

CET Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Siena

Course Title: Italian Cultural History

Course Code: ITTR2710

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Suggested Cross Listings: Sociology, History, Political Science, Italian Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites/Requirements: None



Description

This course introduces students to Italian society by examining the principal aspects of the country's contemporary culture from an historical perspective. Our primary goal is to consider how developments over the past century (and from a few early periods) have influenced the lives of, and formed the outlook of, today's Italians. In other words, we are engaged in the historical search for something quite elusive: Italian "identity." Two key concepts guide this search: nationalism and civic participation.

An overview of key moments in Italian history and key features of Italy's physical and human geography set the stage for this investigation. Following this, the course examines the making of a nation—from its unification in the 19th century through the creation of a cohesive social unit a hundred years later.

Questions about the role of the family, religion and demographic trends reveal the important developments of the Italian home. Civic participation and Italy's political life under both dictatorship and democracy are explored. The examination includes the effects of WWII and, later, global terrorism. The most famous representations of contemporary Italy—the items most associated with "made in Italy"—are also considered. The course concludes with a contrast of Italian and European attitudes as seen through the development of many European Union initiatives.

Objectives

Students acquire a significant understanding of contemporary Italy and the country's recent history, social developments and culture through a multi-disciplinary approach using methods from history, sociology, geography, cultural anthropology, social psychology and political science. The course also guides students in their own cross-cultural comparison of Italian and American attitudes and culture.

Course Requirements

In this course, class lectures are supported by readings and films (taking advantage of Italy's magnificent post-war cinema). Students read chapters from analytical and historical works, as well as selected representative fiction. Students also view three films. Class sessions devote time to discussion, in which students are expected to participate actively.

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The following are required of all students: regular attendance (including 3 film screening sessions), midterm and final examinations, two short papers and active participation in and contribution to all discussions. Examinations include essay questions and historically significant terms.

Students are expected to complete assigned readings prior to each class session. Reading assignments average 20 to 40 pages per class.

Methods of Evaluation

The final grade is determined as follows:

Attendance and Participation:	20%
Midterm Examination:	25%
Short Papers (2):	20%
Journal:	10%
Final Examination:	25%

Primary Texts

Textbooks

Forgacs, D & Lumley, R. *Italian Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

A course reader includes:

Allen B. and Russo M. (Eds), *Revisioning Italy. National Identity and Global Culture*. Minneapolis-London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997

Duggan, C. *A Concise History of Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Baranski & West. *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Dickie J. *Cosa Nostra*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2007.

Ginsborg, Paul, *A History of Contemporary Italy. 1943-1980*, London: Penguin Books, 1990.

Ginsborg, Paul. *Italy and its Discontents 1980-2001*. London: Penguin Books, 2001.

Steele, Valerie. *Fashion Italian Style*. Yale University Press, 2003

Robin Pickering-lazzi, *Mafia and Outlaw Stories from Italian Life and Literature*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2007

Khouma, Pap. "I Am an Elephant Salesman". In *Mediterranean Crossroads. Migration Literature in Italy*, Graziella Parati [ed.], London: Associated University Press, 1999.

Shego, Igiaba. "Sausages". In *Metamorphoses* 13.2 (Fall 2005), pp. 214-225

Wadia, Laila. "Chicken Curry". In *Metamorphoses* 14.1-2 (Spring and Fall 2006), pp. 150-157

Films (entire film or selected scenes):

Emanuele Crialesi, *Nuovomondo* (2007)

Gustav Hofer and Luca Ragazzi, *Italy Love It or Leave It* (2011)

Luca Miniero, *Benvenuti al sud* (2010)

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Marco Tullio Giordana, *I cento passi* (2000)
Matteo Garrone, *Gomorrah* (2008)
Marco Bellocchio, *Vincere* (2009)
Roberto Rossellini, *Roma città aperta* (1945)
Vittorio De Sica, *Ladri di biciclette* (1948)
Federico Fellini, *La dolce vita* (1959)
Dino Risi, *Il sorpasso* (1963)
Ettore Scola, *C'eravamo tanto amati* (1974)
Marco Bellocchio, *Good Morning, Night* (2003)
Gianni Amelio, *Colpire al cuore* (1982)

Outline of Course Content

Note: Students cover approximately one topic every two weeks.

TOPIC 1 – Introduction to the Nation

Background: Cultural History; Geography: land forms and regional variations; Identity: Ancient Past to the 19th Century; Overview: Italy—19th, 20th, 21st Centuries; Renaissance Florence; *Risorgimento*, Nationalism (then and now).

TOPIC 2 – Italian Identity

“Making Italy”, the Prospects and “Making Italians: the 20th Century”; Economic Miracle: 1950s and 1960s; The Southern Question; Immigration and Emigration.

TOPIC 3 – Southern Italy

The Southern Question and Organized Crime.

TOPIC 4 – Italian Identity at Home

Family, Demography, Religion.

TOPIC 5 – Participation in Civic Life and Politics

20th Century—Dictatorship to Democracy: Fascism, World War, Resistance, Liberation, and Regime Change. The Republic and its Constitution; Terrorism; 1st to 2nd Republic; Berlusconi.

TOPIC 6 – Italian Icons

Production and Consumption.

TOPIC 7 – Italy and Europe

Italians and Europeans. The European Union.