

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: CET Siena

Course Title: Contemporary Italian Literature

Course Code: ITAL 3120

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Italian Studies / Italian Language

Language of Instruction: Italian

Prerequisites/Requirements: Open to advanced learners of Italian (two years minimum or equivalent)

Description of the Course

This course provides an overview of recent trends in Italian literature, with particular attention to fiction writing in the last twenty years. The course focuses on textual analysis and interpretation, providing students with the opportunity for critical and linguistic reflection, and drawing on contemporary literary production to support and promote the acquisition of modern Italian language. Taught in Italian.

Course Objectives

- To introduce the main authors and works of contemporary Italian literature, focusing on the latest trends in the period roughly from 1994 to the present
- To analyze the relationships among works and authors, and the tensions between different themes and styles
- To suggest an overview of the last several decades of Italian society and culture through literature
- To improve students' familiarity with contemporary Italian language (comprehension and production) by increasing their knowledge of idioms and vocabulary.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing the course successfully, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a solid understanding of the most recent period in Italian literature and of current developments in the field
- Demonstrate good knowledge of the cultural situation (and its social circumstances) which characterizes the life of Italy today
- Evidence improved linguistic competency acquired through the study of recent works (broader vocabulary, use of more complex syntactic variances, and primary rhetorical models)
- Demonstrate an awareness of the literary function of language as compared to its spoken and everyday functions.

Course Requirements

Students must complete all reading assignments before coming to class. They are responsible for fully preparing to discuss the texts in class by noting and reviewing the grammar structures in the reading, as well as completing supplementary exercises that will reinforce syntactic constructions and new vocabulary encountered.

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The class is organized as follows: students' presentations of the readings (see details below), followed by paraphrasing and discussion of the text, which will focus on analysis of vocabulary, grammar and syntactic structures, rhetorical and literary figures, and the text's position in Italian literary history. Students are required to submit four writing assignments over the course of the term. Each writing assignment consists of a minimum of two typed pages and focuses on one of the main topics on which the course is structured (see details below). Assignments must be written in polished Italian and will be graded on both content and quality of written Italian.

Assessment of students' oral language skills derives from their in-class oral presentations (see *class presentations* below).

There is also a midterm and a final examination, each comprising both essay and questions about central themes and authors studied in the course.

Methods of Evaluation

Participation	10%
Class presentations	10%
Writing projects	40% (4 projects each worth 10%)
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%

Writing projects 40% (4 projects each worth 10%)

Each writing assignment (2-3 typed pages) will concern one of the four topics of the course. For each topic/writing project, students will choose one of the relevant books, and read an additional 5-6 page excerpt from that same book (beyond the excerpts already studied in class). The instructor will suggest the additional excerpt, and help the student understand it in the context of the required course readings. The writing assignment asks that the student treat/analyze the supplementary excerpt, expanding on reflections discussed in class.

Class presentations 10%

In order to encourage a consistent and informed participation in class, students are required to introduce each class meeting with a short oral presentation (about 10-15 minutes) based on reading assignments. Depending on the class enrollment, students will be responsible for 1-2 presentations for each topic over the course of the semester. Class presentations will be assessed in terms of oral speaking competence and understanding of readings.

Midterm exam 20% and Final exam 20%

Both exams will consist of some short questions about themes studied in the course + one short essay (in Italian) where students will be encouraged to connect these themes in a wider and/or deeper reflection.

Primary Texts

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Course reader

Outline of Course Content

Topic 1: Gli anni Novanta

Niccolò Ammaniti e i giovani "cannibali"

Fango; Ti prendo e ti porto via

Tiziano Scarpa, *Occhi sulla graticola*

Aldo Nove, *Il mondo dell'amore*

In addition, only in Spring/Fall: Il successo di Andrea Camilleri, *La forma dell'acqua*

Topic 2: Narrativa dei primi anni duemila: ritorno alla realtà?

Roberto Saviano, *Gomorra*

Il New Italian Epic e il collettivo Wu Ming

Luther Blissett, *Q*

In addition, only in Spring/Fall: Antonio Scurati, *Una storia romantica*

Topic 3: Un filo femminile?

Melania Mazzucco, *Vita*

Goliarda Sapienza, *L'arte della gioia*

Elena Ferrante, *L'amica geniale*

Jhumpa Lahiri, *Racconti per Internazionale*

In addition, only in Spring/Fall: Michela Murgia, *Accabadora*

Topic 4: Ultime tendenze

Rossana Campo, *Più forte di me*

Valeria Parrella, *Lo spazio bianco*

Silvia Avallone, *Acciaio*

Paolo Nori, *La banda del formaggio*

In addition, only in Spring/Fall: Paolo Giordano, *La solitudine dei numeri primi*