

## **Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology Format for Study at the Angelicum**

DSPT offers a one-semester residency in Rome at the [Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas](#) (PUST/Angelicum) for any student in the M.A. (Theology) program. To qualify for this residency, the student normally must have completed at least 24 semester units of coursework in the M.A. (Theology) program at the Berkeley campus.

The following is an outline of the format which must be followed when a student desires study abroad at the Angelicum. As the process requires **significant time**, the student must begin well before the desired time of study, and **no later than six months prior** to the start of the desired semester. The academic dean cannot grant a requests for study abroad submitted with less than six months of preparation time. Please read through this entire document before you begin the process.

### **OVERVIEW**

Students begin the process for planning study in Rome during a preliminary meeting with the academic dean of DSPT to determine eligibility for the program. If eligibility is confirmed, then the student schedules a follow-up meeting with the dean to establish the particular program of study at the Angelicum (see "Step-by-step process," below).

In order to be officially accepted into one of its programs, the Angelicum requires the following documents before-hand:

1. a copy of the transcripts of the student who is applying.
2. a visa for study in Italy. (This visa must be granted before the Angelicum can officially accept the student.)

**Obtaining a student VISA for study in Italy.** To grant the visa, the Italian government requires the following items:

1. A sealed letter from a bishop, countersigned by the apostolic nuncio for the United States, recommending the student for study at the Angelicum;
2. A letter from the student, countersigned by the President of DSPT, the bishop and the apostolic nuncio, indicating that the student has valid health insurance which provides adequate coverage while in Italy, as well as the financial resource to pay for tuition, fees, room and board, and transportation to and from Italy;
3. Proof of resident housing in Italy during the intended period of study;
4. An acceptance letter, issued by the Angelicum, confirming that the student can study in Italy, issued once the Angelicum has received all of the documentation noted in 1-4.

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

The following protocol is necessary for any DSPT student who wishes to study in Rome. Given the time constraints, the student must begin this process *at least one semester* before anticipated study.

1. **Initial Interview.** Obtain the "Checklist for Rome Residency," (at the end of this document), and have an initial interview with the academic dean to discuss possibility of study abroad. For this meeting, the student should propose the time for study abroad. If the prerequisite 24 semester units of coursework have been completed, then a copy of the transcript should be brought to the meeting. If not, then the student should have a clear plan of when this coursework will be completed.
2. **Confirmation Interview.** At least six months before the intended semester in Rome, the student meets with the academic dean to confirm the student's proposed selection of courses and to discuss precisely how credits will transfer.

To select courses, the student should check the current online catalogue for the [Angelicum](#). As is true for many schools in Europe, the Angelicum has dopted the use of "ECTS units" to measure course value. To transfer a course from Angelicum to DSPT the formula 2 ECTS units = 1 semester hour. Thus, a 6 ECTS unit course is equivalent to a 3 semester units DSPT course. When reviewing the course catalog please be aware of this calculation. Some professors will allow U.S. students to do extra work in a course, for example a 5 ECTS course, to "elevate" it to a 6 ECTS workload.

When all coursework has been approved, the academic dean will sign the checklist, confirming the proposed curriculum. *To change this list of approved courses, a new written petition must be submitted to the academic dean. Failure to do so may mean coursework will not be approved for transfer to DSPT.*

3. **Officially Initiating the Process.** Once the program of studies has been approved by the academic dean, the student contacts the DSPT registrar to request that an official transcript be given to sent to the dean of theology at the Angelicum. When sending the transcript, the Registrar will inform the Angelicum that the student is interested in studying there for one semester. (N.B. The student must also bring the actual official documents to Rome.) *This step formally initiates the process.*
4. **Secure Housing.** At this point, the student must *immediately* secure housing in Rome (see 5.c below). This can be done through the PUST [Students Office](#), via e-mail: [ufficiostudenti@pust.it](mailto:ufficiostudenti@pust.it). At the present time, DSPT is unable to offer assistance in this part of the process. According to past student experience, this is the most time-consuming aspect of the process. Because housing is necessary to obtain a student visa, it is important to begin this part soon.
5. **Secure Proper Documentation.** In order to study in Italy, students are required to present certain documentation concerning:
  - a. health insurance which is valid in Italy.
  - b. the necessary funds to pay for room and board, tuition, and travel to and from Italy. (N.B. Foreign students are *not* permitted to work in Italy. Therefore, each student must have ready access to financial resources.)
  - c. the address of residence while in Italy.

