

Italian Spring 2017 Course Descriptions

Undergraduate

ROIT 20202 - Language through Lyrics: Rhyme, Rock & Romance

L. Marcantonio

MWF – 3 different sections

This fourth-semester language course is taught in the context of Italian song. We will trace a history of poetry, song, and music in Italy from the end of World War II to the present. Through the analysis of song and lyric, we will further our speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills as well as grasp of a wide variety of styles and registers in Italian. Readings include a wide array of literary and nonliterary texts (poems and song lyrics, newspapers and magazines, interviews, short fiction, and so on). Spoken and written Italian will be practiced through various classroom activities and assignments.

Prior knowledge and practice of music is not required to take this course; students will not be required to perform. There is, however, a performance component to the course. The sections of 202 will work together to put on a concert of Italian music for the other 250+ Italian language students. The concert will take place on Friday April 7th at 7pm in the Decio Theater in the Debartolo Performing Arts Center. Every student will contribute to the development and execution of the concert according to their interests and skills—music selection, poster design, promo videos, advertisement, stage managing, set design, working with the musicians, performing, visiting other language classes to promote the concert, etc. With this concert, we'll invite our friends and classmates to participate in the great art of freedom of Italian song, and into the beauty and power of voice, of music, of language, and of history.

ROIT 20300-01 – Let's Talk Italian I

P. Vivirito

W 3:30-4:30

This one-credit mini-course in Italian offers both informal and structured conversation practice. Conversation on Italian politics, society, and culture will be based on authentic materials. This course meets one hour per week for group discussions on contemporary issues and with guest speakers. Conducted in Italian. Recommended for students returning from Italy and for students who have completed the 10000 level of Italian. Meant to accompany another Italian course within the year.

ROIT 20610-01 – Literature, Science, Humanity, and Friendship: Reading

Primo Levi

V. Montemaggi

MW 3:30 – 4:45

In this course we will explore the profound connections between literature, science, and what it means to be human. We will carry out such exploration by reading together the work of Jewish Italian writer and chemist Primo Levi, doing so in the light of one of the central ethical principles governing Levi's work: friendship. Jewish Italian writer and chemist Primo Levi is considered one of the most important authors of the 20th Century. Levi's *The Periodic Table* (1975) has been referred to as "the best science book ever", and his *If This Is A Man* (1947/1958) is widely regarded as one of the most thought-provoking accounts of humanity ever to have been written. We will read both of these, together with a number of other works by Levi, including poems, essays, short stories, and a novel. By doing so we will give ourselves the opportunity of diving deeply and fruitfully into reflection on some vital questions: what is a human being? what is the relationship between friendship and truth? what is the relationship between suffering and knowledge? how are the humanities and the sciences connected to each other? Taught in

English. Throughout the course, we will make use of materials from the Primo Levi Collection of the Hesburgh Library - one of the most important collections in the world dedicated to the study of Primo Levi. Cross-listed with Philosophy, Religion & Lit, Peace Studies, European Studies, Science Technology, Values, University Literature.

ROIT 21205-01 – Pre-Study Abroad

A. Blad

W 5:00-6:15

This one-credit course begins the week after spring break; it is designed for students planning to spend a semester or a year abroad in Notre Dame's study abroad programs in Rome or Bologna, Italy. By means of a carefully planned program of film viewings, lectures, discussions and internet guided tours organized by Notre Dame's Italian Studies faculty, students will be provided with an advanced introduction to the history and topography of Rome/Bologna, Italian lifestyle(s), music and youth cultures, service learning, sports and internship opportunities, as well as cultural events, including opera theatre and music concerts. Students are prepared for various cultural and day-to-day challenges that await them in Italy. The Italian Studies faculty will also assist students in assessing their linguistic and cultural competency in Italian, and in fashioning individualized learning goals for their study abroad experience.

CSEM 23101 - On Humor: Understanding Italy

J. Welle

TR 12:30-1:45 / 3:30-4:45 (2 sects.)

