



CIEE Ferrara, Italy

Course name:	La Bella Vita: Italian Food, Culture, and Society
Course number:	ITST 3001 FEIT
Programs offering course:	Ferrara Language and Culture
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Fall 2019

Course Description

The course provides an introduction to the main aspects of contemporary Italy, from the 1950s to the present day, across a range of artistic media (e.g., movies, documentaries literature). The course material, which is presented thematically rather than strictly chronologically, exposes students to a wide variety of topics. Starting with the art of Italian cuisine, its distinctive features, and its multiple functions in contemporary culture, the materials offered in this course will briefly summarize the last years of WWII in Italy to explore the post-war modernization and industrialization of the country in the 1950s and 1960s; the call for radical changes in ethics and laws (Student and Women Movements in the late 1960s and 1970s); the role of the Catholic Church in the shaping of Italian culture and the relatively new addition of other religions like Islam, the internationally-recognized uniqueness of Italy in fashion; the impact of television on Italian society; the changes that the Italian model of family underwent between the 20th- and the 21st centuries, the latest phenomenon of the 'brain drain'. . The course also deals with some of the most controversial and unfortunate peculiarities of Italy nowadays, such as the corruption of politics and the power of organized crime.

Learning Goals

By the end of the course, students should develop an awareness of the major accomplishments, crucial themes, and relevant issues of contemporary Italian civilization. Students should demonstrate the ability to produce culturally informed analysis of the material presented in class, and effectively use critical thinking skills to identify the multiple factors involved in the developments of Italian community and society. Moreover, through the reading of informational texts and seminal literary works, the viewing of significant films and documentaries, frequent written assignments, and class discussion, students will gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the practices and the perspectives of a given culture.

Course Prerequisites

No specific prerequisites are necessary to attend this course.



Methods of Instruction

The methods of instruction will be the following: lectures, view of movies and documentaries, discussions, group work. Students will be constantly prompted to observe and reflect on the new culture they are experiencing and studying in relation to their own cultural background and personal experience in Italy. This approach aims at developing students' critical thinking and personal opinions as based on solid and productive in class discussions. Students will feel free to ask questions, express their opinions, and carefully listen to what their classmates have to say and report. It then goes without saying that class participation is crucial to do well in this course.

Online Resources

All required readings, slides, supplemental digital resources and additional information will be available online at Canvas.

Assessment and Final Grade

Oral presentation: 10%
Midterm exam: 25%
Final exam: 25%
Term paper: 15%
Class participation: 25%

Course Requirements

Oral Presentation

Each student is required to give a short (15 min.) class presentation. Students are responsible for providing a one-page summary/outline of their presentations to be distributed to the rest of the class on the day of the presentation. The date and topic of the oral presentation must be agreed upon with the instructor before the midterm exam (week 5). The topic of your presentation will be the same as the topic of your paper. You are required to hand in a copy of your secondary source to the instructor the week before your presentation takes place in order for him/her to read it.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will cover material from lectures, assigned readings, and films shown in class. The exam will consist of both short-answer questions and 1 essay question.



Final Exam

The final exam will cover material from lectures, assigned readings, and films shown in class. The exam will consist of both short-answer questions and 2 essay questions, and it will cover the material taught after the midterm exam.

Term Paper

In writing the paper (expected length: 1,500 words), you should make use of at least one secondary source. Late papers will be marked down one grade per workday late (e.g., after one day an A will become an A-). Papers marred by plagiarism will be given an F. Computer problems will not be accepted as a legitimate excuse for late submission. Hand-written papers will not be accepted.

The topic of your paper, which will be the same as that of the oral presentation, must be agreed upon with the instructor before the midterm exam (week 5). One month before the submission date, it is mandatory for you to meet and discuss *in greater detail* the topic of your paper with the instructor during office hours. You should bring your paper outline, as well as your thesis statement (one paragraph) and at least one secondary source (including the one used in the oral presentation)

Both a hard copy and a copy on disk of your paper should be handed in together with a copy of all the secondary sources used in your paper.

Class Participation

Readings must be completed before the class begins and you will be expected to be familiar with the content and able to answer questions on what you have read. Participation includes the following:

- Regular attendance
- Arriving to class on time
- Class behavior
- Maintain a respectful and appropriate posture and behavior in class
- Ask permission to leave the classroom
- Participation in class (i.e., making comments and asking questions on the assigned readings)
- In-class quick writes and quizzes
- Presentation project and discussion with instructor (mandatory)
- Paper outline and discussion with instructor (mandatory)
- You are expected to arrive to class on time.

