional Florence settings.

6. *Who provides student housing, classroom space etc. for us while in Florence?*

The university contracts with the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) as its Florence service provider. AIFS provides classroom space, as well as a host of other services, including student housing, arrangement of field trips, travel advisement and assistance for students, etc. Additionally, AIFS provides office space for faculty, and other kinds of assistance to both faculty and students while in Florence.

8. *What are the dates of the Florence Semester?*

The Florence Semester normally begins in the mid-September and concludes in mid December.

9. *Will I continue on my regular salary while I am teaching on the Florence Semester?*

Yes, faculty members are paid their normal full salary, just as if they were teaching their full load of classes on campus.

10. *Do I have to pay for my own airfare to Florence, and must I accompany students on a group flight?*

Faculty members buy their own tickets to and from Florence. If the minimum enrollment is met, the faculty member is reimbursed by AIFS up to the amount it would cost them if they were to go on a student group flight to Florence.

11. *I have heard that housing in Florence is expensive, and I will have to continue paying my home mortgage, or apartment rental here locally while I am there. Is there any financial assistance for me regarding housing in Florence?*

AIFS provides for faculty housing in Florence in a studio or one-bedroom apartment, if minimum enrollment is met (15 students).

13. *What am I obliged to do in Florence, aside from my teaching duties?*

While your teaching duties are the main thing you must do while there, we also want faculty to interact as much as possible with students. Exactly what that means varies from faculty member to faculty member. AIFS also arranges several cultural experiences for the group (cooking class, wine tasting, opera, etc.). It is expected that faculty will accompany students on these trips. In addition, note that for many Florence Semester students this may be their first time outside of the United States (for some, it is their first time outside of southern California). There is the expectation, therefore, that faculty members more or less keep an eye on students. For example, if a student appears to be depressed, or to be acting out in some way, particularly if that behavior were disruptive to

the group, we would want the faculty member in question to work closely with AIFS staff to talk with the student, and to see what could be done for him or her. In general, we look for very student-oriented faculty members for the Florence Semester, who enjoy working and interacting with students.

14. *Are there any other faculty duties, or ancillary obligations, associated with the Florence Semester?*

The Education Abroad Office in the Center for International Education takes on the main responsibility for advertising the Florence Semester to students, as well as the processing of all application paperwork. We also very much need faculty assistance, however, to get the word out. Therefore, we ask faculty to talk about the program first of all in their own classrooms, but also to do whatever else is in their power to assist in the disseminating of information about the Florence Semester to CSULB students. This includes, but is not limited to, attending as many student "Information Sessions" as schedules will allow, assistance with getting fliers distributed in their department/college, etc. In addition, faculty attendance at the student Pre-Departure Orientation Session is required. We also ask faculty to work closely with the staff in the Education Abroad Office by supplying descriptions of the courses they propose to teach for inclusion on the Florence Semester website, as well as early information on the text book(s) they will require students to buy for their courses.

15. *Is my department compensated for absence?*

Yes. Academic Affairs supports the Florence Semester by compensating departments at the vacant rate.