

Covid-19 Statement

Masking: Penn State University requires everyone to wear a face mask in all university buildings, including classrooms, regardless of vaccination status. **ALL STUDENTS MUST wear a mask appropriately (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) while you are indoors on campus.** This is to protect your health and safety as well as the health and safety of your classmates, instructor, and the university community. Anyone attending class without a mask will be asked to put one on or leave. Instructors may end class if anyone present refuses to appropriately wear a mask for the duration of class. Students who refuse to wear masks appropriately may face disciplinary action for Code of Conduct violations. If you feel you cannot wear a mask during class, please speak with your adviser immediately about your options for altering your schedule. Eating is not permitted during our class sessions, as it would be impossible to wear a mask appropriately while consuming food.

Class Modality: This class will meet **in person**. Class sessions will not be offered remotely, and the instructor will not post recordings of the lessons.

Illness: Students experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms should not attend class in person. Those students are strongly encouraged to contact a health care provider, and their instructor as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations.

Any updates to university guidance that affect this course will be communicated as soon as they are received by the course instructor.

Italian 485: Italian American Cultural Studies

Michael Edwards, PhD

Email: mje13@psu.edu

Class Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 12:05-1:20PM - Electrical Engineering West 105

Office Hours: by appointment, weekdays, via Zoom (24-hour notice required)

Course description: More than 5 million Italians left Italy for America in the latter half of the 19th century through the post-war period. IT485 looks at Italian American culture through its literary and cinematic representations to explore themes of identity, ethnicity, and heritage. We will look at why Italians left their newly unified nation for the often exploitative and harsh conditions of industrial America, and the cultural impact of this massive exodus on the American culture through generations. We will pay particular attention to the social, political, and economic factors that motivated the migration and how those elements shifted and changed over a century in a new American cultural landscape. Throughout the semester, we will discuss what it means to be an Italian American cultural artifact and how ethnic markers on literature, film and art function in the intellectual community.

Course Objectives:

- Recognize and identify the factors that characterize the difficult relationship between Northern and Southern Italy from 19thC to the early 20th C
- Trace the lasting consequences of the Southern Question on social movements within Italian American communities in the United States
- Identify the role of literature and film in the study of migrations, and discern central arguments from texts
- Strengthen critical writing and speaking skills in class discussions and written essays
- Interpret how gender and religion shape discussions of inclusion/exclusion in recent scholarship about Italian American ethnicity

Required texts/Films:

Puzio Mario, *The Fortunate Pilgrim* (1965)

Mazzucco, *Melania, Vita* (2006)

Covino, Peter, *Cut off the Ears of Winter* (2005)

Mann, Daniel, *The Rose Tattoo* (1955) – YouTube Rental (\$2.99)

Savoca, Nancy, *True Love* (1989) (Swank Streaming Service via Canvas – pending)

*Selected articles and film excerpts will be available on Canvas or engaged in class

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

20% Participation & Preparation: Your dedicated and continued participation is essential to this course. You are expected to have all materials thoroughly read. You are expected to take notes and come to class with questions, comments, points of interest and general thoughts about the material every class period. Fruitful discussion during class time is central to the success of this class, and, as such, you should be prepared to comment each period with thoughtful input. Excessive absence or tardiness minimal class input, disruption of class with cellphones, etc., will all negatively affect your final participation grade. I have a no cell phone policy in this class and you will need the text each day. Essentially, you should plan on adding to the class discussion each class period to do well in this requirement.

Attendance Policy: Each student is allowed two absences for minor illness, family events, etc. This is NOT an allowance for late submission of work. The student is responsible for the material covered on the day of the absence. Absences beyond this will incur 1% off the final grade for each absence or require documentation for one of the following: observance of a religious holy day, serious illness, university-sponsored activity, serious family emergency.

20% Quizzes: Three scheduled in-class quizzes on the readings and discussions.

15% Creative Project: Each student will work on a creative engagement with Mario Puzo's *The Fortunate Pilgrim*. Projects can include a creative text inspired by an original, video project, lesson or others. Project details will be established in a one-on-one meeting with me. Due February 17th. Guidelines on Canvas.

15% Short Writing Project on Melania Mazzucco's *Vita*. Students will write a brief three-page analytical paper on the novel. Due April 14th. Guidelines to be posted to Canvas.

15% Presentations: In pairs students will choose an example of a contemporary representation of Italian Americans in American popular media (film, television, videogames) and prepare a 20-minute class presentation that critically analyzes the choice. You will need to have a written bibliography of your scholarly sources to hand in. Guidelines to be posted to Canvas. Due Week 11 & 12.