A note about plagiarism

Plagiarism is unacceptable and illegal. In all CIEE courses, academic honesty is expected and required. It is your responsibility to make sure everything is cited properly. When unsure about how to properly cite an article, book, magazine or any other source, please ask the instructor for advice.



Weekly schedule

WEEK 1

Lesson 1 Introduction to the Course

Lesson 2 Italy: The Origins of Slow Food
Reading:
Excerpt from: Petrini, Carlo, 'Appetite and Thought,' in *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

WEEK 2

Lesson 3 Food, Culture, and Identity

Reading:
Excerpt from: Petrini, Carlo, 'In the Beginning, the Territory,' in *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

See instructor to discuss topic of oral presentation and paper

Lesson 4 The invention of Italian Cuisine

Reading:
Excerpt from: Capatti, A. & Montanari, M. 'The Italian Way of Eating,' in *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History*, 2003.

WEEK 3

Lesson 5 Before the end of WWII: Italy during the dictatorship and the Jewish presence in the cities.

Reading:
Bassani Giorgio 'One night in 1943', in *Within the Walls*, Penguin Edition, 1956.

Visit to the Jewish area

Lesson 6 Reconstructing Italy after WW2

Reading:
Harper, John L., 'Italy and the world since 1945' in McCarthy, Patrick (ed.), *Italy Since 1945, Short Oxford History of Italy*, Chapter 4, 2000, 97-101.



Viewing 1:
Ladri di biciclette – Vittorio De Sica (1948)

WEEK 4

Lesson 7 Modernizing Italy (1): The Economic Miracle

Reading:
Ginsborg, Paul, excerpts from 'The Economic Miracle, Rural Exodus, and Social Transformation 1958-1963' in *A History of Contemporary Italy 1943-1980*, London: Penguin, Chapter 7, 1990.

Viewing 2:
Rocco and his brothers – Luchino Visconti (1960)

See instructor to discuss topic of oral presentation and paper

Lesson 8 Modernizing Italy (2): Consumerism and the Industrial Society

Reading:
Pravadelli, Veronica. "Visconti's *Rocco and His Brothers*: Identity, Melodrama and the National Popular." *Annali di italianistica* 24 (2006): 233-46.

Calvino, Italo, (1963) 'Marcovaldo at the Supermarket', in *Marcovaldo or The Seasons in the City*, Harcourt, 2001, 84-89.

WEEK 5

Lesson 9 Radical Changes (1): The Student Movement

Reading:
Excerpt from: Ginsborg, Paul, 'The Era of Collective Action' in *A History of Contemporary Italy*, Chapter 9, 2000.

Deadline for discussing with instructor topic of oral presentation and paper

Lesson 10 MIDTERM EXAM

WEEK 6



Lesson 11 Radical Changes (2): Women's Rights

Reading:

Excerpt from: Allum, Percy, 'Italian Society Transformed' in McCarthy, Patrick ed.), *Italy Since 1945, Short Oxford History of Italy*, Chapter 1, 26-36, 2000.

Viewing 3:

Marazzi, Alina 'Vogliamo anche le rose' ('We want roses too', on Youtube with English subtitles), 2007.

WEEK 7

Lesson 12 Red Terrorism: '*Gli anni di piombo*' ("The Years of Lead")

Reading: Hof, Tobias, "The "Moro Affair" - left-wing terrorism and conspiracy in Italy in the late 1970s," *Historical Social Research* Vol. 38. 1., 2013, 129-141.

Viewing 4:

Buongiorno, notte (2003) by Marco Bellocchio

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Lesson 13 Videocracy: Understanding Berlusconi's Era

Viewing 5:

My way – The rise and Fall of Silvio Berlusconi, A documentary and an interview to former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi by Alan Friedman (on Netflix with English subtitles)

Reading:

Ginsborg, Paul, 'Consumption' in *Italy and Its Discontents 1980-2001*, 2001.

WEEK 8

Lesson 14 Organized Crime in Contemporary Times (1)

Viewing 6:

Excellent Cadavers (2005) by Marco Turco

Reading:



Excerpt from: Ginsborg, Paul, 'Corruption and the Mafia' in *Italy and Its Discontents 1980-2001*, Chapter 6, 2001.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Deadline for seeing instructor to discuss your paper outline and one-paragraph thesis statement. Bring at least one secondary source

Lesson 15 Organized Crime in Contemporary Times (2)

Viewing 7:
Gomorrah (2008) by Matteo Garrone

Reading:
Cilento, Fabrizio, 'Saviano, Garrone, *Gomorrah*: Neorealism and Noir in the Land of the Camorra' in *Fast Capitalism* 8.1, 2011.

