



SAS – SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

SCHOOL OF LIFE STUDIES AND HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY
DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN CULTURAL STUDIES
COURSE TITLE: CULTURAL INTRODUCTION TO ITALY
COURSE CODE: LSSOCI202; GSANCI202; LAAHCI202; ISISCI202
3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

The study of Italian culture helps the student to acquire a deep awareness of both cultural unity and regional diversity. This course is intended to provide students with an in-depth introduction to Italian culture and to broaden one's awareness and understanding of the role of cultural heritage in customs and lifestyles. Lectures will provide students with an organized, focused, and academic understanding of Italian history, art, architecture, food, religion, and culture. The course provides additional enrichment through basic notions of Italian language and terminology along with assigned readings and a final paper. On-site teaching is a significant part of this course and is aimed to provide the student with an incomparable experience of studying important sites of artistic architectural and social relevance in present-day Italy. Students are encouraged to observe the sites through active participation and to discuss their observations using specific and analytic social assessment skills. Florence only.

2. OBJECTIVES

This course is intended to provide students with an in-depth introduction to Florentine and Italian culture. Students will be encouraged to become active visitors and not passive observers, and to understand a culture beyond the stereotypes. We will begin by identifying the common stereotypes of Italians and Italian culture and revisit those stereotypes after being immersed for three weeks in Italian language and culture. The course will focus on several topics: culture, art history, enogastronomy and on relevant aspects of contemporary Italian culture and society, such as political and social changes that Italy is going through. Students should acquire a global understanding of history, traditions, and contemporary issues of Italian culture by the conclusion of the course. Upon completion of the course the students should:

- Analyze and describe how culture creates meaning for its members and how values are interpreted by visitors.
- Conduct a critical analysis of Italian culture and identify its key issues, themes, styles, and forms.
- Analyze Italian culture in his historical development and in the context of a globalized world.
- Experience that there are many "Italies" and understand the historical and geographical reasons for the cultural diversity of the Italian regions.
- Compare the diversity of cultural patterns and lifestyles in different contexts throughout class discussions.
- Describe how cultures are different according to the historical heritage of each region or area.
- Recognize how both verbal and non-verbal behavior is affected by history, geography and

- culture.
- Discover the relation between landscape, art and architecture in different contexts in Tuscany and Italy.
- Outline the cultural development of Tuscany and Italy including the development of tourism during the last century.
- Identify the fundamental features of Tuscan economy (i.e. wine and oil production, fishing industry, tourism, outdoor markets).
- Describe the geography of Italy and of Central Italy in particular.
- Examine and reflect how their points of views have changed through interaction in a multicultural environment and re-evaluate the components of personal worldview.
- Analyze and describe Italian Contemporary culture in relation to social and cultural trends, identity and citizenship, tradition and evolution of social norms and customs.
- Identify basic introductory phrases and vocabulary in Italian.
- Be able to engage in simple conversations and understand the meaning of key words of the Italian Culture.

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

- Mignone, Mario, *Italy Today: Facing the Challenges of the New Millennium*, Peter Lang, 2008.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

ABOUT ITALY AND ITALIANS

- Brucker, Gene A., *Renaissance Florence*, (University of California Press, 1983)
- Baranski, Zygmunt, *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2001)
- Bondanella, Peter, *A History of Italian Cinema* (Continuum, 2009)
- Brand, Peter, *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- Calcagno, Anne (ed.), *Italy* (Travelers Tales, 2001)
- Cunaccia, Cesare, *Tuscany Marvels* (Assouline, 2021)
- D'Epiro, Peter – Pinkowish, Mary Desmond, Sprezzatura, *50 ways Italian Genius shaped the World* (Anchor 2001)
- De Mauro, Tullio, *Linguistic Variety and Linguistic Minorities* (Oxford University Press, 1996)
- Duchartre, Pierre Louis, *The Italian Comedy* (Dover Publications, 1966)
- Duggan, Christopher, *A Concise History of Italy* (Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- Linda Falcone, *Italians Dance and I'm a Wallflower* (The Florentine Press, 2006)
- Field, Carol, *Hill Towns of Italy* (Chronicle Books, 1997)