An interview with the GTU Financial Aid Officer and the DSPT CFO will help students ensure that financial resources and proper health insurance are in place. The GTU Financial Aid Officer will confirm the financial viability and access to health insurance with a written letter.

6. **Secure Proper References & Support.** In order to matriculate at a pontifical university such as the Angelicum, students must also have supporting references. There are several steps for obtaining these documents. Each student should:
  - a. Write a letter to their local bishop explaining their desire to study at the Angelicum and that he should expect a letter from the President of DSPT with a formal request (see 6.c below). If the student is not Catholic, then the letter is written to the Bishop of Oakland by the DSPT president.
  - b. This letter is given to the Academic Dean, along with two self-addressed return envelopes and a copy of a passport.
  - c. The Dean will forward this documentation to the President of DSPT, who will do the following:
    - i. write a letter to the local bishop (or to the Bishop of Oakland) explaining the situation, and testifying to the integrity and good-standing of the student;
    - ii. sign the financial testimony form from the GTU Financial Aid Officer which guarantees that the financial and health insurance information is correct N.B. If the student will need federal student loans, then the appropriate forms must also be completed through the GTU Financial Aid Office;
    - iii. ask the bishop to write his own letter of recommendation, and to countersign the student's financial testimony. Please note that **TWO COPIES** of the bishop's letter are required: one for the visa, and the second for the Angelicum which the bishop should forward to the Apostolic nuncio;
  - d. upon receipt of the letter and financial testimony, the bishop will compose his own letter, and make two copies, sending them along with the countersigned financial testimony to the apostolic nuncio;
  - e. Once he receives this documentation, the apostolic nuncio will then append his own signature to the financial testimony, and the two copies of the bishop's letter, placing them in *separate* sealed envelopes. These three documents (two letters of support in sealed envelopes, and the financial testimony) are returned by the nuncio to the student, who must leave the letters sealed.
7. **Obtain a Letter of Acceptance from the Angelicum.** Once the student has received these items back from the apostolic nuncio, the student must email copies of the following documents to Dean of Theology along with a letter of application:
  - a. the letter of recommendation signed by the bishop and nuncio;
  - b. the financial testimony;
  - c. copy of the student transcript;
  - d. copy of the student passport;
  - e. the address of residence in Rome;

Upon receipt of this correspondence, the Angelicum will issue a letter of acceptance to the student.

N.B. The original documents must be presented to the Dean of Theology upon arrival in Rome.

8. **Obtain a Student Visa.** Upon receipt of the letter, the student presents it along with the second letter from the bishop, and the other supporting documentation to the Italian consulate for the student visa.
9. **Register for Courses.** As a final step, the student must register at DSPT during the time in Rome. **No direct transfer of credit is possible.** Normally, the student will register for 12 units of MDV 3025, "Dominican Exchange Program." This process must be completed **before** the student leaves for Rome. Registration will generate a tuition bill, which must be paid to DSPT in order for the School to have the funds to pay the Angelicum.
10. **Tuition Payment and Financial Aid.** Students enrolled in this option are considered enrolled at DSPT for the purpose of applying for financial assistance under Title IV. Students interested in study abroad should contact the GTU Financial Aid Office for further details.

While the student is away, the following tuition payment protocols will be used:

- The bursar at the college the student is attending will send an invoice for tuition (and room and board where applicable) to the VP Finance at DSPT who in turn will send it to the student for their review.
- The fees will be converted to US\$ using the prevailing exchange rate on the date the fees are posted to the student's tuition account.
- The balance of the tuition account must be paid by the student to DSPT before DSPT will wire the fees to the college the student is attending.
- As soon as the student pays their tuition account balance, DSPT will wire the fees to the college the student is attending using the prevailing exchange rate on the day the wire is processed. Any difference between the exchange rate used when the tuition fees were posted and paid, will be charged or credited to the student's tuition account.

N.B. *If you do not register at DSPT for the semester you are in Rome, then any outstanding student loans will come due from your loan agency.*

## **WHILE AT ROME and AFTERWARDS**

1. Student are to keep a file containing all papers and examinations completed to fulfill the program of study at the Angelicum, as well as a syllabus for each class. These items are given to the academic dean upon return from Rome, and will be placed in the student's portfolio. Each student must ensure that an *official* transcript of coursework is sent to the registrar at DSPT.
2. A ten-page essay must be submitted to the academic dean along with the paperwork noted above in (1). This essay is to be a reflection of the overall learning experience at the Angelicum and include information about personal learning objectives and specific course outcomes. The academic dean will not grant the SRC 9999 credits until this paper is submitted.