WEEK 9

Lesson 16 Italy and Religion

Reading:
Garelli Franco 'The public relevance of the Church and Catholicism in Italy' in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, Vol. 12, Issue 1, 2007 (8-36).

Lesson 17 Italy and Religion

Reading:
Saint-Blancat Chantal and Schmidt di Fridberg Ottavia, 'Why are Mosques a problem? Local politics and fear of Islam in Northern Italy' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 5, 2005 (1083-1104)

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 10

Lesson 18 Fashion and Glamour, Italian Style

Reading:
Paulicelli, Eugenia, Fashion: narration and nation, in G. Barański Zygmunt and Rebecca J. West (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*, Chapter 14, 2001, 283 – 291.



Calabrese, Omar, *Italian Style. Forms of creativity*, Skira, 2006, 175-194.

Lesson 19 Exposing Decadence

Viewing:
Sorrentino Paolo, *The Great Beauty* (2013)

Reading:
Iannone Pasquale, 'Journey to the End of the Night' in *Sight&Sound*, 2015, 38-41.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 11

Lesson 20 Family, Italian style: How Italian family changed between the 20th- and 21st centuries.

Reading:
Blangiardo Gian Carlo, Rimoldi Stefania, 'Portraits of the Italian Family: Past, Present, and Future', in *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, Vol. 45, N. 2, 2014.

Della Zuanna G., Micheli G.A., 'The Banquet of Aeolus – A familistic interpretation of Italy's low fertility' in *Strong Family and Low Fertility: A Paradox?*, 2004, 105-125.

WEEK 12

Lesson 21 A Recent Phenomenon: Italian Brain Drain

Reading:
Becker Sascha O., Ichino Andrea, Peri Giovanni. 'How large is the "Brain Drain" from Italy?' in *Giornale degli Economisti e Annali di Economia*, Nuova Serie, Vol. 63 (Anno 117), N. 1, 2004 (1-32)

Galan Arturo and Agasisti, 'From Brain Drain to Knowledge Transfer: Experiences of Italian Academe' in *International Organization for Migration*, Vol. 52 (4) 2014 (60-63).

PAPER DUE



Lesson 22 FINAL EXAM

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bassani Giorgio 'One night in 1943', in *Within the Walls*, Penguin Edition, 1956.
- Becker Sascha O., Ichino Andrea, Peri Giovanni. 'How large is the "Brain Drain" from Italy?' in *Giornale degli Economisti e Annali di Economia*, Nuova Serie, Vol. 63 (Anno 117), N. 1, 2004 (1-32)
- Blangiardo Gian Carlo, Rimoldi Stefania, 'Portraits of the Italian Family: Past, Present, and Future', in *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, Vol. 45, N. 2, 2014.
- Calabrese, Omar (ed.), *Italian Style. Forms of Creativity*, Roma, Skira, 2006.
- Calvino, Italo, 2001 (1963), 'Marcovaldo at the Supermarket', in *Marcovaldo or The Seasons in the City*, Harcourt, pp. 84-89, 2001.
- Della Zuanna G., Micheli G.A., 'The Banquet of Aeolus – A familistic interpretation of Italy's low fertility' in *Strong Family and Low Fertility: A Paradox?*, 2004, 105-125.
- Galan Arturo and Agasisti, 'From Brain Drain to Knowledge Transfer: Experiences of Italian Academe' in *International Organization for Migration*, Vol. 52 (4) 2014 (60-63).
- Garelli Franco 'The public relevance of the Church and Catholicism in Italy' in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, Vol. 12, Issue 1, 2007 (8-36).
- Ginsborg, Paul, *A History of Contemporary Italy. Society and Politics: 1943-1980*, London: Penguin, 1990.
- 'Civil Society and Mass Culture', *Italy and Its Discontents 1980-2001*, London, Penguin, 2001.
- 'The Making of a Television Empire', in Silvio Berlusconi. *Television, Power, and Patrimony*, 28-56.
- Hof, Tobias, "The "Moro Affair" - left-wing terrorism and conspiracy in Italy in the late 1970s," *Historical Social Research* Vol. 38. 1., 2013, 129-141.
- Iannone, Pasquale (2013), 'Journey to the End of the Night' in *Sight&Sound*, 38-41.
- McCarthy, Patrick (ed.), *Italy Since 1945*, Short Oxford History of Italy, London, 2000.
- Petrini, Carlo, 'Appetite and Thought,' in *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.



Saint-Blancat Chantal and Schmidt di Fridberg Ottavia, 'Why are Mosques a problem? Local politics and fear of Islam in Northern Italy' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 5, 2005 (1083-1104)