



SYLLABUS

ITALIAN LANGUAGE 303: ITALIAN CINEMA

Instructor: Courses are taught by the Italian language faculty and vary by term and level

Contact Hrs: 50

Language of Instruction: Italian

SIENA, ITALY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A good way to understand the culture of a country is watching its movies. This course focuses on Italian films after the Second World War as a mirror through which the student can penetrate Italian culture and way of life. By writing about Italian cinema, studying its history and filmmakers, an organic outline of the matter will come out.

Starting with the years following the Second World War ("Roma città aperta", 1946), to more recent productions such as *La Vita è Bella* (1997), motion pictures will allow the student to become familiar with several aspects of Italian experience in the second part of 20th century. Lectures, film viewings, discussion of films and readings, student researches and presentations will be relevant part of class sessions.

A particular focus will be on review and usage of Italian language.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To be able to research and present complex topics in Italian;
- To understand and become familiar with real Italian language;
- To learn about Italian culture, art, and film-making;
- To gain an understanding of major issues and events in post war's Italy;
- To learn about the ways in which films convey meaning, and how they are structured and presented.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

The course utilizes an integrated communication method that puts the student at the center of the learning process in a cooperative relationship with the teacher. Grammatical theory will be always connected with the practical use of the language. All of the didactic materials used throughout the course, such as textbooks and multimedia devices, are in Italian.

The class will be a combination of lectures (also with slide presentations) and class discussions, where the student is expected to be actively involved. Handouts, articles, and other useful materials for discussion will be given out by the teacher. Lectures are not just an explanation of the reading materials but complete them; the student is expected to take notes during classes because the topics raised will part of the exams.

METHOD OF EVALUATION/GRADING

1. **Attendance:** Attendance is very important for the continuity of class activities and it is mandatory. There will be no unexcused absences, except in the case of illness with written doctor's certificate.
1st absence - student will be warned.
2nd and 3rd absences - student will receive a lower grade – a deduction of 4 % for each absence.
4 or more absences - student cannot receive a passing grade and must formally withdraw from the course.
2. **Participation:** Each student is expected to actively participate in class discussions; this is essential moment of the learning experience. Assigned readings must be completed prior to class meetings.
3. **Mid-term exam:** Essay paper (see the guidelines below).
4. **Student research:** The student will research information on directors and movies on their own in order to write a paper. This is to be presented in class. The student is requested to prepare two papers (400-500 words each)/presentations during the semester.
5. **Final exam:** Oral interview on all the class topics and essays. The questions are similar to ones the student is asked to deal with in the essay paper.

Grading: Your grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

- Class attendance, 14 %;
- Discussion participation, 14 %;
- Mid-term exam, 24 %;
- Student researches, 12 % + 12%;
- Final exam, 24 %.

Essay Paper - Guidelines

These are the components that the essay paper (analysis of a movie) should include:

1. Plot summary (approx. 150 words)
2. Director's point of view/interpretation (approx. 100 words)
3. Scene analysis. Analyze one pivotal scene (approx. 150- 200 words). Consider in particular: dialogue, music and sound effects, camera angles and movement, field size, editing, and symbolism.
4. Critical film reviews (approx. 100 words).
5. This film as a cultural source (approx. 100-150 words).

COURSE OUTLINE

- Week 1** Welcome and course introduction
An brief outline of Italian history after the second world war

- Read: 1.a and 1.b.
- Week 2** Film-making: direction
Read: 2.
- Week 3** Italian cinema and neorealism
Film screening: *Roma città aperta* (Rossellini, 1945)
Read: 3.a
- Week 4** Italian cinema and neorealism
Film screening: *Ladri di biciclette* (“Bicycle thief”, dir. De Sica, 1948)
Student research
- Week 5** Fellini's world I
Film screening: *I vitelloni* (dir. Fellini, 1953)
Read: 3.b.i
- Week 6** Mario Monicelli and “Commedia all'italiana”
Film screening: *La grande Guerra* (1959)
Student research
Mid-term exam
- Week 7** Visconti and Italy's social change
Film screening: *Rocco e i suoi fratelli* (1960)
Read: 3.c
- Week 8** Fellini's world II
Film screening: *Amarcord* (dir. Fellini, 1973)
Read: 3.b.ii
- Week 9** Italian contemporary film-making.
Benigni, *La vita è bella* (1997)
Student research
- Week 10** Italian contemporary film-making.
Salvatores, *Io non ho paura* (2003)
Student research
- Week 11** Italian contemporary film-making.
Veronesi, *Manuale d'amore*
Review and **Final exam**

COURSE READINGS

1) Historical overview:

- a) Ferroni, Giulio, (1995). *Società e cultura del dopoguerra* in *Storia della letteratura*

- italiana*, IV, pp. 339-345. Torino, Einaudi.
- b) John L. Harper, *Italy and the world since 1945*, in Patrick McCharhy (ed.), (2000), *Italy since 1945*, pp.95-117,Oxford University Press.
- 2) Film-making.
Buccheri, Vincenzo *Il film*, Roma, Carocci, 2003, ch. 7: pp. 139-194, La regia,.
- 3) Critical reviews
- a) Rondolino, Gianni *Roberto Rossellini*, La Nuova Italia, pp. 51-56.
- b) Pecori, Franco *Federico Rossellini*, La nuova Italia,
i) pp. 39-49.
ii) pp. 124-128.
- c) Bencivenni, Alessandro (2005). *Luchino Visconti*, La Nuova Italia, pp. 39-46.