



ITL 412 - THE IDEA OF ITALY IN LITERATURE: Romanticism and romanticisms, 1819-2019

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Mon. / Wed. 9:30 – 10:50

**Office hours (Mon/Wed/10:30-11:30 or by appointment/ CSUIP
Florence library or email or via skype in the evenings, Fridays or
weekends—I'm Lee.Foust in Florence, Italy)**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce students to literature (poems, short stories, and novels) set in Italy written in different languages as a critical jumping-off point from which to study Italian identity from various outside perspectives. We will read texts by British, America, and one German author, compare and contrast their textual expressions of Italy and Italianess across two centuries of Anglo-European literature in order to assess our own assumptions and impressions of the country's national character as well as its greater symbolic significance. I hope that this will foster reactions, questions, and engagement for our in-class discussions and provide us with the opportunity to achieve a deeper understanding of the complexities of a national identity as well as the many literary strategies, genres, and individual works that we will experience as we proceed.

CSU GE Category: C4 or C elective

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Our objectives will be three-fold: Primarily we will focus on the texts' evocation of place and national character, gaining a familiarity with primarily Anglo-American views of the land and people of Italy across two hundred years of literary works. Secondly, we will enrich our general knowledge of literary forms, strategies, and genres by reading both short stories and novels from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Lastly, beyond simply digesting this material in your written work, I would like to invite students to work on their rhetorical and essay-writing skills by inviting you to rewrite your papers based on my constructive criticisms and comments. Combing these three-fold objectives, the measurable objective of

this course will be to make its students more competent in writing a coherent and knowledgeable critical essay on any aspect of literature set in and invoking Italy and Italianess.

LEARNINGS OUTCOMES

We will familiarize ourselves with literature set in Italy—its authors, their works, and the various textual strategies that the literary movements that they represent employed. We will also increase our knowledge of Italian history and social mores (and its relationship to other nations as well, including our own) through the events described in the texts. Lastly, students will become more proficient in their rhetorical and essay writing skills through practice and editing feedback.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Beyond the completion of the requisite reading and participation in the class discussions, you will be expected to write two papers during the course of the semester and to give a brief oral report on a topic of your own choosing from those listed in the calendar below. The written work will consist of two 5-7 page papers that either closely examine one of the novels, stories, or poems that we study or examines trends you have isolated in two or more texts, explores an applicable novel outside of our reading list, or examines a current of literary criticism, a sub-genre, or a historical topic related to twentieth-century Italian literature. These papers will spring directly from our class discussions I hope and will be due no later than one week after we have finished discussing the novel or poem upon which you choose to write. The due dates of these papers are marked on the syllabus with a 📅. All papers are absolutely due no later than the final exam class period.

COURSE METHOD AND STRUCTURE

I do not believe that I (or anyone else) can coerce or cajole anyone into "learning." Rather I believe that intellectual progress is made through the sharing and discussion of reactions and interpretations. Therefore this course will be conducted as a seminar and be totally dependent upon your individual contributions and courtesy. Obviously, then, it is absolutely necessary that each of you take control of your own education not only for your own sakes, but also in accordance with your responsibility to the rest of those participating in this course. You must both keep **up with the reading and begin the process of digesting the material by coming to class with something either to say or ask about it. I strongly recommend that you take notes while reading with both questions and observations and that you come to class prepared to challenge and/or benefit from the group's discussion.** You cannot depend on me to lecture on material that you have not read, nor will I accept the role of monitor for your reading or policeman for discourtesy to the class during the discussions. Concerns of this kind should be voiced and dealt with by the community during the class sessions. Remember that I am only one in a group of people here to explore and learn from this very interesting group of texts. That said, I am extremely available both in class and out to offer my expertise and experience to help you digest and write about this material. (I also have a lot of experience living, studying, and now teaching here in Florence and I offer a sympathetic ear to culture shock concerns as well.) Aside from my official office hours I'm always available for private conferences and very open during the in-class discussions to address both our method and the material of our study if the group as a whole is in agreement as to the utility and feasibility of changing

them. All of this is said and done to clarify from the start my particular approach based on the assumption that we are each mutually dependent individuals demanding of respect and ultimately responsible for our own intellectual progress and to allow the greatest flexibility in our proceeding so that the most appropriate and useful materials and methods are addressed in this course.

REQUIRED READING

☞ = Texts provided by in a photocopy packet to be found at **Copisteria X**, Via San Gallo No 72r. Tel: 055/215367.

The three novels have been ordered at the Paperback Exchange (Via delle Oche 4R) but may also be found in other bookstores and/or libraries in Florence or mail order through Amazon, The Book Depository in the UK, and many others. They Are:

E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View* (1908)
Wolfgang Koeppen, *Death in Rome* (1954)
Jess Walter, *Beautiful ruins* (2012)
Jessie Chaffee, *Florence in Ecstasy* (2017)

There are no course costs other than the book(s) and the photocopy packet.

CALENDAR

Feb 25 **Course Introduction**

Feb 27 **Gothic Italy**

John Polidori, "The Vampyre" (1819) ☞
Oral Report: The Romantics telling ghost stories at Villa Diodati.

March 4 Edgar Allan Poe, "The Oval Portrait" (1842) & "The Assniation" (1835) ☞
Oral Report: Anne Radcliffe and English Gothic literature set in Italy.

March 6 Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844) ☞
Oral Report: Nathaniel Hawthorne's Italy.

March 11 Henry James, "The Last of the Valerii" (1874) 4
Oral Report: Henry James' Italy.

March 13 F. Marion Crawford, "For the Blood Is the Life" (Written 1900, published 1911) 4
Oral Report: The Crawfords and Expatriot/Immigrant Lit.

