



ITAL 311: Intensive Italian through Culture: Advanced Intermediate I

Summer 2026 Course Syllabus

Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 50

Practice with Italian students (Tandem): 7+ hours

Co-curricular cultural activities: 20+ hours

Prerequisites: Four semesters of college level Italian or permission of the Instructors

Instructor(s): Livia Matarazzo, MA, Luca Gatti, PhD

Course Type: Course taught entirely in Italian

Course Materials: Textbook: *L'Italiano in Testa*, Corso di Lingua Italiana per Stranieri Vol. B1, Le Monnier (ISBN 9788800808392)

Note: This is one of the two mandatory courses which make up the Advanced Intermediate Level of the Summer Intensive Italian Language & Culture Program

Course Description

Intensive Italian through Culture combines intensive language instruction with a rich immersion in Italian culture, past as well as present. The program has two components: Italian language classes and speaking opportunities; and cultural events conducted in Italian.

This is an advanced intermediate course specifically designed for students who have achieved an intermediate level of Italian and wish to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Italian language. To achieve this goal, students work with Italian texts of various types (e.g., narrative and literary excerpts, newspaper articles, film clips, and segments from television shows); engage in guided activities; participate in out-of-the-classroom activities that require them to conduct “street” interviews, gather direct testimonies on different aspects of contemporary life, and engage in short surveys, all with the aim of encouraging them to interact as much as possible with the city; and will be asked to reflect on each of these activities through preparing short oral accounts and essays. Through these varied exercises students come in contact with the authentic written and spoken language in a variety of forms through which they can develop their skills in writing, reading, listening and speaking; they enrich their vocabulary, paying particular attention to the study of idiomatic expressions, modes of speaking, and proverbs; and they advance their understanding of several grammatical and morphological aspects of the language. Lastly, students will be exposed to various cultural aspects such as regionalism, festivals and traditions, social customs, literature, cinema, style and fashion, music, and other defining features of Italian culture, in a manner that fosters further understanding and practice of the language.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

By the end of this level, students can take part in a casual conversation for a reasonable period of time. They can understand texts that express a range of personal opinions and can write short, professional and personal emails and simple texts stating facts and events. During the course, students will improve fluency, intonation, and pronunciation, and use more complex tenses and modes to talk about future possibilities and probability.

They will notice that they understand faster and catch and retain the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters encountered in work and leisure.

Assessment

Attendance in class and co-curricular activities	10%
Attendance at Tandem	15%
Participation in class with completed homework	15%
Weekly quizzes	20%
Final Exams (written and oral)	40%

Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Range	Grade	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A		93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-		90% - 92%	Excellent
B+		87% - 89%	Superior
B		83% - 86%	
B-		80% - 82%	
C+		77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C		73% - 76%	
C-		70% - 72%	
D+		67% - 69%	Low Pass
D		63% - 66%	
D-		60% - 62%	
F		59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Please note: Decimal and centesimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following criteria:

Attendance in class and co-curricular activities (10%)

Attendance is an important part of this course. You have one "sick day," per Institute policy. As long as you are at all the other meetings, you will receive the full 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

Attendance at Tandem (15%)

Tandem offers you the opportunity to practice and enhance your oral skills by engaging in relaxed, semi-structured conversations with students from Italian universities in Perugia. Attendance at three Tandem meetings contributes to 15% of your grade (i.e. 5% each).

Participation in class with completed homework (15%)

Another important part of learning Italian is doing exercises after class to practice what you've learned. The next day that practice will be part of class. All the written exercises in the book are essentially pass/fail: if you did them, full credit!

Weekly quizzes (20%)

There are weekly online quizzes on Moodle, which you may retake as often as you wish/need in order to reinforce vocabulary and key grammatical concepts.

You may repeat these exercises as often as you want: your average score is what will count.

Final

Exams

(40%)

The final exam will assess student mastery of course content. In addition to a written component, each exam will include an oral component that will assess students' language competency.

Extension & Submitting Late Work

Work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, not partial credit. Each student is allowed one extension of 24 hours over the entire semester. This can be used for any assignment but the final project. Students need to email the instructor before the deadline and inform the instructor of their use of the extension. Any work submitted after the 24-hour extension will be marked zero.

As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

Attendance Policy

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. The first absence per course due to illness will be considered a "sick day" and does not require medical documentation. To receive additional excused absences due to illness, students are required to see a local physician or request a letter from an Institute-approved doctor documenting they should be excused from class for illness.

Please note: For the purpose of this policy, 'absence' refers to the non-attendance of a specific class meeting or activity, rather than the absence of an entire day of classes.

Unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's academic performance and will result in a reduction of the student's final course grade by 4% per absence up to a maximum of 10%. Excessive unexcused absences (3 or more) may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

Legitimate reasons for an excused absence or tardiness includes: death in immediate family, religious observances, illness or injury, local inclement weather, medical appointments that cannot be rescheduled.

Students who request an approved absence to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Institute's Director within one week after the add/drop period when course schedules, including any field trips, are finalized. No exceptions will be made after this deadline.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Tardiness Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes punctually. Any student arriving up to 15 minutes late or leaving up to 15 minutes earlier than the scheduled class end time will be marked as tardy. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 0.5% off the final grade. However, should a student arrive more than 15 minutes late or depart more than 15 minutes before the conclusion of the class, it will be recorded as an absence.

