

**ITA 3500 Italian Culture and Society**  
**Florida International University**  
**Department of Modern Languages**

**Days and Time** Tuesday and Thursday 2:00pm-3:15pm

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 11:00am-12:30pm DM 4 floor, Modern Language Dept., room 495C

**Course Description:**

When we think of Italy we think of culture: Italian historians, musicians, artists, architects and cinematographers have contributed significantly to the world thought, and during this course will see how Italy influenced other cultures around the world, in fact few cultures have contributed as much to the United States and to the world. Italians gave the name "America" (a tribute to the Florentine navigator Amerigo Vespucci) to Americans; created the first universities, law and medical schools, banks, and public libraries; taught diplomacy and manners to Europe; mapped the moon (in 1651); split the atom; produced the first modern histories, satires, and sonnets; invented the battery, barometer, radio, and thermometer; and bestowed on the world the eternal gift of music. We'll see how the Italian culture it's not monolithic and how it's the results of several subcultures within the Country and how culture and events in the rest of the world shaped the Italian culture. This course is for students who have completed four terms of Italian and/or have a good command of the language. This course aims at improving and perfecting the students' knowledge of Italy's contemporary culture and literature. In order to acquire the necessary knowledge of Italian culture and society, students will be exposed to present and past-day Italy through the selection of specific texts (newspaper articles, songs, poems, and passages from literary works) in the original language. **Please note that even if the readings for this course are in English, teaching as well as the Class Discussions will be in the target language.** The indispensable key to Italian culture is the Italian language, that is one of the languages from which almost everybody knows at least one word (mostly about food or music) and it quickly identifies a culture full of life and colour.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

This course exposes students to the Italian cultural identity through a series of norms, attitudes, values, beliefs and social practice.

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Explain several trends of the Italian culture
- Describe a variety of Italian cultural beliefs
- Explain cultural differences between Italian and Italo-Americans
- Determine which aspects of Italian culture influenced other cultures and vice versa

**Global Learning Course Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

- Students will be able to analyze how Italian culture and society interrelates with other cultures and societies around the world. (Global Awareness)
- Students will demonstrate the ability to develop a multi-perspective analysis of Italian culture and society. (Global Perspective)
- Students will be able to collaborate with diverse others to address open-ended questions concerning Italian culture and society in a global context. (Global Engagement)

**Active Learning Strategies:**

The Professor will engage students with different discussion topics involving Italian and Italo-American trends and traditions, and case study analysis through class discussion, and out-of-class assignments linked to the course weekly topics.

Students will participate in a number of activities including:

- Class Discussions
- Discussion Groups
- Socratic Circles
- Class Debates
- Power Point Presentations
- Video Production

**Grading Policy:**

- Class discussions, Presentations and Debates 20%
- Quizzes 15%
- Final Exam 15%
- Attendance\* 25%
- Team peer assessment 10%
- Video project\*\* 15%

**\* Attendance:**

**Regular attendance is mandatory. Students may be absent from class 3 times with no penalties. 2 points will be deducted per absence from the final grade for all other absences. Tardiness: For every 3 times you arrive late (10 minutes after the class starts) or leave early, it will count as 1 absence.**

**You are expected to participate in class activities and to try to speak Italian regardless of any mistakes you may make in the process. Errors are to be expected and taken as a natural part of language learning.**

**Mid Term and Final Exam:** Exams will be given on the day and hour scheduled in the Tentative Course Calendar. There will be no make-ups without a documented valid reason. It is your responsibility to be in class on the day of an exam. **NO make-ups are allowed unless you have a legitimate written excuse signed and dated from a reliable source regarding a personal or family emergency: i.e., doctor, hospital, accident report, family death notice, and /or court appearance.** An excuse from home is not acceptable.

**\*\*Video Project:** The project will take place towards the end of the semester. The project will be a presentation (VIDEO- if you don't have a video camera you can borrow it from the FIU audio visual material office) done in groups on an assigned topic on Italian culture previously discussed with your Professor. The topic must address one of the open-ended questions presented at the beginning of each session.

