

The Umbra Institute

Discover More



Nestled in the historic center of Perugia, Italy, the Umbra Institute offers semester, summer, and year-long study abroad programs for American and Italian college students. Since its origin in 1999, the Institute has continued to set itself apart as a provider of distinctive academic programs, allowing students the opportunity to learn both in and beyond the classroom in the vibrant city of Perugia. Continuing its tradition of excellence, the Umbra Institute offers exciting opportunities for service learning and community engagement, internships, and volunteer activities.

Studying in Perugia

Each year, tens of thousands of students from all over the world chart a course for Perugia. Nestled in the rolling green hills of Umbria, the city boasts a rich past and vibrant present—the ideal context for any study abroad experience. In Perugia, Italian can be heard on every street corner and in every shop, affording language students endless opportunities to practice and perfect their linguistic skills while immersing themselves in authentic Italian culture.

Perugia is a city of both ancient secrets and modern-day delights. As the capital of the Umbria region, its history extends back to Etruscan times.

Pieces of antiquity are preserved in abundance—every day, students walk across cobblestones from Roman roads, pass by resplendent Renaissance artwork, and study under the shadows of towering medieval cathedrals. The historic center is easy to maneuver by foot; a host of restaurants, theatres, cafes, museums, and shops are all within a fifteen-minute walk. Perugia's central location also offers easy access to other parts of Italy and beyond. Just hop a train at the station or head to the small regional airport and catch a flight to Rome, Florence, Venice, Sicily, or any other European destination—the sky's the limit.

The Academic Programs

The Umbra Institute offers a variety of distinctive academic programs designed to serve the needs of a diverse range of students. A general studies program provides students from any discipline or major the opportunity to choose liberally from a selection of courses taught by Umbra faculty. For those students eager to pursue deep integration within the local community, academic internships, service learning, and honors courses are available to challenge even the most academically ambitious. Our new Food Studies Program explores the past, present, and future of food with emphasis on sustainability and new technology. And finally, students may choose to direct enroll at either the *Università per Stranieri di Perugia* or the *Università degli Studi di Perugia* for a truly immersive experience.

SEMESTER PROGRAMS

General Studies Program

The general studies program is the most flexible option for students studying for a semester at Umbra. Students may choose freely from the varied list of courses offered each semester at the Institute, selecting the courses that interest them or creating curricular concentrations. All general studies students must take an Italian Language course or a course(s) in Italian as part of their curriculum and enroll in full-time study (14-16 credits).

Language Study at the Umbra Institute

The main vehicle through which people approach and begin to understand a different culture is the language. This is why all Umbra students are required to study Italian. As they hone their linguistic skills, students are able to communicate and feel more at home, ensuring a successful immersion experience. The desired outcome of language study at the Umbra Institute is to increase students' motivation and enthusiasm for Italian, as well as heighten their curiosity about the city and its local culture.

Using Perugia as a Classroom

Perugia is a mid-sized city with a strong tradition of hosting students from around the world who come to study the Italian language. Because of the authentic regional environment, Italian can and often must be used, setting the stage for a richer study abroad experience. Language classes at the Umbra Institute include a strong cultural component, frequently using the city as a living laboratory. Each semester begins with a weeklong program of immersion: afternoons are dedicated to "getting around town" and include outside-the-classroom exercises and excursions, all conducted in Italian.

Focus On Community Engagement

True to the Umbra Institute's mission of immersing students in the local culture and fostering strong linguistic skills, community engagement in Perugia offers a hands-on opportunity to develop interpersonal interests and deepen the overall cultural experience. Many courses within the general studies curriculum have a service learning or community outreach component. Umbra strives to provide a transformative, student-centered learning environment through feedback, personal reflection, and experiential opportunities.

Umbra also offers special courses built around community engagement projects, including:

- Academic Internship and Seminar
- The Honors Programs - Independent Research Track
- The Honors Program - Community Engagement Track

Food Studies Program

The Food Studies Program is a new curricular concentration that employs an interdisciplinary approach to the study of food. It consists of three courses in food studies, an Italian language course, and an optional elective. The program focuses on the history, politics, and culture of food, as well as production, sustainability, new technology, and related businesses in the food industry. Each course includes a series of co- and extra-curricular activities that are a fundamental part of the curriculum. Students visit production facilities, farms, and businesses; participate in workshops and cooking classes; and even become familiar with food production by running, over a limited number of nights, their own "trattoria."