Students are also expected to remain in class during the time of instruction except for a reasonable amount of time to use the restroom. Students who leave class and do not return during the class session will receive an unexcused absence or late penalty.

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Utilizing ChatGPT or other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for the generation of content submitted by a student as their own as part of any assignment for academic credit at the Institute constitutes a form of plagiarism. Should the Institute become aware of a student's use of such platforms and services, the student will be subject to the same consequences and judicial proceedings as are in place for plagiarism (defined above).

Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Students are not allowed to use their cell phones or laptops while in class or during co-curricular events and activities, unless otherwise specified in the course syllabus or expressly permitted by the instructor for special learning. This policy also applies to earbuds and headsets. Students who do not respect these rules will be subject to disciplinary warnings and probation, be given an unexcused absence from class, and other disciplinary action including dismissal from the course.

Moodle

Please note that Moodle, not this syllabus, is the ultimate reference for due dates, assignment prompts, and course announcements. It is *the student's responsibility* to check the site regularly to be aware of announcements as well as to see and record all due dates for assignments.

Weekly course structure

Language Classes:	17 hours
Practice with Italian students (Tandem):	2.5 hours
Co-Curricular Activities (Outside of Classroom)	7+ hours (varies by week)

Language classes

Our language classes are structured with two daily lessons, each focusing on distinct aspects of language acquisition

Focus on linguistic structures: One aspect of our classes is dedicated to exploring the essential elements of Italian grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. Through interactive lessons and engaging activities, students develop a strong foundation in language fundamentals.

Development of practical skills: The other component emphasizes the application of language skills in real-life contexts. Students engage in activities aimed at enhancing oral communication, listening comprehension, and overall proficiency. This hands-on approach fosters practical language use and fluency development.

Practice with Italian students (Tandem)

Tandem sessions are weekly meetings where students interact with native Italian speakers, who are students from Italian universities in Perugia. These sessions are mandatory components of the course curriculum, providing essential exposure to language and culture. Tandem meetings are facilitated by instructors to ensure

productive and enriching exchanges between students and their Italian counterparts.

Co-curricular activities

Students enrolled in the two courses which make up the Summer Intensive Italian Language & Culture Program take part in a vast series of co-curricular activities designed to improve their language speaking skills in a natural environment while introducing them to practices of daily life and the cultural offerings of Central Italy. These activities may include the following:

- Day-Trip to Siena
- “L’italiano in Cucina”- language & cooking classes with faculty members or local experts;
- Trips to local festivals (e.g., typical Central Italian “sagre”);
- Guided tour of Teatro Morlacchi conducted by real actors
- Guided tour of prominent museums in Perugia
- Guided tours of Perugia and other Umbrian towns;
- Visit to local winery with tastings;
- Cinema nights

In addition to these co-curricular activities, students are invited to a traditional dinner where they will be introduced to the Italian faculty.

N.B. A final co-curricular activities series schedule will be provided during orientation.

WEEK 1

Textbook: L'Italiano in Testa Vol. B1, Unit 1
Quiz #1 on Moodle

Activity #1: Tandem language exchange with Italian students on Tuesday

Activity #2: Visit to Giuditta Brozzetti Atelier on Wednesday. This visit focuses on the ancient art of weaving that was at the core of the Perugian economy during the Middle Ages and that is displayed, among other paintings, in the Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper

Competencies

- Raccontare esperienze passate
- Raccontare di sé e degli altri
- Raccontare fatti reali

Grammar

- Ripasso di alcuni tempi dell'indicativo (presente, passato prossimo, imperfetto, trapassato prossimo)

WEEK 2

Textbook: L'Italiano in Testa Vol. B1, Unit 3
Quiz #2 on Moodle

Activity #1: Tandem language exchange with Italian students on Tuesday

Activity #2: Italian wine culture and tasting workshop in the Umbra kitchen on Monday. This workshop will focus on the cultural aspects of wine in Italy as well as on tasting techniques and related vocabulary.

Activity #3: Day-trip to Siena on Friday. The trip includes a guided tour of the city of Siena and a full immersion in one of the 17 "contrade" of Siena to learn more about the world famous "Palio"

Competencies

- Esprimere desideri
- esprimere sorpresa

Grammar

- Condizionale presente e passato
- Le frasi causali
- Forma passiva

WEEK 3

Textbook: L'Italiano in Testa Vol. B1, Unit 4

Activity #1: Tandem language exchange with Italian students on Tuesday

Activity #2: L'Italiano in Cucina workshop. Monday in the Umbra kitchen. The workshop is run by Umbra faculty and focuses on Italian food traditions as well as vocabulary and use of verbs in a cooking activity

Competencies

- Esprimere le proprie opinioni
- Esprimere un giudizio
- Esprimere sentimenti

Grammar

- Ripresa del congiuntivo presente e passato
- Congiuntivo imperfetto e trapassato
- Concordanze dei tempi al congiuntivo
- Connettivi

Final exams (written and oral) – TBD