



UNIVERSITÀ DI SIENA 1240  
RETTORE

Siena, August 2021

Dear students

As the summer break approaches, I would like to share with you some considerations on our recent past and on our determination to face the future, in the context of the current pandemic.

During the just-ended academic year, we faced together complex situations, resulting from the fluctuating evolution of the local and national epidemiological scenario. You have endured with great spirit of adaptation concrete logistical difficulties deriving from the succession of the different teaching solutions adopted.

We were - and we still are - convinced that the university experience is completely satisfied only if students can attend classrooms, and go to libraries, laboratories and study rooms. Therefore, we were committed to ensuring that your spaces were always available, respecting the legislation in force in each period of the year. We were able to do so counting on your sense of responsibility in strictly observing the security measures imposed, a collective behavior that allowed us to avoid the starting of outbreaks even when the virus was actively circulating. And, from your requests for the use of library services, study rooms and the desire to attend practical activities, we have understood how much you too desire to fully enjoy your university career through the direct contact with your fellow students, as well as with the teaching staff and with the tools of your training (books, equipment, samples, artifacts, etc...). The massive presence of students in the city even in times when classroom lessons could not be held in presence was the clear demonstration of the connection linking the University, its students and the city, a link that rests on human contacts and on the sharing of spaces, experiences, goals and dreams.

I wish to thank to you all who have chosen or will choose USiena for being part of this connection.

This is why it was wonderful to see our students celebrating their graduation again in June together with their families and friends in the lecture halls of the University, including the Aula Magna of the Rectorate.

The academic year that has just ended was marked by another fundamental turning point. The availability of those vaccines that represent our most effective weapon for contrasting the pandemic, and that science has managed to develop in an extraordinarily short time. In addition to being the most effective tool currently in our hands to definitively defeat covid-19, alongside the dedication of our healthcare personnel, the availability of vaccines ideally represents the victory of science. After all, the best demonstration that the efforts of researchers, as many of you dream of becoming, and the knowledge gained through research are the best ingredients for the growth of our society and the protection of our health. An enterprise to which the activities of universities are mainly dedicated in all research fields and which you too have implicitly joined at the time you chose to enroll.



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That is why I recommend that all of you join the vaccination program as soon as possible. Vaccination will protect yourselves and your loved ones, and will guarantee the country to get out of this tunnel as soon as possible.

In times when we talk about rights and freedoms, the simple gesture of vaccination is the best solution to regain the freedom that we have been missing so much for too long.

As already described in our webpages, USiena is taking steps to ensure the resumption of all traditional teaching activities in the classrooms, and to return to carry out exams and graduations in person. This will be done by implementing the same safety standards that, with your sense of responsibility, proved effective during the previous academic year. Counting on the same sense of responsibility, the full participation to the vaccination campaign will be decisive for everyone to return to feel those sensations that we have been missing for 18 months and that make the university experience unique and unforgettable.

I wish everyone a safe and pleasant summer break.

Prof. Francesco Frati  
Rector