

IT130 Italian Culture and Civilization
The Pennsylvania State University – Fall 2018¹

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Class Meetings:

Section 001: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:10AM – 11:00AM in 219 Hammond Building

Section 002: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 1:25PM-2:15PM in 359 Health and Human Development Building

Section 003: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 2:30PM-3:20PM in 207 Sackett Building

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 12:00PM-1:00PM; or by appointment.

Course Aims & Objectives

IT130 aims to allow students to explore some of the most influential examples of Italian literature, art, music, philosophy and film in their historical context, from antiquity to the present. Encounters with these expressions of another culture should encourage students to reflect critically on their own culture's values and assumptions, past and present.

By the end of the course, students are expected to:

- demonstrate a familiarity with the key moments, people, and products of Italian culture from antiquity to the present.
- develop a critical appreciation of the influence of Italian culture on Western civilization.
- recognize and articulate similarities and differences among international cultures
- identify and critically analyze diversity within Italian culture

(The course is taught in English. No previous knowledge of Italian culture is expected.)

Required Texts (available at bookstore)

- D'Epiro, Peter and Mary Desmond Pinkowish, *Sprezzatura: 50 Ways Italian Genius Shaped the World* (Anchor Books, 2001)
- Duggan, Christopher, *A Concise History of Italy*. (Cambridge University Press, 2014)
- Conaway Bondanella, Julia and Mark Musa. Eds. *The Italian Renaissance Reader*. (Penguin Books, 1987)
- Pirandello, Luigi. *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Trans. Eric Bentley. (Signet Classics, 1998)
- Additional readings and resources will be made available on Canvas.

Course Films (available through class screenings and on reserve at Pattee Media Library)

Vittorio De Sica, *Bicycle Thieves* (1948) Giuseppe Verdi / Willy Decker, *La Traviata* (2006)

Communication:

- Material will be posted on Canvas, and the primary form of communication will be through e-mail. You are responsible for checking your university e-mail account (or alternate account to which you have your webmail forwarded) for any correspondence between class meetings.
- Please contact me directly through Penn State's email at mje13@psu.edu. While announcements may be made to the class using Canvas, please **do not** simply reply to those messages.

Nota Bene: Cell phones must be on silent and in your backpack or purse during class. Phone calls and texting are absolutely not permitted. The use of computers for anything not related to the course activities is likewise prohibited. Failure to adhere to any of the above may result in you being asked to leave. One percentage point will be deducted from your final average for each occurrence. Disruptive behavior (i.e. talking privately with other students, reading newspapers or material for another class, sleeping, etc.) is subject to the same policy.

¹ My sincere thanks go to previous instructors of this course: much of the language, policies, and general structure of the course comes from syllabi for previous iterations of IT130.

Course Requirements: Your final grade will be calculated according to the following course components:

5 % - Discussion Questions

Starting in Week 2, students will submit 2 thoughtful discussion questions for each class meeting (excluding exam/presentation days). Questions are to be uploaded to Canvas no later than 11:00pm the night before the class period. Late submissions will not be considered for a grade.

- No discussion questions are due for exam, or final class presentation days. You may choose three “free days” during the semester for which to skip submission. (Students are therefore required to have 27 total submissions for the semester.)
- See guidelines on Canvas on how to formulate useful discussion questions, and their evaluation.

5% - Weekly Reflection Posts

Starting in Week 2, students will submit a reflection on Canvas relating to the readings, film/opera screenings (if applicable), and course discussions. Students will reflect and provide evidence on how their preparation and in-class participation has helped them in their process of meeting the course goals.

- You will receive more information on Canvas regarding expectations for these assignments.

20% - Quizzes

Starting in Week 2, students will complete – either weekly or bi-weekly -- an online quiz on Canvas, which will cover course readings and material discussed during class meetings. Quizzes will be posted on Friday and students will have until following Friday to complete that week’s quiz. Quiz questions will take a multiple choice or short response format.

- You may use readings, class notes, and other appropriate resources. Quizzes, however, **will be timed**. Students, therefore, must attend lectures and regularly prepare for class in order to complete these assessments in a satisfactory manner.

30% - Two In-Class Exams

Exam 1: Friday, 5 October

Exam 2: Wednesday, 14 November

There will be **no make-up exams**. Please make note of the dates accordingly.

- The exams will draw from material both in the readings and presented and discussed in class. The assessment may contain multiple choice, identification, short response, etc. This will not be an open book test: course notes, texts, computers, etc., will not be permitted during the examination.

10% - In-Class Essay / Textual Analysis: Friday, 19 October

There will be **no make-up in-class essays**. Please make note of the dates accordingly.

- The in-class essay will assess your ability to use the critical tools we will build in the class. Use of instructor-approved materials will be permitted during this assessment.