15% Final Paper: Students will submit a 6-7 page critical paper that develops themes and questions from the course. It is strongly suggested that students meet with me to discuss. Due May 2nd. Guidelines to be posted on Canvas.

GRADING SCALE:

A 95-100	A- 90-94.9	B+ 87.7-89.9	B 83.3-87.6	B- 80-83.2
C+ 75-79.9	C 70-74.5	D 60-69.9	F below 60	

Penn State Learning – Free peer tutoring in Italian is available this semester at the Foreign Language Tutoring Center in 7 Sparks. Tutors for IT001, IT002 and IT003 are available without appointment Sunday through Thursday from 6-9pm. Texts and reference materials for Italian Language Courses are also kept on reserve at the tutoring center. Services begin Tuesday, January 16; visit <https://pennstatelearning.psu.edu/tutoring/french-and-italian> for more information.

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 Italian weekly magazines and many Italian DVDs. Browse the CAT by typing in “Italian Motion Pictures” to find titles of films. For additional information on Italian Resources at Penn State, please refer to the Canvas page for this course.

Academic Integrity – Academic dishonesty 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. 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. Suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. 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, a failing in 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://undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/G-9-academic-integrity.html> for further information. For other general university policies regarding Academic Code of Conduct, please read <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct/codeofconduct/>.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are to be turned off and stored before class begins. Professors reserve the right to penalize a student's final grade for continued cell phone interruptions (including sending and receiving text messages).

Laptops/Tablet Computers: Your instructor will provide information on the use of these tools specific to his/her classroom. Any use of laptops or tablet computers unrelated to coursework is prohibited and professors reserve the right to penalize a student's final grade for disregarding this policy.

University Policy on Disabilities – Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact [Student Disability Resources](#), located at 116 Boucke Building (814-863-1807), participate in an intake interview, and provide [documentation](#). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, SDR will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early 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 that you must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.*** For detailed information, please visit [Student Disability Resources](#) website.

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](#).

Provisional Calendar

Readings are to be prepared before the lesson unless otherwise noted.

If needed, course schedule will be adjusted; appropriate notice will be given.

Week 1#

Jan 11 Introduction to course

Jan 13 Canvas: "Negotiating the Hyphen" (DeLucia)

Week #2: 19th C Italy

Jan 18 Canvas: Verga "War of the Saints," "Malaria"

Jan 20 Canvas: Verga "Nedda"

Week #3: Disillusionment and Politics

Jan 25 In class viewing: Taviani, *Kaos* "The Other Son"

Jan 27 *Kaos* & Canvas: Pernicone, "Carlo Tresca"

Week #4: The Other Half

Feb 1 Canvas: Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*

Feb 3 In class screening: Scorsese, *ItalianAmerican*;
Quiz #1

Week #5: Pilgrimages

Feb 8 Mario Puzo, *The Fortunate Pilgrim*
(Chapters 1-7)

Feb 10 *Pilgrim* (Chapters 8-14)

Week #6: Hardships and Assimilation

Feb 15 *Pilgrim* (Chapter 15-end)

Feb 17 Presentation of creative projects, **Puzo**
Creative Project Due

Week #7: Prejudice, Labor & Gender

Feb 22 Canvas: Mary Bandiera "Sacco & Vanzetti in the Arts"

Feb 24 Daniel Mann, *The Rose Tattoo*

Week #8: 1950s Italian Americana

Mar 1 *Rose Tattoo* Discussion

Mar 3 **Quiz #2**

SPRING BREAK

Week #9: Assimilated Ethnics

Mar 15 Nancy Savoca, *True Love*

Mar 17 *True Love* discussion

Week #10: IT AM Cultural Representations

Mar 22 Presentations

Mar 24 Presentations

Week #11: IT AM Cultural Representations

Mar 29 Presentations

Mar 31 Presentations

Week #12: Recovering (from) the Past

Apr 5 Melania Mazzucco, *Vita* (Part I)

Apr 7 *Vita* (Part II)

Week #13: Hyphenated Identity

Apr 12 *Vita* (Part III)

Apr 14 Concluding discussion of *Vita*, **Mazzucco**
Project Due

Week #14: Poverty of Language

Apr 19 Peter Covino, *Cut off the Ears of Winter*

Apr 21 Covino

Week #15

Apr 26 **Quiz #3**

Apr 28 Final discussions, Paper presentations

***Final Paper Due Monday 2 May by 11:59p**