- Field, Carol, *In Nonna's Kitchen* (Morrow Cookbooks, 1997)
- Forgacs, David & Lumley, Robert, *Italian Cultural Studies: an Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 1996)
- Ginsborg, Paul, *Italy and Its Discontents: Family, Civil Society, State* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2006)
- Ginsborg, Paul, *Silvio Berlusconi: Television, Power and Patrimony* (Verso, 2005)
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, *Italian Journey: 1786-1788* (Penguin Classics, 1992)
- Hibbert, Christopher, *The Rise and the Fall of the House of Medici* (Penguin Books, 1979)
- Holmes John, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Italy* (Oxford University Press, 2001)
- Hofmann, Paul, *That Fine Italian Hand* (Henry Holt, 1990)
- Jones, Tobias, *The Dark Heart of Italy* (Faber and Faber, 2003)
- Mc Adam, Alta, *The Blue Guide Florence* (Blue Guide; Ninth Edition edition, 2005)
- McCarthy, Mary, *The Stones of Florence* (Mariner Books, 2002)
- Munari, Bruno, *Speak Italian: The Fine Art of the Gesture* (Chronicle Books, 2005)
- Parks, Tim, *Italian Neighbors* (CCV, 2003)
- Parks Tim, *An Italian Education* (CCV, 2001)
- Pasquale, Maria, *How to Be Italian: Eat, Drink, Dress, Travel and Love La Dolce Vita* (Smith Street, 2021)
- Reeder, Linda, *Italy in the Modern World: Society, Culture and Identity* (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2019)
- Richards, Charles, *The New Italians* (Penguin Books Ltd, 1995)
- Severgnini, Beppe, *An Italian in America* (Rizzoli Intl Pubn 2001)
- Severgnini, Beppe, *Ciao America! An Italian Discovers the U.S.* (Broadway, 2003)
- Trease, Geoffrey, *The Grand Tour* (Yale University Press, 1991)

LITERATURE

- Calvino, Italo, *Fiabe Italiane* (Mondadori, 1993)
- Leavitt, David, *Florence, A Delicate Case* (Bloomsbury, 2002)
- Leavitt, David, Mark Mitchell, *In Maremma: Life and a House in Southern Tuscany* (Counterpoint LLC 2011)
- King, Ross, *Bookseller of Florence: The Story of the Manuscripts That Illuminated the Renaissance* (Vintage, 2021)
- Tomasi di Lampedusa, Giuseppe, *The Leopard* (Vintage, 2007)
- Twain, Mark, *The Innocents Abroad* (Wordsworth, 2010)

FOOD TRADITIONS

- Artusi, Pellegrino, *The Art of Eating Well* (Random House, 1996)
- Belfrage, Nicholas, *The Finest Wines of Tuscany and Central Italy: A Regional and Village Guide to the Best Wines and Their Producers* (Fine Wine Editions, 2009)
- Capatti, Alberto, Montanari, Massimo, *Italian Cuisine, A Cultural History* (Columbia University Press, 1999)
- Dickie, John, *Delizia! The Epic History of the Italians and their Food* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2007)
- Lazzaroni, Laura, *The New Cucina Italiana: What to Eat, What to Cook, and Who to Know in Italian Cuisine Today* (Rizzoli, 2021)

FLORENCE - ART AND ARCHITECTURE

- Borsook, Eve, *The Companion Guide to Florence* (Collins 1979)
- Goy, Richard, *Florence. The City and its Architecture* (Phaidon, 2002)
- Martucci, Roberto, Giovannetti, Bruno, *Florence* (Canal & Stamperia Editrice, 1997)

- Regione Toscana, *Tuscany, The Ways of the Medici* (1998)
- Trachtenberg, Martin, *Dominion of the Eye. Urbanism, Art and Power in Early Modern Florence* (Cambridge, 1997)

ADDITIONAL WEB RESOURCES:

Language:

<https://www.cyberitalian.com/>(drawings for visual learners)

Italian Hand Signals:

<http://www.eurocosm.com/Eurocosm/AppEC/Pdcd/Handsignals/HandsigsGB.asp>

News:

<http://www.rai.it> (RAI – Italian state television networks – in Italian)

<http://www.corriere.it/english/> (Corriere della Sera – in English)

<http://www.repubblica.it/> (La Repubblica – in Italian)

Tourism and Interest:

<http://www.giraitalia.it> (for researching travel and events throughout Italy)

<http://www.firenze.net> Firenze Net

<http://en.comune.fi.it> (Official Website of the City of Florence)

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it> (Websites of Florence Museums)

<http://www.theflorentine.net> (English Language Magazine)

LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/

BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it

THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: www.britishinstitute.it/en

6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

7. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

8. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated

by the instructor on the first day of class.