3. Upon return to DSPT, check with the registrar to see that the transcript has arrived. Once it has been received, schedule an "exit interview" with the academic dean to review all items. At this meeting the academic dean will assign grades to all courses according to the following formula:

ANGELICUM GRADE	DSPT GRADE	DSPT GRADE POINTS	ANGELICUM GRADE	DSPT GRADE	DSPT GRADE POINTS
10.0	A+	4.0	7.5	C+	2.3
9.5	A	4.0	7.0	C	2.0
9.0	A-	3.7	6.5	D+	1.3
8.5	B+	3.3	6.0	D	1.0
8.0	B	3.0	Below 6.0	F	0.0

### Checklist for the DSPT Rome Residency Program

1. **INITIAL INTERVIEW WITH ACADEMIC DEAN.** To be eligible for study in Rome, the student must have completed 24 semester units of coursework in the DSPT MA (Theology) or CCMA program. Please bring a copy of your transcript to the initial interview. The student should also present a specific timeline for study abroad to determine the feasibility of the proposal.

Rome Study Plans Approved      Yes \_\_\_\_\_      No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

2. **INITIATE THE PROCESS.** Request that an official copy of a DSPT transcript be sent to the dean of theology at the Angelicum by the DSPT admissions officer.

Transcript requested by student      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Transcript forwarded to DSPT Registrar's Office

\_\_\_\_\_  
DSPT Registrar

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Transcript sent via email to Dean of Theology, Angelicum N.B. The student must bring an **original** official transcript and present it to the Dean upon arrival at the Angelicum.

\_\_\_\_\_  
DSPT Registrar

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

3. **SECURE HOUSING.** Begin a process to secure a place to stay in Rome. You must have a **valid Rome address** in order to be eligible for a student visa.

Place of Residency in Rome \_\_\_\_\_

4. **INTERVIEW WITH GTU FINANCIAL AID OFFICER.** Submit to the Chief Financial Officer proof of health insurance, as well as any information relevant to your financial affairs which proves that you have the financial resources to pay for your study abroad, i.e all tuition, fees, room and board, and transportation to/from Italy. Obtain a written letter of testimony signed by the GTU Financial Aid Officer. **This testimonial must also contain spaces for countersignatures of the DSPT president, a bishop, and the apostolic nuncio for the United States.**

Student Health Coverage & Finances approved      Yes \_\_\_\_\_      No \_\_\_\_\_

5. **PAPERWORK FOR ACCEPTANCE.** Obtain the necessary letters of support and official acceptance to the Angelicum. Give to the DSPT director of admissions: a) letter to bishop; b) copy of passport and c) two SASE.

Letter to bishop; copy of passport and two SASE forwarded to DSPT president

\_\_\_\_\_

DSPT Director of Admissions

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Letter of support and other documentation sent to bishop

\_\_\_\_\_

DSPT President

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Documentation received by apostolic nuncio

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Application sent to Angelicum via FedEx

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

6. **OBTAIN STUDENT VISA.** Bring the necessary paperwork to the Italian consulate for obtaining the student visa.

7. **REGISTER for COURSES.** Meet with DSPT Registrar to register for 12 units of SRC 9999, or as otherwise specified by the Registrar.

Registration complete                      Yes \_\_\_\_\_                      No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DSPT Registrar

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

8. **CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW.** Upon arrival at the Angelicum, submit to the **DSPT** Academic Dean a list of proposed courses, for review and eligibility for credit transfer. Once approved by the DSPT Dean, *a new written petition must be submitted and reapproved should any changes be necessary. Failure to do so may mean coursework will not be approved for transfer to DSPT.*

Rome Coursework Approved                      Yes \_\_\_\_\_                      No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Academic Dean

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

9. **EXIT INTERVIEW WITH ACADEMIC DEAN.** Upon return from Rome to DSPT, bring the required items to the academic dean for final approval and placement in the student portfolio and student file in registrar's office.

- Course syllabi
- Course exams and paperwork
- Ten-page Reflection Essay
- Official Transcript from Angelicum

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Academic Dean

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Date