Direct Enrollment Programs

The Direct Enrollment tracks at the Umbra Institute offer students the unique opportunity for a truly immersive experience in Italian culture and in the European style of education. Students can take courses with Italian and international students at two of Perugia's prestigious universities: the *Università per Stranieri* and the *Università degli Studi di Perugia*. Enrollment at the local universities is possible for a single semester or a full year. Umbra professors and staff provide a constant support network for students who choose this option through weekly tutorials, extracurricular activities, and *Weekend d'Italiano* excursions.

The *Università per Stranieri di Perugia* is open to students of **all levels**, from beginner to advanced, who wish to learn the Italian language or perfect their acquired skills.

The *Università degli Studi di Perugia* is for students with advanced proficiency in Italian prepared to participate in university-level courses with local students.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

General Studies Program

The Umbra Institute offers a culturally rich set of course offerings each summer, many taught by visiting professors from Umbra affiliate colleges and universities. The summer session is traditionally 5-6 weeks in length and runs from late May through June. Students may choose to enroll in one or two courses during the summer session (3-6 credits). Visit our website for dates and offerings.

Intensive Italian through Culture

The Umbra Institute also offers a unique intensive Italian language program entitled "Intensive Italian through Culture," directed by Dr. Robert Proctor, Professor of Italian at Connecticut College. The program consists of full-time study coupled with a rich co-curricular cultural activities program. Activities such as cinema nights, language exchange sessions, lunches, socials, museum visits, and local tours in Italian complement the in-class learning process. Courses are offered at four different levels of Italian, ranging from the beginning level to the advanced. This is an excellent program for students who wish to learn and practice as much Italian as possible during the summer.

"Participating in the seminar offered me a unique opportunity to investigate Italian culture at an in-depth and personal level. It allowed me as an education student to observe Italian pedagogical strategies and methodological choices, and to compare these cross-culturally with practicum work I previously completed in the US."

Lindsay Paiva, Connecticut College
Academic Internship and Seminar, Spring 2011

Student Services and Support

Orientation

Upon arrival in Perugia, students participate in a comprehensive orientation session designed to acclimate them to their surroundings and provide them with essential information about the Umbra program and life in Italy. They are introduced to the Institute and given practical and historical tours of the city to learn about local stores, the post office, transportation, monuments, and more. Students also meet the staff and faculty, who discuss a variety of topics such as the academic program, buying books and supplies, safety and security, traveling, and getting the most out of the study abroad experience. The orientation session is designed to provide students with the necessary foundation for their explorations of Perugia and all facets of Italian life.

Service Quality

The Umbra staff provides strong and comprehensive service support to students from the moment they enter the country until the time of their departure. Our team of energetic, capable professionals is dedicated to ensuring a safe and positive experience for every student in our program. The Umbra staff is always available when needed; our goal is to ease students' transition to life in Perugia and help them achieve autonomy during their stay. Beyond day-to-day support, the Umbra staff works hard to equip students with the information they need to make the most out of their time abroad, providing daily tech support, how-to travel workshops, and re-entry preparation before leaving Perugia.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of our students is a priority at the Umbra Institute. We address these issues at length with our students during orientation and throughout the term. When it comes to illness, injuries, or any other health or safety issue that requires attention, we have established protocols that bring quick and reliable assistance. Umbra staff members are in regular contact with local authorities and US government offices, and Umbra students are briefed on personal safety and appropriate behavior in Italy by an Italian police officer at the beginning of every term. Although Perugia and Italy are safe environments for American students, the Institute provides a 24-hour hotline in case an emergency arises.

Housing, Meals, and Student Life

Umbra students are well-integrated into the daily life of the school and city. The Umbra Institute selects and coordinates student housing in apartments throughout the city center so that students can experience life as a young adult in a modern Italian city. All accommodations are within a short walking distance of the Italian universities and the Institute. Meals can be prepared at home, purchased at the three university cafeterias, or purchased in one of the many Perugino restaurants, *trattorias*, cafes, or *pizzerias*.