25% - Final Presentation (5% Presentation Proposal / 20% Presentation)

Students will complete a presentation that will demonstrate critical analysis of a topic relating to course content. This presentation must show evidence of reading beyond the required course texts. The objective of this project is to develop students’ research skills as well as the ability to critically explain and discuss various aspects of Italian culture. The topic of this presentation should not be something that we have directly covered in class. You are encouraged to develop this project throughout the semester. You will work in small groups and you will choose from a list of provided topics, or select your own in consultation with the instructor.

- Students must establish presentation groups no later than Friday, September 7, 5PM
- Deadline for submission of presentation topic for approval: Friday, October 12, 5PM
- Presentation Proposals (to be completed individually) are due on Friday, November 2, 5PM

You will receive more information on Canvas regarding Final Presentations.

5% - In-Class Reflection Essay: Friday, December 7

On the last day of class, you will write a short essay that will require critical reflection on content of student Final Presentation and/or our discussion on contemporary Italy. Students must attend all student presentations and class lectures in order to have the necessary critical tools to complete this reflection in a satisfactory manner.

-You will receive more information on Canvas regarding this course component.

Nota Bene:

While there is no formal **participation component** to the course, it is assumed that enrollment in IT130 constitutes a commitment to participate fully and actively.

At the most basic level, participation in this course assumes the following:

- Daily class attendance, unless you have good cause to be absent (see above).
- Preparation of course materials beforehand, intelligent participation in daily class activities, and regular review of material outside class.
- Courteous behavior at all times. You should arrive on time, and be prepared to remain in the room for the duration of the class.
- You are also expected to give your full attention to the activities of the course during the class hour, i.e. cell phones should be silenced (not on 'vibrate') and in your bag at all times. Similarly, it is unacceptable to read newspapers/other materials during the class hour. The use of tablets or computers for anything other than course related activities is prohibited. Failure to adhere to this may result in you being asked to leave. One percentage point will be deducted from your final average for each occurrence, regardless of whether or not you are asked to leave. Other disruptive behaviors (i.e. texting, talking privately with other students, sleeping, etc.) are subject to the same policy.

Grading Scale

A 100 – 95

A- 94.9 – 90

Student demonstrates an exemplary understanding of the material and concepts studied. Exemplary understanding is shown through depth of argument and analysis.

B+ 89.9 – 87.7

B 87.6 – 83.3

B- 83.2 – 80

Student demonstrates a thorough understanding of the material and concepts studied. A thorough understanding is shown through careful argument and clear analysis.

C+ 79.9 – 75

C 74.9 – 70

Student demonstrates a variable depth of understanding of the material and concepts studied. Argument and analysis is of a variable standard.

D 69.9 – 60

Student demonstrates a minimally acceptable depth of understanding of the material and concepts studied. Analysis and argument is weak.

F below 60

Student does not demonstrate an acceptable understanding of the material and concepts studied. There is little evidence of any depth of knowledge or analysis.

Late work is NOT accepted. No make-ups are given, except for:

- Participation in an officially documented, university related activity (official documentation must be presented to me as soon as the activity is known to the student and **no less than 7 days in advance**)
- A grave personal illness or emergency, officially documented and on record with the university. If you fall gravely ill, or have another emergency situation, please contact the office of Student Affairs and Family Services (814.863.1260). This documentation must be presented within 7 days of the absence. You are required to provide verification from University Health Services for significant prolonged illnesses or injuries resulting in absences from classes.

Note on course content: It is likely that we will read about and discuss sensitive topics in this course. Literary and artistic works can often present us with great beauty, and knowledge of history and exposure to diverse ideas can be illuminating. But the experience of widening our perspective can also be difficult, uncomfortable, and in some cases could potentially trigger a traumatic response. Please prepare yourselves for reading assignments/film screenings and class meetings accordingly. In order to fully meet the goals of this course, I will not provide content warning for individual texts/assignments. Furthermore, I fully expect all students to maintain an environment of respect, especially in discussions on potentially sensitive topics. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please meet with me during the first week of the semester.

Class Attendance: Academic Policies and Procedures for Undergraduate Students
(<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/welcome/illnessVerification/>)

The faculty, staff and other resources of the University are furnished for the education of students who attend the University. A class schedule is provided for students and faculty so that a reasonably orderly arrangement for instruction is facilitated. The fact that classes are scheduled is evidence that the faculty believes class instruction is important. Therefore, class attendance is important for the benefit of students.

A student should attend every class for which the student is scheduled and should be held responsible for all work covered in the courses taken. In each case, the instructor should decide when the class absence constitutes a danger to the student's scholastic attainment and should make this fact known to the student at once. A student whose irregular attendance causes him or her, in the judgment of the instructor, to become deficient scholastically, may run the risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower grade than the student might have secured had the student been in regular attendance.