This College Seminar explores questions of humor, laughter, and comedy through a rich variety of classical and modern texts. We begin with examples of Greek and Roman comedy, and proceed to examine Commedia dell'arte, an improvisational form of theatre originating in Italy that was influential throughout Europe for over two centuries. We encounter Shakespeare and Goldoni and analyze their relationship to both classical comedy and to Commedia dell'arte. Having traced the contours of ancient comedy and the roots of modern comedy, we turn to a major twentieth-century thinker on humor: Luigi Pirandello. Pirandello's tragic-comic vision is explored through short stories and a masterpiece of modern theatre, "Six Characters in Search of an Author." Next, we analyze a series of Italian film comedies discussing them in the historical context of Italy over the second half of the twentieth century. Throughout this trajectory, our primary focus will be on the nature of humor and comic forms as expressed in classical comedy from Ancient Greece and Rome up to contemporary film comedies; our secondary focus will be on why comedy from the ancient classical inheritance through the Commedia dell'arte to contemporary film comedy provides a key to understanding Italy both as an heir to an ancient civilization and as a lively modern country. Students will be evaluated on their preparation for and participation in class discussions, on leading class discussions, on oral presentations, and on a final exam. To further develop skills of speaking and oral presentation, the course will also incorporate aspects of "Readers' Theatre" as students will learn to read sections from the various plays out loud in class with dramatic effect.

ROIT 30300-01 – Let's Talk Italian II

C. Moevs

R 3:30-4:30

This one-credit mini-course in Italian meets one hour per week for group discussions on varied contemporary issues in Italian culture, society, and politics. Conducted in Italian. Recommended for students in their third or fourth year of Italian who have completed four or five semesters of Italian, or who have completed ROIT 20300. May be taken more than once. No written work, but faithful attendance required. An ideal supplement to other Italian courses, for more oral practice.

ROIT 30310-01 – Passage to Italy

S. Ferri

MW 2:00 – 3:15

An introduction to Italian culture through the analysis and discussion of major forms of literary works in different genres from the Middle Ages to the present, as well as music, film, art, theatre, and opera. This is not an exhaustive survey, but a sampling of key works and themes of cultural significance, focusing on interpretation and intercultural communication. The course also constitutes a review of Italian language and grammar. Building on the strong foundation in grammar from your previous courses, you will have the opportunity to fine-tune your command of spoken and written Italian. In short, the course should give you the tools to make your own passage into the rich, enchanting, beautiful world of Italy. Taught in Italian; counts as a Lit-Culture course for the major. Pre-requisite: ROIT 27500 or 20215 or equivalent. Strongly recommended for majors and supplementary majors. LANG - College Language Req, LIT - Univ. Req. Literature, MESE - European Studies Course.

ROIT 30721-01 – Introduction to Modern Italian Literature and Culture

S. Ferri

MW 11:00 – 12:15

Renowned for its rich past but full of contradictions up to the modern day, Italy has one of the most fascinating histories in the world. This course sheds light on the history of modern Italy and provides a unique perspective onto Italian modernity by exploring the country's cultural production. We will focus on key issues that unveil the unique "spirit" of modern Italy, such as the importance of the past, the tension between political realism and idealism, the recurrence of social and political crises, immigration, revolution, and youth culture. Through the study of historical and literary texts, films, and other media, the course seeks to understand the development of modern Italy and its future trajectory. Taught in Italian; counts as a Lit-Culture course; required for majors and supplementary majors in the Lit Culture concentration; this course or ROIT 30711 is required for majors in the Italian Studies concentration.

ROIT 40550-01 – Italian Theater: From the Commedia dell'Arte to Goldoni

F. Cotticelli

TR 2:00 – 3:15

Before the expression "Commedia dell'Arte" established itself in the tradition of Western countries, all performances which were staged resorting to the techniques of improvisation were known as "Commedie all'italiana", "commedie mercenarie", or "commedie improvvisate". The aim of the course, taught in English, is to explore the world of those practitioners who founded the modern theater, focusing on their adventurous lives and careers, on their professional methods, on the materials they used to revive old plots and stock characters, raising admiration for their unprecedented skills, or posing questions about the relationship between scripts and scenarios, memory and transformation. Starting from an overview of Italian dramaturgy between the 16th and the 17th century, the course will examine through the lens of theater sources (above all, Perrucci's treatise *Dell'arte rappresentativa premeditata, ed all'improvviso*) the basic materials of improvising actors (*generici, lazzi, canovacci*), their interactions with two masterpieces of European theater (*Convitato di pietra*-*Don Giovanni*; *Basalisco del Bernagasso*), following the thread which leads directly to Goldoni's early plays and the attempts to reform comic theater by providing actors with a new discipline and new resources. The course will be taught in English; English translations will be provided for all materials. Cross-listed with: LLRO, English, FTT, European Studies.