**Extra-credit Policy:** Each student may receive up to 5 points on the final course grade by choosing from the following assignments:

- 1) Watch at least 2 Italian movies during the International Film Festival (month of March);
- 2) Participate in at least 3 activities organized by the FIU Italian Club;

**Classroom Policies:**

- 1) **Cell phone, beepers and computers must be turned off before entering the classroom;**
- 2) Students are expected to conduct themselves properly with respect for the instructor, other students and themselves.
- 3) If you have to be absent, contact a classmate to share notes about what you missed in class.

**Grading scales:**

<b>A</b>	<b>100-94</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>76-74</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>93-90</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>73-70</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>89-87</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>69-67</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>86-84</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>66-64</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>83-80</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>63-60</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>79-77</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>59/Below</b>

## Course Readings Materials:

### *Session I*

Capatti, A., and Massimo Montanari, transl. by Aine O’Healy, *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003

Corbier, M. *The Broad Bean and the Moray: Social Hierarchies and Food in Rome*”, in: *Food - A Culinary History*, ed. J.F. Flandrin and M. Montanari (English edition by Albert Sonnenfeld), 128-140. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. Dickie, J.,

Flandrin, J.F. “*Introduction: The Early Modern Period*”, in: *Food— A Culinary History*, ed. J.F. Flandrin and M. Montanari (English edition by Albert Sonnenfeld), 349-373. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

Montanari, M., *The Culture of Food (The Making of Europe)*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

*Slow Food: The French Terroir Strategy, and Culinary Modernism. An Essay Review of Carlo Petrini*, trans. William McCuaig. *Slow Food: The Case for Taste* (New York: Columbia University Press). *Food, Culture, and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 7. 2. (2004), 133-144

### *Session II*

Jacquine Reich, *Beyond the Latin Lover: Marcello Mastroianni, Masculinity, and Italian Cinema*, Indiana university press, 2004

Foot, John. *The ‘Southern Question’: The Problem of Problems in Modern Italy*, New York: Palgrave, 2003

Small, Pauline, *Giordana’s I cento passi: renegotiating the Mafia code in New Cinemas*: *Journal of Contemporary Film* vol. 3(1)

### *Session III*

David Kimbell, *Italian Opera*, Cambridge University Press, 2012

### **Movies:**

*Marriage Italian Style*

*I 100 passi*

## Tentative Course Calendar

**SESSION I: Italy through Food.** During this first session that will last 4 weeks students will be exposed to an introduction of the history of food in Italy and how Italian food influenced the way of eating in other countries, especially the United States. We’ll see also how other countries influenced Italian food. We’ll approach the theme of food from different historical and sociological perspectives. We’ll read about the *Rosario study* and

how it impacted the health of the families living in US. Is Italy the leader of world's food trends and quality?

**Week I:**

Tu: Class Introduction and Syllabus

Th: "Once in Rome eat like a Roman"

Read before class: Corbier, 128-140

Learning Activity: Class debate

**Week II:**

Tu: The discovery of the new world, the discovery of the new food.

Read before class: Montanari, 98-107 and 133-140

Learning Activity: PP Presentation

Th: The Food Revolution of the 1700.

Read before class: Flandrin 349-373

Learning Activity: TBL fun quiz

**Week III:**

Tu: Food, Myth, and Italian Identity

Read before class: Capatti and Montanari 150-175

Class Discussion: Stereotypes of Italians and their food

Th: Italian-American Food and the Rosario study

Watch before class: The Italian American table on You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YptMyU2DC0I>

Learning Activity: Class Debate

**Week IV:**

Tu: Slow Food versus Fast Food. Italians EAT better!

Read before class: Carlo Petrini: 133-144

Learning Activity: PP Presentation

Th: Group Project Proposal Due

Quiz on the material presented during Session I

**SESSION II: Deconstructing Stereotypes.** This session will last 4 weeks. During the first week students will be exposed to the gender identity in Italy, during week 2 to the "Southern Question", during week 3 to the Italian "Question of the Language", and during week 4 to the Italian immigrants in USA and South America and to the North

African and East Europe immigrants in Italy. The Italian “Southern Question” is the aggregate of problems arising from the extreme economic, social, and cultural backwardness that characterized the historical development of southern Italy. The question as such was first identified in the 1870’s, after Italy’s unification. Whilst *La questione della lingua* is the grammarians attempts’ to confer upon the pronunciation, syntax, and vocabulary of 14th-century Tuscan the status of a central and classical Italian speech. It was not until the 19th century that the language spoken by educated Tuscans spread to become the language of a new nation. Can we really talk of Italian Culture and it would be more appropriate to say Italian Cultures?

