

IT 175 – Spring 2020
ITALIAN LANGUAGE & CULTURE FOR EMBEDDED EXPERIENCES ABROAD
Department of Spanish Italian & Portuguese
Pennsylvania State University
<http://sip.la.psu.edu>



Instructor: Jason Laine (jlaine@psu.edu)

Office: 131 Burrowes

Office hours: M 1:30-3:00pm & by appointment

Class materials – All required readings are available on Canvas

- Hooper, John. *The Italians*. New York: Penguin Books. 2015;
- Severgnini, Beppe. *La Bella Figura: A Field Guide to the Italian Mind*. New York: Broadway Books. 2007;
- Whittaker, Andrew, Ed. *Italy: be fluent in Italian life and culture*. London: Thorogood. 2010;
- Any additional materials distributed online

Recommended:

- *National Geographic Traveler, Italy*;
- Broad Travel Guide (e.g. Let's Go Italy, The Rough Guide to Italy, Lonely Planet Italy) & Regional Guide (e.g. previous series or Time Out, Rick Steves or Eyewitness);
- D'Epiro, Peter & Pinkowish, Mary Desmond. *Sprezzatura: 50 ways Italian genius shaped the world*. New York: Anchor Books. 2001;
- Duggan, Christopher. *A Concise History of Italy*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2013;
- Fili, Louise & Apatoff, Lise. *Italianissimo: The Quintessential Guide to What Italians do Best*. New York: The Little Bookroom. 2008.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *In Other Words*. Trans. Ann Goldstein. New York: Knopf 2016
- An Italian dictionary or familiarity with www.garzantilinguistica.it or www.wordreference.com;
- John Colaneri, Vincent Luciani, *501 Italian Verbs, Barron's Educational Series, Incorporated* 2001 or familiarity with www.italianverbs.com;
- Berlitz, *All in One Italian* or Similar audio program

Canvas MATERIALS – On a regular basis, course materials and assignments will be posted on Canvas and/or emailed to you. It is your responsibility to keep up with announcements made in class and updates to the Canvas page, including all posted materials and assignments.

Course Description and Objective – IT 175 (3 credits) is for students who have little or no knowledge of Italy's language and culture. This course is a co-requisite of BIOL 475 (Anatomy in Italy) and prepares students for the required, embedded Spring Break portion of the course. Properly preparing for an abroad experience helps students to fully exploit their time in the target culture, maximize their opportunity to leverage the study of anatomy while in Italy.

Students will be introduced to key Italian social and cultural issues, pragmatic information (for travelers, students, and residents of Italy) as well as essential vocabulary terms, phrases, and pronunciation. The course explores themes of cultural intelligence/sensitivity and proper behavior abroad.

Students are evaluated through class participation; in-class quizzes and simulated dialogues, written assignments and presentations. Equal time is dedicated to developing basic language skills and providing important cultural

information. Pronunciation, key vocabulary terms and scenario-based instruction form the basis of the language portion. Vocabulary sets include travel (emphasis on public transportation), cuisine (cafe and restaurant settings), navigation (using maps, giving/receiving directions), health (pharmacy and doctor's office settings) and shopping (open air market and boutique settings). These areas of content naturally overlap with cultural lessons as does learning to use formal and informal registers. Accordingly, cultural lessons deal with these topics as well as geography (including regional variations), history and safety.

Italy is the most popular study abroad destination among University Park students. Yet, many students arrive abroad with very limited or no knowledge of Italian language and contemporary culture. In addition to providing the students with a guided, intensive academic experience through the embedded Spring Break trip, this course intends to mitigate cultural shock, make students more capable abroad, and help Penn State students become better ambassadors of their university and country. Students will go abroad better prepared to interact with Italian culture and confront challenges, enriching and maximizing the rewards of their experience in Italy.