ROIT 40116-01 – Dante II

C. Moevs

TR 11:00-12:15

Dante's *Comedy* is one of the supreme poetic achievements in Western literature. It is a probing synthesis of the entire Western cultural and philosophical tradition that produced it, a radical experiment in

poetics and poetic technique, and a profound exploration of Christian spirituality. Dante I and Dante II are an in-depth study, over two semesters, of the entire *Comedy*, in its historical, philosophical and literary context. Dante I focuses on the *Inferno* and the works that precede the *Comedy* (*Vita Nova*, *Convivio*, *De vulgari eloquentia*); Dante II focuses on the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, along with the *Monarchia*. Students may take just one of Dante I and II or both, in either order. Lectures and discussion in English; the text will be read in a facing-page translation, so we can refer to the Italian (but knowledge of Italian is not necessary). Counts as an Italian Studies course. Students with Italian have the option of also enrolling in a one-credit pass/fail Languages Across the Curriculum section, which will meet one hour per week to read and discuss selected passages or cantos in Italian. NOTE: the one-semester lecture course ROIT 40114, Dante's Divine Comedy: The Christian Universe as Poetry, is often offered in place of Dante I. LIT - Univ. Req. Literature. Cross-listed with LLRO 40116, ROIT 63116 (1)/ MI 40553/ MI 60553 (2)/ LIT 73665 (1).

ROIT 40548-01 – Italian Cinema: The Realities of History

Z. Barański

TR 12:30-1:45

Italian film-making continues to be most highly regarded for the films made by directors, such as Vittorio De Sica, Roberto Rossellini, and Luchino Visconti, who belonged to the Neo-realist movement (1945-53) and who tried to make films that examined the contemporary experiences of ordinary Italians. The films were inspired by the belief that, by presenting a truthful reflection of life in Italy which gave spectators information about the experiences of their fellow citizens, they would lead to greater understanding, and hence to a better society. Such was the impact of Neo-realist cinema on Italian culture in general and on Italian film-making in particular that its influence may be discerned in most films that have been made from the mid 1950s to this day. This state of affairs has led to the assumption that Neo-realism marks a decisive break with Italy's pre-war past. Yet, even though Neo-realism did constitute, in ideological terms, a clear departure from fascism, its stylistic roots, its sense of the need for commitment, and its faith in the efficacy of a realist aesthetic all establish ties both with Liberal and Fascist Italy. The principal aim of the course is to explore the construction and development of the Italian cinematic realist tradition from the silent era to the early 1970s, although its primary focus is on the period 1934-1966. In particular, the course examines the formal and ideological continuities and differences between Neo-realist films and their silent and fascist predecessors. In a similar way, it analyses Neo-realism's impact on later film-makers, such as Federico Fellini, Pietro Germi, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Gillo Pontecorvo, Dino Risi, and Francesco Rosi, who attempted to develop new versions of cinematic realism. Taught in English; counts as an Italian Studies course. Cross-listed with LLRO 40548, FTT 40249.

ROIT 42116-01 – Dante II: Discussion Group

TBA

Time TBA

This one-credit section accompanies ROIT 40116, Dante II. It meets one hour a week to read and discuss in Italian passages of the Italian text of the *Comedy*. Meeting time will be arranged by participants' schedules. Requirements include faithful attendance, careful preparation of the passages, and participation in the discussion, but minimal or no written work and no exam.

ROIT 53000-01 – Italian Seminar – Siena: The Life, Culture, and Devotion of One of Italy's Greatest Treasures

V. Montemaggi

MW – Time TBA

Taught in Italian, this course offers the opportunity for an in-depth study of Italian life, history, art, and religion, through detailed study of one of Italy's best known and most loved cities: Siena. One of Italy's great medieval cities, Siena stands to this day as one of the most interesting, intriguing and fascinating

examples of defining dynamics of Italian culture: the inspiring relationship between art and public life; the nourishing importance of food and wine; the fruitful tension between tradition and innovation; the constructive encounter of sacred and secular. Siena is home to some of Italy's most wondrous art (Duccio, Martini, Lorenzetti, Beccafumi) and some of its most breathtaking architecture (its Duomo, its Palazzo pubblico). It also produces some of Italy's most distinctive food and wine products (carne chianina e di cinto senese, panforte, Chianti). In the late Middle Ages it was the home of Saint Catherine and Saint Bernardino, as well as one of the most powerful political and economic centres in the Italian peninsula. It is home still today to one of Italy's most lively, intense, dynamic, and controversial traditions: the Palio. All of this life, culture, and devotion is brought together in Siena in and through the contrade, a form of communal living originating in the Middle Ages and evolving ever since. It is also all brought together in and through a particularly profound devotion to Mary, to whom the city has been dedicated since 1260. In all of these respects - and more - to study Siena is to give yourself the opportunity of enriching in uniquely profound ways your understanding of Italy. Through its research component, the course will allow you to do so by developing in academically rigorous ways your own specific and particular interest in Italian life and culture. Prerequisite: at least two 3-credit courses taught in Italian at the 30000 or 40000 level. Cross-listed with MI; History; European Studies; Art History; University Fine Arts, Philosophy, Religion, and Literature.

