



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

At the Umbra Institute, building a **meaningful connection with the local community**, both as a student and an active participant in the Italian culture, is an integral aspect of studying abroad. For this reason, Umbra offers students a **diversified curriculum** that incorporates the immense educational resources of Italy, particularly in the city of Perugia, **through community engagement**.

Community engagement at Umbra is the cornerstone of our educational philosophy and is the collaborative process of combining academic study and work with community partners through ongoing dialogue, planning, research, and action. As a result, students benefit from **intercultural exchange, language acquisition, and a more global perspective**.

Umbra actively maintains vibrant, well-established relationships with its partners in Perugia — local artisan and internationally recognized companies, schools, city and regional governments, fair trade cooperatives, museums, and Italian families. This reciprocal collaboration allows students to incorporate **real-world practice with theoretical coursework**.

Umbra students may choose from a **variety of opportunities** to interact with the local community, which becomes one of the most rewarding aspects of their time abroad. Offerings include community engagement seminars and practica, community-based courses, service learning projects integrated into elective courses, volunteering, independent research, extracurricular activities, and language exchanges.

Visit [www.umbra.org/community-engagement-abroad/](http://www.umbra.org/community-engagement-abroad/) for more details.

## EMPLOYABILITY & STUDY ABROAD

Study abroad is widely recognized as an experience of personal, academic, and professional growth that gives recent graduates an edge in the job market. For this reason, each fall and spring, Umbra staff hosts an Unpacking Your International Experience Career Workshop, with a particular focus on competencies acquired through community engagement.

Based on research, Umbra recognizes that the following employability skills are often developed while students are in Perugia:

- **Team work,**
- **Customer focus,**
- **Diligence,**
- **Quick thinking,**
- **Learning agility,** and
- **Creative Insight.**

Umbra students often self-report that their study abroad experience has contributed to their development of cultural competencies (e.g. valuing diversity and improving intercultural understanding). Furthermore, it has cultivated their listening and problem-solving skills, as well as helped them become more self-aware and independent.

To get the most out of your time in Perugia, we suggest you set your goals for study abroad and work with your advisors to design the ideal curriculum for you.

For any questions about courses and activities that can help you actively accomplish your goals, visit [www.umbra.org](http://www.umbra.org) or contact [info@umbra.org](mailto:info@umbra.org).



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## GET INVOLVED ABROAD

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



[www.umbra.org](http://www.umbra.org)



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Perugia, also known as Italy's "Univer-city," is located halfway between Florence and Rome and hosts multiple international universities and higher education institutions. Its diversity contributes to a lively city well known for its student population and festivals, such as Eurochocolate, the International Journalism Festival, and Umbria Jazz. The city's airport, as well as multiple train and bus stations, keep the city open to regular international visitors curious about the city's history and culture.

Since 1999, the Umbra Institute has been the only American study abroad provider in Perugia, offering fall, spring, and summer academic opportunities. Umbra provides its students with:

- state-of-the-art, centrally located facilities;
- expert and dedicated international faculty and staff;
- pre-departure and arrival assistance, including airport transfers between Rome and Perugia;
- a comprehensive academic and safety orientation;
- emergency phone service available 24/7;
- practical Italian language courses and workshops;
- nearby, fully-equipped, student apartments; and
- WiFi access in all apartments and at the Institute.

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Service learning projects change semesterly, but previous ones have lead:

- Photography students to collaborate with a local social co-operative that trains workers with special needs to make handmade leather goods, which are photographed. Photos were used for print and online promotion by the co-operative.
- Business students to advise a fashion company in creating cashmere cellphone cases for sustainable purposes, using leftover production materials.
- Sustainability students to work with local restaurants and government to introduce biodegradable to-go boxes to Perugia through the repEAT Box Project.
- Psychology students to work with refugees and other immigrants at a local immigration center, discussing topics of intercultural differences and determining best practices for cultural integration.

## SEMINAR & PRACTICUM COURSES

These are 3-credit elective courses divided into two parts – **the seminar**, or in-class lectures, and **the practicum**, or applied work experience with a local institution in Perugia. Both components complement one another to provide hands-on experience and theoretical knowledge in your chosen field of study.

## SERVICE LEARNING & COMMUNITY-BASED COURSES

Service learning abroad links critical thinking, academic theory, and personal reflection with service in the host community. Many Umbra courses include a service learning component that allows students to become active participants in community partner projects. Students gain real-world experience in an international environment, innovative skills in problem-solving and intercultural communication, along with a sense of the purpose for learning and respect for others.

Community-based courses prepare students for engaged citizenship, leadership, and community participation by utilizing comparative readings and discussions, participatory field research, and exercise with the local community to understand the relationships between people, places, actions, and values. Students learn to address real world issues as well as community needs and interests.

## INTERNSHIPS

Umbra offers unpaid and credit-bearing internships upon request to mature and motivated students.

In the past, students have interned at the local University for Foreigners, wineries, fashion companies, and more.

Interested candidates should contact [info@umbra.org](mailto:info@umbra.org).

## ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS

Seminar & practicum courses, or academic internships, give students the opportunity to work for 30 hours during the semester in their chosen field of study. Some of the most popular options include:

### Critical Disabilities Studies

Work with VIVA Sports Association, an athletic program for kids and adults with motor and/or intellectual disabilities to manage athletic activities.

### Education in Italy

Examine educational psychology, pedagogical models, and English language teaching methods. Work closely with English language teachers and local elementary, middle, and/or high school students to assist with lesson planning and classroom instruction.

### Museum Studies

Work in local museums to learn the ins and outs of operating a museum, creating promotional materials, giving guided tours in English, and preparing exhibitions.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Umbra collaborates with local organizations to encourage students to become a part of their community, providing opportunities to work with UNICEF, teach English, lend a hand to a seasonal harvest, and more.