Instructors shall provide, within reason, opportunity to make up work for students who miss class for regularly scheduled, University-approved curricular and extracurricular activities. However, if such trips are considered by the instructor to be hurting the student's scholastic performance, the instructor should present such evidence for necessary action to the head of the department in which the course is offered and to the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled or to the Division of Undergraduate Studies if the student is enrolled in that division.

Instructors should provide, within reason, opportunity to make up work for students who miss classes for other legitimate but unavoidable reasons. **Legitimate, unavoidable reasons are those such as illness, injury, family emergency. If an evaluative event will be missed due to an unavoidable absence, the student should contact the instructor as soon as the unavoidable absence is known to discuss ways to make up the work. An instructor might not consider an unavoidable absence legitimate if the student does not contact the instructor before the evaluative event. Students will be held responsible for using only legitimate, unavoidable reasons for requesting a make-up in the event of a missed class or evaluative event. Requests for missing class or an evaluative event due to reasons that are based on false claims may be considered violations of the policy on Academic Integrity (Policy 49-20).**

SIP Departmental Policy on Absences: You are required to provide verification from University Health Services or outside clinicians for significant prolonged illnesses or injuries resulting in absences from classes.

Course Accommodations:

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments, contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 814-863-1807(V/TTY). For further information regarding ODS, please visit the Office for Disability Services website at <http://equity.psu.edu/ods/>.

In order to receive consideration for course accommodations, you must contact ODS and provide documentation (see the documentation guidelines at <http://equity.psu.edu/ods/guidelines/documentation-guidelines>). If the documentation supports the need for academic adjustments, ODS will provide a letter identifying appropriate academic adjustments. Please share this letter and discuss the adjustments with your instructor **as early in the course as possible**. You must contact ODS and request academic adjustment letters **at the beginning** of each semester.

Counseling and Psychological Services

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Counseling and Psychological Services at University Park (CAPS)
(<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/>): 814-863-0395

Counseling and Psychological Services at Commonwealth Campuses (<http://senate.psu.edu/faculty/counseling-services-at-commonwealth-campuses/>)

Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400

Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

Educational Equity and Reporting Bias

Penn State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the Report Bias webpage (<http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/>).

Academic Integrity

Penn State defines academic integrity as "the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts" (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20).

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

Discussion of course material both in and out of the classroom is encouraged in IT130. However, any work submitted for a grade - whether written or oral - must be the result of the individual or the group's own effort and undertaking. Any sources, whether printed or electronic, used in research for the oral report, research project, or

class discussion must be properly cited. **That is, any idea which is not a student's own, whether paraphrased or quoted verbatim must give credit to the source from which it originated.** Should you have any questions as to what is acceptable, please speak to the instructor as soon as possible.
For further information, please consult: <http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism/tutorial>

Provisional Course Schedule

Especially IMPORTANT dates. COPY these NOW into your PLANNER / CALENDAR

Exams and In-Class Essays

(10/5) Exam 1: Friday, 5 October

(10/19) In-Class Essay/Textual Analysis: Friday, October 19

(11/14) Exam 2: Wednesday, 14 November

(12/7) In-Class Reflection Essay: Friday, 7 December

Presentation Dates and Deadlines

(9/7) Students must establish presentation groups no later than Friday, September 7, 5PM

(10/12) Deadline for submission of presentation topic for approval: Friday, October 12, 5PM

(11/2) Presentation Proposals (to be completed individually) are due on Friday, November 2, 5PM

(11/16, 11/26, 11/28, 11/30) Student Presentations in Class

The instructor may change this provisional schedule as needed. Appropriate notice will be given if changes are made.

Readings or assignments in the “Preparation” column are to be complete before the class meeting.

Week	Topic	Preparation
What is Italy?		
1	8/20 – Course Introduction: What is Italy? Why Study Italy?	---
Roma Caput Mundi		
	8/22 – Legendary Beginnings	-Livy, <i>History of Rome</i> (Canvas)
	8/24 – Legendary Beginnings	-Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> : Book I (Canvas)
2	8/27 – Republic and Empire	-Hearder, <i>Italy: A Short History</i> : pp. 1-37 (Canvas)
	8/29 – Republic and Empire	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 2 (“The Roman Republic”), Chapter 3 (“Julius Caesar”)
	8/31 – Roman Life	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 5 (“Master Builders”) -Virtual Tour of Rome 320 AD (Link on Canvas)
Medieval Italy		
3	9/3 – No Class	
	9/5 – Introduction to Medieval Italy; The Catholic Church	-Duggan: pp. 31-46 - <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 11 (“St. Francis”) Do informal internet research on the term <i>Weltanschauung</i> . Be prepared to discuss your understanding of this term in class today.
	9/7 – Dante	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 14 (“Dante’s incomparable <i>Comedy</i> ”) -Dante: <i>Inferno I</i> (Canvas)
Friday 9/7, 5pm – Deadline for establishing groups for final presentation.		