NOTE: ALMOST ANY COURSE IN THE UNIVERSITY OR FROM ABROAD WHOSE CONTENT IS AT LEAST HALF ON AN ITALIAN SUBJECT (INCLUDING CLASSICS, ART HISTORY, HISTORY, MUSIC, POLITICS, ETC....) MAY COUNT AS AN ITALIAN STUDIES COURSE (A COURSE IN ENGLISH ON AN ITALIAN SUBJECT) TOWARD A MAJOR OR MINOR. IT NEED NOT HAVE AN ROIT CROSSLIST. BUT IF IT DOES NOT HAVE AN ROIT CROSSLIST YOU MUST HAVE IT APPROVED BY YOUR ADVISER TO COUNT FOR A MAJOR OR MINOR.

Graduate

ROIT 63011-01– Introduction to Advanced Studies in Italian

TBA

A two-semester course, meeting one hour a week, co-taught by all the Italian T&R faculty. The course will ensure a solid foundation in the precise analysis of literary texts and other cultural artifacts in the context of Italian Studies, including a survey of metrics, rhetorical figures, narrative techniques, and film analysis. It will also provide an introduction to key terms and forms of critical and literary theory, and develop the skills necessary to pursue advanced independent research projects, including familiarity with bibliographic resources and research methods. During the course of the year students will also review a university-level manual/anthology of Italian literature. Required in their first year of all Master's and Doctoral candidates specializing in Italian. Passing the final exam of this course is a prerequisite for continuing studies in Italian.

ROIT 63113–01 – Dante's World of Books

Z. Barański

TR 3:30 – 4:45

“Dante's World of Books” aims to examine the oeuvre and career of, arguably, the most original and influential writer in Western culture from three closely interlinked perspectives. First, the course provides an overview of all Dante's writings, the books he actually produced. Second, it explores his intellectual formation and his attitude towards the literary tradition—the books that were probably present in his ‘library’. Third, it will assess the manner in which Dante synthesized his different

ideological and poetic interests in order to develop an incisive and powerful assessment and critique of humanity's position in the order of divine creation. In the Middle Ages, the created universe was often metaphorically described as "God's book" or the "book of creation". The course thus attempts to investigate the complex inter-relationship that Dante forged between his books and the 'book' of the Supreme Artist, a popular and highly influential medieval image for God the Creator. Cross-listed with: History MI, English, Theology & Philosophy.

ROIT 63116-01– Dante II

C. Moevs

TR 11:00 – 12:15

Dante I and Dante II are an in-depth study, over two semesters, of the entire Comedy, in its historical, philosophical and literary context, with selected readings from the minor works (e.g., Vita Nova, Convivio, De vulgari eloquentia). Dante I focuses on the Inferno and the minor works; Dante II focuses on the Purgatorio and Paradiso. Lectures and discussion in English; the text will be read in the original with facing-page translation. Students may take one semester or both, in either order. Graduate students enrolled in Dante II read more broadly in the secondary literature, and write a graduate seminar paper.

ROIT 63955-01 – Manzoni

C. Moevs

TR 2:00 – 3:15

Alessandro Manzoni's *Promessi Sposi* is an enduring classic, one of the great novels of nineteenth century Europe. Its importance in forging the cultural, literary, and linguistic identity of the emerging Italian nation is rivaled only by Dante's *Comedy*. In this seminar we will read the *Promessi Sposi* in its historical and cultural context (the tension and fusion between enlightenment and romantic ideals at the threshold of the Italian nation-state), paying special attention to the work's artistic, social, and religious aims as a novel at once historical, political, and self-consciously Catholic. We will also look at Manzoni's other works (the other redactions of the *Promessi Sposi*, the poems, plays, and essays) to try to form a complete picture of Manzoni's intellectual, cultural, religious itinerary in relation to his time. The readings will be in Italian, and the course will require student presentations and a research paper.