About Brandeis University
Brandeis University is a community of scholars and students united by their commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and its transmission from generation to generation. As a research university, Brandeis is dedicated to the advancement of the humanities, arts and social, natural and physical sciences. As a liberal arts college, Brandeis affirms the importance of a broad and critical education in enriching the lives of students and preparing them for full participation in a changing society, capable of promoting their own welfare, yet remaining deeply concerned about the welfare of others.

Partnerships
The program is a collaboration between Brandeis University and the Siena Art Institute.

Find Out More
For program fees, application deadlines and procedures, housing, FAQs and more, please visit us on the web. If you would like to speak with a program representative, please call the Office of Study Abroad.

Academic Excursions
During the program there will be an organized academic field trip to Florence and one-day trip to San Gimignano, as well as many other relevant site visits in and around Siena and the Tuscan region. These field trips are incorporated into the curriculum of both courses.

Student Life
Housing and Meals
Students will live in student apartments within the city of Siena and walking distance of the school. There are kitchens in the apartments and a number of food venues and grocery stores within a short walk. Some meals will be provided by the program during related activities and excursions.

Field Trips and Cultural Events
Students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of enriching field trips throughout Tuscany as well as in Italian cultural events within the area. The program appropriately ends just in time for one of Siena’s most exciting events: Palio di Siena. Students can stay on to witness this history horse race in the town’s central piazza, Piazza del Campo.

Computers and Library Access
The Siena Art Institute has its own computer facilities with internet access, but students are encouraged to bring their own laptops. The school also maintains its own library with essential reference works and limited volumes of primary source materials.

Program Dates
Mid-July – Mid-August

Eligibility
- Are in good academic and judicial standing at Brandeis University
- Have completed at least one year of college-level coursework at the time of the program start date
- Have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher
- No prior background in Fine Arts is required, however students are strongly encouraged to enroll in a Fine Arts course prior to departure
- Students with previous Fine Arts courses will be given first consideration

The admissions committee strives to accept students who are the best possible match for the program.

“This intensive program is designed to utilize the unique cultural and artistic contributions of Siena, Italy. Nestled in the beautiful hills of Tuscany, the program is a well-balanced mix of historical study, studio practice (traditional and contemporary), and field trips to visit masterworks and experience the cultural life of the medieval city. The goal of the program is not only to study the art of the past or practice it now, but also to connect through the language of art to another culture and offer reflection.”

– Professor Joseph Wardwell
Brandeis in Siena, 2015 Faculty Director
Applications are reviewed once spaces are filled on a rolling admissions deadline. Students are encouraged to apply well before this date as longer be reviewed.

Program Overview

The Brandeis in Siena program is a two-course intensive summer program combining Studio Art and Art History in Siena, Italy. The program is a culturally immersive, experiential learning experience where students will come in direct contact with master works of art seminal to the canon of art history and Western culture. This program focuses on art of the Renaissance, offering greater dimension and depth to the fields of Studio Art and Art History at Brandeis.

The English-taught courses are led by Brandeis University professors as well as faculty from our academic partner, the Siena Art Institute (SART). The Brandeis faculty within the Department of Fine Arts will teach their respective course in alternate years, while the other course is taught by SART.

Academics

The curriculum for the Brandeis in Siena summer program is a combination of studio experience, classroom coursework, and field trips to historic cultural sites in Tuscany. Students will study the context of Italian masterworks in the classroom, visit them in-person on field trips, and practice traditional techniques in the studio. Integration between the two courses and the field trips will give students a holistic understanding of this unique and culturally important environment. Hands-on program is designed to fully immerse students in the understanding of and creation of art and specifically painting. All aspects of this program will deepen students’ appreciation of art and can be incorporated into their own existing practice.

FA 28a Painting Siena

Prerequisite: One Fine Arts studio course. Explores the unique cultural and artistic contributions of Siena, Italy. Students will study and practice traditional and contemporary painting techniques with excursions to visit masterworks and experience the cultural life of the medieval city.

Course Credit

• Satisfies the Creative Arts requirement
• For Studio Art majors: Satisfies one of the four beginning/Intermediate painting and/or sculpture requirements
• For Art History majors: Satisfies one of two Studio Art requirements.

FA 45a Early Renaissance Art in Tuscany from the Age of Dante to the Medici

Examines the development of late Medieval and Renaissance Art and Architecture between 1200 and 1500, with an emphasis on the centers of Siena and Florence, and artists who worked in these cities.

Course Credit

• Satisfies the Creative Arts requirement
• For Art History majors: Satisfies the Renaissance/Baroque distribution, or elective
• For Studio Art majors: Satisfies one of the Renaissance to Modern Art History requirements
• For Italian Studies: Satisfies elective
• For Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Satisfies non-history elective

Academic Partner

The program is a collaboration between Brandeis University and the Siena Art Institute (SART), which will serve as students’ Italian cultural launching point. SART is located in the heart of Siena’s oldest neighborhood, Castelvecchio, which is perched on top of a hill with magnificent views of the surrounding area. Students will find anything they may need within a five-minute walk — food markets, restaurants, bars, shops, cafes, and of course, gelaterias and pizzerias!

The Siena Art Institute’s building dates from the 15th century, but the inside space is modern, bright, and airy with large windows and soaring ceilings. All students are assigned a shared studio space in rooms along the main corridor, and each artist is provided an area with shelves and tables as well as easels to suit his or her needs.

Faculty Leadership

Joseph Wardwell

Wardwell is currently an assistant professor of Fine Arts at Brandeis University. He received his MFA from Boston University, Boston, MA and his BFA from the University of Washington, Seattle, WA. He has exhibited at The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum and has work in each collection. He was a 2012 recipient of the Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant. In addition to numerous group exhibitions, he has held solo exhibitions in New York, Boston, and Seattle. His work is represented by LaMontagne Gallery, Boston, MA.

Jonathan Unglaub

Jonathan Unglaub (Ph.D., Columbia ’99) is Associate Professor of Fine Arts at Brandeis University. A primary area of research focus has been the art and larger literary culture of Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665), the founder of French Classicism, who worked in Rome. His scholarship on the painter includes two books, and numerous articles. Unglaub’s current research ranges across the 16th and 17th centuries in Italy, and includes studies on Caravaggio, Bernini, and Venetian Renaissance pastoral painting, as well as a book project on pictorial transitivity and Malamian symbolism in Raphael’s St. John the Baptist of Washington, Siena and other Renaissance images of the Incarnation. His scholarship and reviews have appeared in many venues, including the Art Bulletin, Burlington Magazine, Master Drawings, among others.

Applications are reviewed on a rolling admissions basis until the closing deadline. Students are encouraged to apply well before this date as once spaces are filled applications will no longer be reviewed.

Visit go.brandeis.edu/siena for more information on the application process.