

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
CSU Virtual International Program

ITL 415 - ITALY IMAGINED IN WORLD LITERATURE:
Romanticism and romanticisms, 1819-2019

Spring Semester VIP 2020

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Wed. 7:15 – 8:15 pm (Italy time – through March 27)

Wed. 8:15 – 9:15 pm (Italy time, as of March 30)

Office hours (by appointment via skype or Zoom Monday, Friday or Weekend evenings (my time) or immediately after our class sessions on Wednesdays—for Skype I'm Lee.Foust in Florence, Italy)

3 CSU Semester Units

California State University, Florence~Via G. Leopardi, 12, 50121 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

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)

Daša Drindić, *Trieste* (2007)

Jessie Chaffee, *Florence in Ecstasy* (2017)

There are no course costs other than the books and the photocopy packet.

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.

LEARNING 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. Combining 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.

LEARNING 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 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.) Though I have no 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.

General Course Requirements

You are responsible for the weekly readings, the information given to you in class, on handouts **and via email**. Part of your grade will be determined by regular attendance, participation in class discussions and active engagement in all activities of this course. ***Make sure to check your email on a regular basis for updates and additional information.***

Grades and Exams

Your grade will be determined by the following assignments:

Paper 45%

Paper 45%

Class participation 5%

Class presentation 5%

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

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 order to pass the class.*

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)**.

VERY IMPORTANT: Failure to complete all work and exams assigned in the course could result in failure of the class.

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.

Students with Disabilities

Upon identifying yourself to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluations. For more information, contact the Resident Director.

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.

General Attendance Policy 2019-2020

For on-line classes, the teacher will track attendance through the Canvas portal.

CALENDAR

Feb 24 **Course Introduction** (in Florence)

Feb 26 **Gothic Italy** (in Florence)
John Polidori, "The Vampyre" (1819) 📖

March 2 (in Florence) Edgar Allan Poe, "The Oval Portrait" (1842) & "The Assigantion" (1835) 📖

March 4 (in Florence) Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844) 📖

March 9-11 **Classes suspended.**

ON-LINE CLASSES BEGIN:

March 18 Henry James, "The Last of the Valerii" (1874) 📖

March 25 F. Marion Crawford, "For the Blood Is the Life" (Written 1900, published 1911) 📖

April 1 **Sensual Italy**
E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View* (1908) (chapters 1-15)
(Gothic papers due)

April 8 E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View* (1908) (chapters 16-20)

April 15 Edith Wharton, "Roman Fever" (1934) 📖

April 22 **Political Italy**
Daša Drindić, *Trieste* (2007) (pp. 1-140)

April 29 Daša Drindić, *Trieste* (2007) cont. (pp. 141-244)
(Forster papers due)

May 6 Daša Drindić, *Trieste* (2007) cont. (pp. 245-355)
("Roman Fever" papers due)

May 13 **Contemporary Italy**
Jessie Chaffee, *Florence in Ecstasy* (2017) (Chapters 1-14)

May 20 Jessie Chaffee, *Florence in Ecstasy* cont. (chapters 15-22)
(**Drindić Papers Due**)

May 27 Final Papers and re-writes due