Discover More

For additional information about the Umbra Institute, please send an email to info@umbra-institute.com or visit the Umbra Institute website at www.umbra-institute.com.

Student life at Umbra involves a delightful balance of academic study, social gatherings, cultural excursions, sports activities, and local festivals—all of which leave a lasting imprint on students as they pursue their individual vocations. In addition, there is a well-established student social scene, where Umbra students take full advantage of the many restaurants, pubs, night clubs, discotheques, and public spaces brimming with Italian and international students.

Perugia University Cafeteria and Library

The Umbra Institute students have access to a variety of resources through the University of Perugia. They include the student *mensa*, or cafeteria, where most of the Italian university students meet for affordable meals, and the new humanities library located in the very center of Perugia. This library offers extended open hours, Wi-Fi access, and a chance to socialize with other students outside of the Umbra Institute community.

Travel and Exploration

Location, location, location. When you're choosing a study abroad program, it matters. So what's so special about Perugia? Besides being a trendy university city, Perugia is located in the lush heart of Italy near the picturesque towns of Siena, Assisi, and Cortona. With Florence just to the north and Rome just to the south, Perugia is the perfect staging point for exploration; the extensive train and bus system can take you anywhere in the country. And Perugia's local airport now offers international flights to multiple European destinations on low-cost airlines. Travel can be an educational experience, too!

Class Trips

Most of the classes at Umbra offer course-related excursions designed to enrich a student's appreciation of their academic work. Our students visit churches and museums throughout Umbria and Tuscany, explore ancient libraries and printing presses, work in vineyards and olive groves, participate in Etruscan digs, and participate in international theater groups. Umbra consistently seeks ways to utilize the rich resources of the Italian cultural community to supplement the academic program and the overall student experience.

Optional Excursions

Umbra also offers students several optional day and weekend trips throughout the semester. These trips may include out-of-town destinations such as Capri, Sorrento, Venice, and Cinque Terre, or they may be closer to home, such as Cortona or the nearby Perugina Chocolate factory. Weekend hiking and camping opportunities are also available in the hills and mountains surrounding Perugia. The optional trips are offered at the most affordable prices possible.

THE UMBRA INSTITUTE

Via Bartolo 16, 06123 Perugia, Italy
Tel: +39 075-573-4595 Fax: +39 075-573-7033
Web: www.umbra-institute.com
Email: info@umbra-institute.com

Endless Immersion Opportunities

The Umbra Institute seeks to continually offer opportunities for student integration in the Perugia community by providing a comprehensive support network, enriching every student's first-hand experience. These initiatives supplement the academic community engagement programs and include:

Italian University Students at the Umbra Institute

Italian university students can earn credit by enrolling in elective courses at Umbra. Sharing the classroom with Italian students stimulates discussion, broadens intercultural awareness, and deepens cross-cultural understanding. As a way to build further ties between American and Italian students, Umbra orchestrates various community engagement activities such as volunteer workshops, language tutoring, and organized social outings.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Umbra Institute offers a variety of opportunities for students to become involved in the local volunteer community. With UNICEF, an international children's rights and relief organization, Umbra students work side-by-side with Italian students from the University of Perugia and local UNICEF volunteers to design and sew dolls known as "Le Pigotte." These dolls are the very symbol of UNICEF in Italy and are sold to raise money for children's vaccination kits. Students may also volunteer with Monimbò, a local fair trade cooperative, promoting goods that protect workers' rights and the environment. Examples of collaborative work with Monimbò include assisting with store operations, the monthly fair trade market, public education and awareness campaigns, and marketing projects.

Educational Workshops and Symposia

The Umbra Institute offers numerous educational workshops throughout the semester where students can learn about Perugia, Italian cuisine, and how to safely travel while abroad. Past workshops have included a historical walking tour around Perugia; hands-on workshops on Italian pizza, cheese, coffee, wine, and *aperitivo*; and a travel workshop with practical, money-saving tips and advice. Umbra also organizes academic symposia between students and faculty to further explore engaging class discussions or to debate hot topics in the media.