9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

10% Attendance

20% Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm exam, Field Learning Project (if applicable), Special/Research Project (if applicable)

20% Reflection Journal

10% Presentation

20% Final Exam

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

Absences are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

Participation: Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

The **Reflection Journal** counts for 20% of the final grade. Students are responsible for a weekly writing exercise based on their experience in Florence, observations about the city, the traditions etc. This should not be a travelogue or diary account, but rather a selection of specific subjects to write about in their journal. Each entry is 250 words. In addition, if a student's perspective of what they wrote in a past week changes, that could be the topic of a later entry and how their opinion changed.

The **Midterm** and **Final Exams** each count for 20% of the final course grade.

Format:

Part I: Multiple-choice questions worth 30 points.

Part II Short-answer questions worth 40 points.

Part III: Essay-based question worth 30 points.

The date and time of the exams cannot be changed for any reason.

The **Presentation** counts for 10% of the final course grade. This is a group presentation focusing on one specific topic related to the course and assigned by the Instructor. Each student should talk for about 5 minutes. The students are assessed for their accuracy, legibility of slides, and public speaking abilities.

12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Geography of Italy. Short history of Italy and Florence: Roman origins and initial ethnicities.
Language Component	Introductions and greetings. Countries and nationalities.
Objectives	Identify the key events and ethnicities at the base of the Italian history. Recognize the main geographical characteristics of Italy.
In-Class Activity	Discussion: Stereotypes about Italy and Italians.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>Preface</i> , pp. 1-11

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The Unification of Italy. The Southern Question: Emigration and social transformation. Florence is the capital
Language Component	Vocabulary: in a bar, in a restaurant.
Objectives	Identify the key events and dates of the Italian history from the Unification to recent times. Recognize the main issues related to the Southern Question. Identify the main changes in Florence during its role as Italian capital.
Visit	Visit Piazza della Repubblica, and its typical coffee shops.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>The Two Italies and the Southern Question</i> , 181-213 Assignment 1: Focus on one Italian region, learning about its main characteristics.

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The Second World War, the Liberation of Florence, the Birth of the Republic, and the Aftermath. The current Italian political system.

Language Component	Numbers: quantities and prices. Numbers and dates.
Objectives	Identify the main events of the Second World War. Understand the changes in Italian politics and society in second half of the 20th century. Recognize the basic pillars of the Italian political system.
In-Class Activity	Exercise: Find war-related memorials in Italy and explain their significance.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>Italians</i> , pp. 14-28

Lesson 4	
Meet	In class
Lecture	From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance in Florence: art, architecture, and heritage. History and legacy of the Medici family.
Language Component	Vocabulary: art and architecture. Italian verbs.
Objectives	Recognize the history of Medieval Florence and the subsequent period of the Renaissance. Identify the main art and architecture from the Renaissance in Florence. Apprehend the history and legacy of the Medici family.
Visit	Architectural walking tour in Florence to the most significant sites and buildings of the Renaissance.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: <i>Tuscany, The Ways of the Medici</i> , 3-35

Lesson 5	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Gastronomical tour of Italy: Food Culture in Italian Festivities. The role of food in Italy, from Pellegrino Artusi to contemporary cuisine. The Slow Food movement.
Language Component	Vocabulary: food and cooking.
Objectives	Analyze the relationship between Italians and their food. Recognize the significance of Artusi's kitchen book in identity-building. Identify the importance of local products in the Italian cuisine, and the rituals and the meaning of food in Italian traditions and celebrations. Identify the role of the Slow Food movement.
Visit	Traditional Florentine market.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: <i>Pellegrino Artusi and the Italian Unity in the Kitchen</i> . Assignment 2: Research a typical Florentine dish, its history, flavors, and significance.