### Week V:

Tu: The Italian Latin Lover.

Read before class: Jackeline Reich 12-32

Watch before class: Marriage Italian Style (movie in Italian w/ English subtitles)

Class debate on the movie

Th: Catholic Culture and the '60 Revolution.

Watch before class: In viaggio negli anni '60 on YouTube

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gbpa\\_-q7Fag](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gbpa_-q7Fag)

Learning Activity; PP Presentation

### Week VI:

Tu: The Nord-South Divide

Read before class: Foot, 150-158.

Th; Organized Crime, the Mafia Code, and the Godfather Myth

Watch before class: I 100 passi (movie in Italian w/ English subtitles)

Read before class: Small, 41-54.

Class discussion on the movie

### Week VII:

Tu: The Linguistic Varieties: Regional Dialects

In class students will watch two videos from You tube:

Italian dialects: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwerQt0yOAK>

Enrico Brignano e i dialetti di Italia: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHDJzCEmn-8>

Discussion will follow

Th: The Linguistic Minorities

Read before class: Minority Language Protection in Italy in

<http://www.jcer.net/index.php/jcer/article/viewFile/120/117>

Learning activity: TBL based on material read

### Week VIII:

Tu: The Italian Immigration in USA and South America

Watch before class: Storia dell'emigrazione italiana in YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Xd3J0OyHxw>

Watch before class: Italiani mercanti di profughi?

<http://inchieste.repubblica.it/it/repubblica/rep->

[it/2013/10/16/news/clandestini\\_il\\_grande\\_business\\_da\\_lampedusa\\_a\\_roma-68743833/](http://inchieste.repubblica.it/it/repubblica/rep-it/2013/10/16/news/clandestini_il_grande_business_da_lampedusa_a_roma-68743833/)

Class discussion about the videos.

Th: Quiz on the material presented on session 2

### **Week IX:**

### **SPRING BREAK**

**SESSION III: Contemporary Italy.** This last session will last 4 weeks. The session will provide students with an overview of Italian art, design, fashion, music, and global trends. Italy has 47 UNESCO World Heritage sites; a mark of the cultural and geographic richness of the nation. That is more than any other country and represents around 5% of the World Heritage list. Who is responsible for the up-keep of these sites? Only Italy or also other countries? With the world becoming more and more global every day, how can we define what it's Italian in terms of fashion, design and art?

### **Week X:**

Tu: Italy has more World Heritage Sites than any other country on earth.

In class students will discover the 40 UNESCO sites in Italy with an overview presented in PP based on <http://italiantourism.com/cosmo/unesco.pdf> **(part 1)**

Th: Italy has more World Heritage Sites than any other country on earth.

In class students will discover the 40 UNESCO sites in Italy with an overview presented in PP based on <http://italiantourism.com/cosmo/unesco.pdf> **(part 2)**

### **Week XI:**

Tu: The Italian Opera

Read before class: Kimbell, 403-448

In class watch 2 videos from YouTube:

Opera Aria Sung by Luciano Pavarotti

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8wQzTGKNoY>

Nessun Dorma w/ 3 Tenors

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNQeKvVPPlc>

Class discussion will follow

Th: Amore. The story of Italian American songs

Read before class: Mark Rotella, Farr and Strauss, 2010, 15-35

Learning activity: PP Presentation

**Week XII:**

Tu: The Italian Design

Watch before class the video on You Tube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qb0W7STW7Us> Italy Design World Centre: from the Linea Italiana to the Made in Italy

Learning activity: TBL based on material read

Th: A successful history of Italian design: La Ferrari

In class students will watch the YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9P23NmngXlk> Ferrari la storia infinita

Class discussion will follow

**Week XIII**

Tu: Italian Fashion

Read before class: Rosita Levi Pisetsky, *Il costume e la moda nella societa' italiana*, Einaudi, 1995, 18-35

Class discussion

Th: Quiz on the material presented in Session III

**Week XIV**

Tu: Project Presentations

Th: Project Presentations

**Week XV**

Tu: Project Presentations

Th: Review for Final Exam

**Week XVI**

**FINAL**