Prerequisite: none. *Co-requisite:* BIOL 475

Course Format – The course format is one of high participation and discussion. Your presence and preparation for every class period are expected. This course will be conducted in English and Italian. **You are responsible for all material covered in class, whether present or not.**

Attendance/Participation – Your active attendance and participation in every class session are expected. In the event you are unable to attend a class (due to official University excused absence with documentation), please contact the instructor **prior to the conclusion of the day's class** by e-mail at jlaine@psu.edu. With the exception of absences due to officially documented university-related activities or university-recognized religious observances, you should not miss class. Moreover, absence from class is NOT an excuse for the late submission of work. If an **evaluative event** will be missed due to an unavoidable absence, you should contact your instructor as soon as the unavoidable absence is known to discuss ways to make up the work. The instructor *might not consider an unavoidable absence legitimate if you do not contact the instructor beforehand*. 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 ([Policy 42-27](#)). 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](#)). **You are required to provide verification from University Health Services for significant prolonged illnesses or injuries resulting in absences from classes.**

Highest participation marks are earned by: 1) regularly volunteering during language activities and answering questions in class discussions; 2) sharing relevant (to course material) articles; 3) preparing and sharing assigned material in class; and 4) leading group discussions. **A students** almost never miss class, come having read all material and actively participate and contribute in every class. **B students** rarely miss class and come having read the material and participate and contribute regularly. **C students** adhere to the course attendance policy and may contribute here and there, but generally do not participate in class. **D grades** and below are reserved for students that miss many classes, have clearly not read course materials, or disrupt class with cell phone or other electronic device use, talking, sleeping, etc.

Participation & Preparation/Homework (40%) – *Active participation* (graded daily) in class is vital to your success in this course. Your contribution to a cooperative classroom atmosphere and the quality and quantity of your participation in class discussions and group activities will be evaluated. It will be graded based on your effort to discuss topics in the classroom, your daily preparation for class and completion of all homework assignments (including memorizing vocabulary). Homework may be collected and graded, or checked in class. In order to earn full credit, you must (1) submit your assignments on time; (2) respond to all items in the assignment; (3) be

thorough and, as needed, demonstrate critical thinking and self-reflection. Late homework assignments may not be accepted.

N.B. During the Spring Break experience, Italy is our classroom. This is an invaluable and unparalleled opportunity to immerse yourself in the language and culture emphasized in this course, to put the classroom content to immediate, practical use. You are expected to be prompt, engaged and thoughtful during all of the planned excursions, linguistic encounters and culture experiences. Participation that does not rise to this level will negatively impact your grade.

Dialogues (20%) – Your ability to correctly pronounce Italian and employ spoken language in the conversational scenarios emphasized in this course are essential to your ability to engage during cultural encounters in Italy. This portion of your grade will test your spoken Italian based on the pronunciation, vocabulary, attention to formality (when appropriate) and accurate communication skills you have learned in class. In preparation for these in-class assessments, you will prepare and record a short dialogue with a group of your classmates, assigned at random.

Deadlines

- **February 11: *Mangiare***
- **February 25: *Shopping***
- **April 7: *Indicazioni***

Journal (20%) – Throughout the semester you will maintain a journal of your observations and reflections from our class dialogues and discussions. Your entries will be a combination of your thoughtful considerations of class experiences as well as responses to directed prompts dealing with cultural inquiries. The spring break trip will make up a large portion of your entries and those observations will form the basis for your final presentation.

Deadlines

- **February 24: Pre-Departure**
- **March 23: Abroad**
- ***Due the day of your presentation: Reflections and Conclusions***

Final presentation (20%) – During the final three class meetings, students will make individual presentations drawing on cultural and linguistic knowledge experienced in Italy and gleaned from in-class dialogues and course readings. More details are available on Canvas.

Italian Resources at PSU – The Pattee Library has an extensive collection of Italian resources. Many good bilingual (English-Italian) and monolingual (Italian-Italian) dictionaries are located in the Reference Room (PC1640.A17 and following), and you can find numerous grammar books and other reference materials in the stacks (PC1412.M26 and following). At the Media and Music Center, on the 2nd floor of West Pattee, you will find many Italian DVDs. Browse the CAT by typing in “Italian Motion Pictures” to find titles of films.

Academic Integrity – In accordance with *PSU Senate Policy 49-20*, plagiarism, cheating, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor may lead to lowered course grades, failing the course, or more severe measures, depending on the gravity of the individual case according to the judgment of the Academic Integrity Committee. Visit <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html> for further information. For other general university policies regarding Academic Code of Conduct, please read <http://www.sa.psu.edu/ja/conduct.shtml>.

University Policy on Disabilities – Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for modifications or reasonable accommodations in this

course, you must contact the Office for Disability Services, ODS, located at 116 Boucke Building at 1-814-863-1807 (V/TTY) and provide documentation. 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. Many disabilities are not readily noticeable and students are therefore encouraged to identify their needs early in the semester so timely adaptations can be made. Please note you must contact ODS and request academic adjustment letters at the beginning of each semester. For further information regarding ODS please visit their web site at www.equity.psu.edu/ods.