March 18 **Paper Writing Guidelines**

March 20 **Sensual Italy**

E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View* (1908) (chapters 1-7)
Oral Report: E. M. Forster

March 25 E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View* (1908) (chapters 8-15)
(Gothic papers due)

Oral Report: Italy and travel writing (choose a specific time period: the grand tour, 19th century, or contemporary.)

- March 27 E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View* (1908) (chapters 16-20)
Oral Report: Open topic.
- April 1 Edith Wharton, "Roman Fever" (1934) 📖
Oral Report: Edith Wharton's Italy.
- April 3 **Political Italy**
Wolfgang Koeppen, *Death in Rome* (1954) (pp. 1-68)
Oral Report: Wolfgang Koeppen
- April 8 Wolfgang Koeppen, *Death in Rome* (1954) (pp. 68-133)
Oral Report: Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*
(Forster papers due)
- April 10 Wolfgang Koeppen, *Death in Rome* (1954) (pp. 133-end)
Oral Report: Hemingway's *Across the River and into the Trees*
("Roman Fever" papers due)
- April 15 Make-up day—general discussion.
- April 17 **Cinematic Italy**
Jess Walter, *Beautiful ruins* (2012)
Oral Report: Jess Walter
- April 19 -28 **Spring Break. CSU Closed.**
- April 29 Jess Walter, *Beautiful ruins* (2012)
Oral Report: Cinecittà and Italian cinema.
- May 1 **International workers' Day—National Holiday – CSU closed.
No classes.**
- May 6 Jess Walter, *Beautiful ruins* (2012)
Oral Report: Open topic.
- May 8 Jess Walter, *Beautiful ruins* (2012)
Oral Report: Open topic.
- May 13 **Contemporary Italy**
Jessie Chaffee, *Florence in Ecstasy* (2017) (Chapters 1-8)
Oral Report: Jessie Chaffey.
- May 15 Jessie Chaffee, *Florence in Ecstasy* cont. (Chapters 9-14)
Oral Report: Medieval female saints and eating disorders.
- May 20 Jessie Chaffee, *Florence in Ecstasy* cont. (chapters 15-22)
Oral Report: Graves, Youcenar and ancient Rome in modern literature.
- May 22 Make-up day / Final Paper tutoring

Finals week: **Final Papers and re-writes due** (Exact day and time TBA)

Grades and Exams

Your grade will be determined by the following assignments:
(select and list the ones applicable to your course)

- Paper 40% with consideration for re-writes
- Paper 40% with consideration for re-writes
- Class participation 20%

100-94	A
93-90	A-
89-88	B+
87-83	B
82-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-73	C
72-69	C-
68-67	D+
66-63	D
62-60	D-
59 and below	F

***A** Student performance has been outstanding and indicates an exceptional degree of academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements*

***B** Student performance has been at a high level and indicates solid academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements*

***C** Student performance has been adequate and indicates satisfactory academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements*

***D** Student performance has been less than adequate and indicates deficiencies in meeting the learning outcomes and/or course requirements*

***F** Student performance has been unacceptable and indicates a failure to meet the learning outcomes and/or course requirements*

The + and - symbols will be used for grading (except for A+). Specific information about the paper, exams and other projects will be given to you during the semester.

You must complete all work assigned in the course to pass the class (**optional**).

Class Code of Conduct

Activities unrelated to the course (including private conversations, emailing, text messaging, reading, web surfing, etc.) are not permitted during class time. Please turn off or put all electronic devices on silent mode prior to the beginning of the class.

Academic Dishonesty Will Not Be Tolerated.

Any form of plagiarism or cheating may result in a failing final grade in the course and might be reported to IP and your campus. You are better off spending your

time studying for the class. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please refer to the student handbook and catalog of your campus and also ask me and/ or the Resident Director for more information.

Attendance

General Attendance Policy 2018-19 (for classes that meet twice a week)

Attendance to all CSU courses is mandatory. Two unexcused absences are allowed during the semester but more than two unexcused absences will lower your grade (excused absences will be accepted for serious medical reasons or emergencies) as follows: 3 unexcused absences, lowers one letter grade; 4 unexcused absences, lowers two letter grades; 5 unexcused absences, lowers 3 letter grades. More than **five unexcused absences could result in failure of the course.**

In order not to disrupt the class, punctuality is required. Students are expected to be in class at the beginning of the class hour; any delay exceeding **five** minutes will be considered an absence.

Dates of mid-term and final exams **can not** be changed for individual travel plans or personal needs. Students should take note of the dates and hours of the midterm and final exams and plan their trips after the last exam. It is important to inform friends and relatives about these exam dates so that no tickets are purchased for you that will interfere with these exam dates. **Missing the midterm or the final exam could result in failure of the course.**

During the academic year photocopies and other material may be distributed in class by the instructors. Students who were not in class are responsible for getting the material from their classmates and making their own photocopies.

Other class policies:

Use of the computer in class is restricted to oral presentations, unless previously approved by the professor.

Eating is **NOT** allowed in class.

Cellular phones must be **turned off** or placed on **silent mode** during class.

Important: Exams

You must attend all exams and quizzes as scheduled. Make-up exams are given only for valid reasons. Please check your academic calendar **BEFORE** you book trips, flights and hotels.

Copyright and Privacy Laws

No portion of the texts, films, videos, and other material used in this course can be reproduced in any format including scanning, electronic downloading or sharing of files.

In addition, no portion of class lectures, discussions, and activities can be reproduced and used any format, including electronic, without the written consent of the instructor and/or guest speakers.

Changes—Important

Information contained in this syllabus, including the class calendar, other than that mandated by the University, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

