

Assumption College's Rome campus has been named one of the 10 " best study abroad programs in America " by the independent college rankings journal Best College Reviews.

Calling it one of "the most desirable study abroad opportunities" in the United States, Best College Reviews noted that Assumption's Rome campus was "unique" to the College and "provides students a personal experience."

"It is an honor to have Assumption's Rome campus nationally recognized as one of the best study abroad programs in the United States in only its second year of operation," said Assumption College President Francesco C. Cesareo, Ph.D. "Our students experience Rome and all of Italy as part of a learning community—living, studying and traveling together, enjoying a transformative adventure as they grow both personally and intellectually. They can stand where the classical liberal arts tradition was born and influenced the development of Western Civilization."

Established only two years ago, and located on the property of the Augustinians of the Assumption (the founding religious order of Assumption College), the program is open to sophomores, juniors and seniors. Staffed by Assumption faculty, the campus—which is walking distance to St. Peter's Basilica and other historical sites in the heart of Rome—offers unique courses that take full advantage of all that the city has to offer.

Travel is an important part of the Assumption Rome program. Faculty—some of whom studied in Rome and have vast knowledge of the art, history and language of Italy—lead visits to culturally and historically significant locations in Rome. Travel helps sophomores, juniors and seniors to immerse themselves in their studies. Trips to other sites and cities—such as Pompeii,

the Tuscan capital Florence and other exciting destinations—are included in the tuition. Housing includes both classrooms and living accommodations, where students enjoy family-style meals in an elegant dining room prepared by an authentic Italian chef, who is beloved by the students.

Students enjoy a transformative experience during their semester at Assumption's campus in Rome. For them, the program is more than simply "studying abroad"—it's also about fully embracing a new place, its culture and its history.

"The out-of-classroom component of the Rome campus allowed us to learn in a whole new way," said Southborough, Mass., resident and senior psychology major Tracy Baldelli, who studied there in 2013. "I would recommend this program to other students, because it is extremely unique. The fact that our own professors are teaching the courses, coupled with the community aspect, is a great feature of the program. You become a family, just as you do on the Worcester campus.

Gwen Sawyer, a sophomore from North Yarmouth, Maine, who studied in fall 2014 at the Rome campus, said she found the experience to be "invigorating."

"Many of our classes were on site—meaning, when we studied a piece of art we were there in person looking at the actual work, instead of just reading about it in a textbook," said the political science major.

"The full Rome campus experience cannot be duplicated in just a classroom or on a vacation," Sawyer added. "Living with the Italian people and understanding their culture requires time and experience. In the four months we were there, we met people from all over the world and lived in one of the most historic places on earth. By the end of the semester, we were not just tourists; we felt like we were part of the city. When you live in that kind of stimulating environment, your education means more."