Umbra Social Events and Activities

Umbra offers many in-house events throughout the semester designed to enhance student social life. Past activities have included pasta and pizza nights, wine tasting events, cooking classes, student debates, film screenings, and cycling and hiking expeditions. Umbra students also present musical performances, literary readings, and art shows with free admission to residents of the city. For the sports aficionados, Umbra sponsors athletic events with Italian students every semester.

Tandem Language Exchange Program

One of the things we don't want students to do is to spend all their free time with only American friends, speaking nothing but English. At Umbra, we are passionate about cultural immersion and, to further this aim, we offer a language exchange program called "Tandem." Tandem is an informal gathering of Umbra students and Italian students from local universities who serve as language partners and tutors. Interactions between students take various forms, such as meeting at local cafes or pizzerias, studying or traveling together, and socializing at Umbra cultural events.

Dedicated Expert Faculty

The Umbra Institute is committed to excellence in teaching. We draw expert faculty with terminal degrees from many American universities, as well as Italian and European academic institutions. We insist that faculty members deliver engaging, challenging, and worthwhile material to our students. To achieve this goal, the Institute looks for those who are not only experts in their fields, but who are also dynamic professors dedicated to teaching in Italy. For detailed profiles on all Umbra faculty, please visit the Academics section of our website.

International Recognition and Accreditation

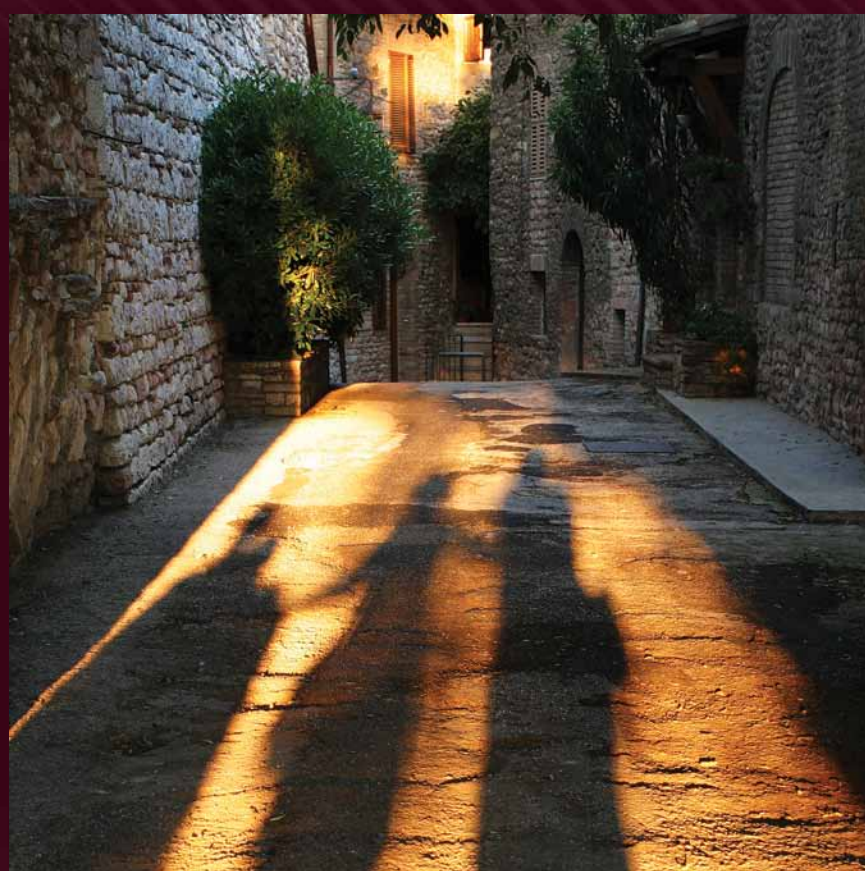
Recognized by the Ministry of Education in Italy and accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges through its partnership with Arcadia University, the Umbra Institute is also recognized as a provider of credit-bearing courses for the *Università degli Studi di Perugia*. As a result, a number of Italian students attend the Institute each semester, creating further opportunities for cultural exchange and enrichment.



Study
abroad
in Italy

Do it Differently: Study in Perugia

The Umbra Institute in Perugia, Italy



THE UMBRA INSTITUTE
Via Bartolo 16, 06123 Perugia, Italy

www.umbra-institute.com
info@umbra-institute.com