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. For further information regarding CAPS please visit their web site at <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/>

Educational Equity/Report 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.

University Important Dates:

- Drop deadline: Saturday, January 18th at 11:59 p.m. (ET)
- Add deadline: Sunday, January 19th at 11:59 p.m. (ET)
- Late-drop deadline: Friday, April 10th at 11:59 p.m. (ET)
- Withdrawal deadline: Friday, May 1st at 5:00 p.m. (ET)

For other dates, see the university’s academic calendar: http://www.registrar.psu.edu/academic_calendar/spring20.cfm

Cell Phones – Cell phone use is prohibited in this class. Phones must be turned off or on silent during your time in class. Absolutely no text messaging is permitted during class. Cell phone use lowers your participation grade.

Grading Scale (based on departmental guidelines). There is **no curving** of grades in this course.

A 100 – 95	B+ 89.9 – 87.7	B- 83.2 – 80	C 74.9 – 70	F below 60
A- 94.9 – 90	B 87.6 – 83.3	C+ 79.9 – 75	D 69.9 – 60	

Contact your instructor immediately if anything pertaining to the course needs further clarification.

The topics and dates on the syllabus may vary slightly depending on the needs and interests of the class, as well as the availability of guest speakers. It is your responsibility to listen for any changes that may be announced in class and check Canvas & your webmail regularly for assignments

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE – ITALIAN 175

Date	Topic	Materials/Assessment
	JH = <i>The Italians</i> STC = <i>Italy: be fluent in Italian life and culture</i> BF = <i>Bella Figura</i>	
13-Jan	Course introduction; Numeri; Student introductions Pronunciation; alphabet; formal vs informal	
17-Jan	What do we know about Italian culture?	
20-Jan	No class: <i>MLK Holiday</i> – Online class assignment due 21 Jan	
24-Jan	Who are the Italians?	STC 1.3 / JH 26-30
29-Jan	Dr. Lauren Halberstadt: Health & Safety	STC 7.2 / Question Set #1
31-Jan	Mangiare e bere	
3-Feb	Al bar	Question Set #2 (Foods of Italy)
7-Feb	Al ristorante e alla tavola calda	
10-Feb	Fare la spesa	
14-Feb	Fare acquisti (Shopping)	Dialogue #1 / STC 5.2
17-Feb	L'Italia di oggi: Prof. Francesca Passerini	Current Events: Italy /
21-Feb	Fare acquisti (Shopping)	Question Set #3 JH Chapter 13 / BF 104-107
24-Feb	Mercato all'aperto	Question Set #4
28-Feb	Ethnography training	Dialogue #2
2-Mar	Pre-Departure Information	ANDIAMO IN ITALIA!!

Spring Break Embedded Experience: February 28- March 9

5-Mar	PM: Depart U.S.	
6-Mar	AM: Arrive Verona	<i>Fare aperitivo</i>
7/8-Mar	Excursions in Verona	<i>Walking Tour/ Shopping in Verona</i>
9-Mar	AM: Transfer to Bologna	<i>Meeting with U. Bologna Med Students</i>
10-Mar	Excursions in Bologna	<i>Meeting with U. Florence Students</i>
11-Mar	AM: Transfer to Florence	<i>Tavola Calda</i>
12/13-Mar	Excursions in Florence	
14-Mar	AM: Depart Florence for U.S.	
16-Mar	Debrief/Trip Highlights	
20-Mar		
23-Mar	Organized Crime in Italy	JH 227-36 / STC 8.3, 8.5
27-Mar	North v. South: Prof. Brunella Brizzi	JH 275-82 / Question Set #5
30-Mar	Geography of Italy; Indicazioni (Directions)	
3-Apr	In viaggio	

6-Apr Shopping in Italy
10-Apr Family & Health Care in Italy

JH 85-9
Dialogue #3 / JH 170-85 / BF 1-3

13-Apr Italian Cuisine
17-Apr

JH 96-103 / Question Set #6

20-Apr Final thoughts/conclusions
24-Apr Student presentations

JH 297-83 / BF 211-17
Question Set #7

27-Apr Student presentations
1-May