Week	Topic	Preparation
4	9/10 – Dante / Petrarch	-Dante: <i>Inferno V</i> (Canvas) - <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 16 (“Petrarch”)
	9/12 – Boccaccio	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 17 (“Boccaccio”) - Boccaccio: <i>Decameron</i> – “Preface,” “First Day, First Story” (In <i>Italian Renaissance Reader</i>)
	9/14 - Boccaccio	- Boccaccio: <i>Decameron</i> – “Second Day, Fifth Story” (In <i>Italian Renaissance Reader</i>)
Renaissance Italy		
5	9/17 – Introduction to Renaissance Italy	Duggan: pp. 46-65
	9/19 – Patrons of Renaissance Art: The Medici	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 19 (“Inventors of the Visual Language of the Renaissance”), Chapter 21 (“Cosimo and Lorenzo de Medici”);
	9/21 – Renaissance Art: Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 23 (“Leonardo da Vinci”), Chapter 26 (“Michelangelo”)
6	9/24 – Machiavelli	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 25 (“Machiavelli”) Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> (selections in <i>The Italian Renaissance Reader</i>)
	9/26 – Machiavelli: Debating <i>The Prince</i> Introduction to Castiglione	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 27 (“ <i>Sprezzatura</i> and Castiglione’s concept of the gentleman”)
	9/28 – Castiglione	-Castiglione, <i>The Book of the Courtier</i> (selections in <i>The Italian Renaissance Reader</i>)
Early Modern Italy		
7	10/1 – Reformation and Counter-Reformation Galileo and Modern Science	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 33 (“Galileo”) -Readings on Canvas
	10/3 – TBA	TBA
	10/5 (Friday) - EXAM 1	Continue preparation for Exam 1
8	10/8 – Introduction to Opera	- <i>Sprezzatura</i> : Chapter 32 (“Pari’s <i>Euridice</i> ”), Chapter 35 (“Claudio Monteverdi”)
	10/10 – Verdi’s <i>La Traviata</i> (Must see <i>La Traviata</i> before class)	-Must see <i>La Traviata</i> before Wednesday’s class; Readings on Canvas
	10/12 – Guest Lecture by Prof. John Champagne: Caravaggio	Look up basic biographical information on Caravaggio, as well as 3 of his paintings, on the internet. (Discussion questions should address this research.)
Friday 10/12, 5:00pm – deadline for SUBMISSION of topic for final presentation		
Risorgimento and Unification		
9	10/15 – Revolutionary Impulses: The National Question	Privitera and Di Scala: Readings on Canvas -Duggan: pp. 118-130
	10/17 – Imagining Italy I: Cavour, Garibaldi, Mazzini	-Duggan: pp. 130-143
	10/19 – (Friday) In-Class Essay / Textual Analysis	Prepare for In-Class Essay

Twentieth Century Italy		
<i>Italy and the Avant-garde</i>		
10	10/22 – Pirandello and Modernism	- <i>Six Characters in Search of an Author</i> , pp. 1-45 [Optional -- Duggan: 173 -191]
	10/24 – Pirandello Continued	<i>Six Characters in Search of an Author</i> , pp. 46-74 [Optional -- Duggan: pp. 191- 206]
	10/26 – Futurism: <i>Speed, War,</i> and <i>The Senses</i>	-Readings on Canvas
<i>Fascism, Resistance, and WWII</i>		
11	10/29 – The Rise of Fascism	Duggan: 207-234 -Readings on Canvas
	10/31 – What is Italian Fascism: Document Analysis	Review Previous Reading
	11/2 – World War II and the Italian Resistance	Duggan: 234-246
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 2, 5:00PM – DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PRESENTATION PROPOSAL		
<i>Cinema: Italian Neorealism and its Legacy</i>		
12	11/5 – Introduction to Italian Neorealism;	Duggan: pp. 246-257 -Bondanella, <i>Italian Cinema</i> (reading on Canvas)
	11/7 – De Sica’s <i>The Bicycle Thieves</i> . (Must see before class.)	*Must see <i>The Bicycle Thieves</i> before class.
	11/9 – The Cinematic Legacy of Neorealism	TBA: Readings on Canvas
Contemporary Italy		
13	11/12 - TBA	TBA
	11/14 (Wednesday) – EXAM 2	Continue preparation for Exam 2
	11/16 – Presentations	TBA
	11/18 - 11/24 : THANKSGIVING BREAK	Buone vacanze!
14	11/26 – Presentations	TBA
	11/28 – Presentations	TBA
	11/30 - Presentations	TBA
15	12/3 – TBA; Reflection on Presentations	TBA
	12/5 – Italy Today	--Amara Lakhous, <i>Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio</i> (Selections on Canvas) --Readings on Canvas
	12/7 – In-Class Reflection Essay	Grazie mille!