Lesson 6	
Meet	In class
Lecture	History of the Italian Mafia: focus on Cosa Nostra.

	Italian Mafia in the world.
Language Component	Bodily language and gestures. Vocabulary: body parts.
Objectives	Learn about the formation and history of the main Italian mafia organizations. Discover and analyze the role of the Mafia power in contemporary Italy. Learn about the main characteristics of Cosa Nostra.
Visit	Via dei Georgofili, the place of a Mafia attack in 1993. Focus on impact and memorialization.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Paul Ginsborg, <i>Corruption and the Mafia</i> in Ginsborg, Paul, <i>Italy and Its Discontents: Family, Civil Society, State</i> , 2006 (pp. 179-212).

Lesson 7	
Meet	In class
Lecture	MIDTERM EXAM

Lesson 8	
	ACADEMIC BREAK

Lesson 9	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Economy 1: Made in Italy. “The Economic Miracle”: post-WWII boom in Italy.
Language Component	Vocabulary: Talking about jobs.
Objectives	Analyze the factors that led to the economic miracle and the role of Italy in the international economy. Learn about la Dolce Vita lifestyle. Identify the significance and characteristics of Made in Italy.
In-Class Activity	Discuss the distinctiveness of the Dolce Vita lifestyle.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>The Economic Recovery</i> , Ch. 5, pp. 131-156

Lesson 10	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Economy 2: the role of artisanship in Florence, from the ancient guilds to the contemporary city. Industrial change and social transformations in today’s Italy.
Language Component	Asking and giving directions.
Objectives	Learn about the Italian small family businesses and explain the effects of the globalization on this type of business. Identify the main types of arts that were protected by the ancient guilds. Recognize the main social transformations of contemporary Italy.
Visit	Oltrarno neighborhood, focus on artisans’ labs.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>Industrial Change and Social Transformation</i> , pp. 157-180 Assignment 3: research the work and mission of a Florentine artisan shop.

Lesson 11	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Italy and Florence in Italian cinema and literature. The ordinary life and sentiments of working-class people in Florence.
Language Component	Expressing opinions about a book or movie.
Objectives	Identify the main characteristics of modern Florentine and Italian cinema and literature. Gain knowledge about the life of working-class people in Florence.
In-Class Activity	Exercise: find excerpts of books and/or movies that describe Florence. Compare and share the findings in class.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>Cultural Modernization: Changes and Conflicts</i> , Ch. 13, pp. 347-372

Lesson 12	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The Italian identity through television, radio, newspapers, Internet.
Language Component	Vocabulary: free time.
Objectives	Analyze the Italian contemporary culture in the context of a globalized world. Identify the main historical events related to the media in Italy.
In-Class Activity	Exercise: find an ancient and a modern movie/tv series that describe Florence. Compare and share the findings in class.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>Communication Revolution and Cultural Consumption</i> , Ch.14, pp. 373-402 Excerpts from the website or RAI, Radiotelevisione Italiana. Assignment 4: review of a literature/cinema/theatre illustration focusing on Florence.

Lesson 13	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Italian family relations in Italian society. The Italian education system.
Language Component	Vocabulary: family ties.
Objectives	Identify the changes in the family relationships and the role of the family in contemporary Italian society. Identify the structure of the Italian education system.
In-Class Activity	Discussion about present-day Italy and comparisons with other countries.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>Democratizing the Educational System</i> , Ch. 9, pp. 235-262

Lesson 14	
Meet	In class

Lecture	Final Presentations. Final recap and discussion about stereotypes on Italian culture. Confirmations and changes in perspective.
Objectives	Be able to evaluate the main points of the course. Identify the changing patterns in ideas and ideologies as a result of the course.
In-Class Activity	Presentations, Q&A.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Mignone, <i>Conclusion</i> , Ch.16, pp. 427-434 Submit Reflection Journal and Presentations Slides. Submit FL Project (if applicable)

Lesson 15	
Meet	In class
Lecture	FINAL EXAM