



ITAL 101: Living Perugia: Culture, Language, and Reflection

Course Syllabus

Spring Semester 2026

Course Type: Standard course

Lab Fee: USD\$95

Course Description

Exploring Perugia is an interdisciplinary course that focuses on achieving a basic level in cultural and linguistic-communicative competences (speaking, writing, reading and comprehension) regarding familiar contexts, everyday life activities and simple interaction with native speakers. At the same time, it introduces students to various, relevant aspects of contemporary Perugia life and Italian culture, asking them to reflect on their own experience of immersion in a different cultural environment. This course has three pillars: language, culture, and reflection. Basic Italian language instruction is at the core of the class. Students will learn fundamentals of the Italian language in order to interact with Italians in various real-world settings. Second, they will use their language learning as a vehicle for delving into the richness and complexity of Italian culture. Third, students reflect on their experiences living in a new culture and understanding how this has impacted their perspective on the United States and their sense of their own identities. Through engaging in interactive assignments, and participating in group activities, students will learn to live in their new environment, build competence and confidence as global citizens, and understand how they can leverage their Perugia experience for their future personal and professional success.

Course Purpose

Students will acquire basic skills in speaking and understanding Italian, study Italian culture and experience it first-hand, and reflect on what they have learned both about Italy, the United States, and themselves through their study abroad experience. This course is the equivalent of a standard first semester college-level Italian course in the United States.

Course Learning Objectives

At the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate foundational skills in speaking and understanding Italian, including:
 - a. *recognizing* and using words and expressions of daily and common use;
 - b. *participating in* conversations at a basic level in everyday situations (talking about oneself, asking information, giving and receiving instructions, shopping, reading notices, etc.);
 - c. *understanding* short texts (menus, signs, announcements, timetables, notices, recipes, short newspaper articles, etc.);
 - d. *composing* short passages about their daily lives and direct experiences.
2. Participate in discussions of contemporary Italian culture.

3. Engage in critical evaluation of their own culture, Italian culture, and other foreign cultures, including:
 - a. *articulating* U.S. cultural rules, norms and biases;
 - b. *understanding* how their own experiences have shaped their values and priorities;
 - c. *knowing* how to respond productively to cultural differences;
 - d. *valuing* what is important to members of another culture, including their history, politics, communication styles, economy, beliefs and social practices;
 - e. *interpreting* cross-cultural experiences from multiple worldviews and *respecting* the rights and feelings of other cultural groups;
 - f. *asking* complex questions about their own culture and other cultures, *seeking out* answers to those questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.
4. Understand and articulate the unique benefits of their study abroad experience and anticipate how to leverage those benefits for their future personal and professional success.

Course Materials:

All students in ITAL 101 will be provided with a personal copy of the Umbra Italian 101 textbook: *Allora! Corso di italiano per stranieri*.

Assessments

The fundamental approach of this class is the following: after an intensive first 4 days, the class will nudge you to recall and use what you've learned about the Italian language. There are *many* low stakes, low stress assignments that together make up your grade. Be sure to consult Moodle and mark the due dates in your calendar as missed assignments accumulate quickly. Final grades will be based on the following:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Attendance in class | 10% |
| Participating in class with completed homework | 10% |
| Attendance at Tandem nights | 10% |
| SoloItaliano Challenge | 5% |
| Weekly quizzes | 20% |
| “Vivi Perugia” assignments | 5% |
| Midterm Exam | 15% |
| Final Exam | 25% |

Attendance in class (10%)

Attendance is an essential part of this course. You are allowed 2 unexcused absences without penalty, per Institute policy. If you attend all the other meetings, you will receive 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

Participating in class with completed homework (10%)

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!

Attendance at Tandem (10%)

Tandem is your chance to get to know Italian students and have a relaxed, semi-structured conversation with them. Attendance at two Tandem meetings (both dates TBA) is worth 10% (i.e. 5% each). Each class will be assigned two dates.

SoloItaliano Challenge (5%)

Active participation in the SoloItaliano Challenge is a fun way to apply what you've learned in class and beyond. Participation in the group activity ‘Present an Italian personality associated with the city of Perugia’ and in Cinema Night are each worth 2.5%.

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.

“Vivi Perugia” Assignments (5%)

We want to encourage you not only to see different parts of Perugia but to use your Italian as you explore the city. These assignments will ask you to go to different parts of the city and use the Italian you’ve learned in class. For each assignment you’ll turn in either a recording or a selfie or both. These assignments are basically pass/fail: if you turn them in, you get full credit. All assignments will have a thorough prompt on the course’s Moodle site. You don’t have one every week: it’s your job to check Moodle and mark your calendar as they cannot be made up later: don’t leave them until the last minute.

Midterm Exam (15%)

The midterm exam will assess student mastery of course content during the first half of the semester. There will be a full prompt on Moodle with the topics covered on the exam. In addition to a written component, the midterm will include an oral component that will assess students’ language competency.

Final Exam (25%)

The final exam will be cumulative: it will cover material from the whole semester. As with the mid-term, there will be a thorough prompt on Moodle and the exam will include an oral component.

Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

| Letter Grade Range | 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.

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

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. The first two absences per course due to illness will be considered excused “sick days” and do 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.

Unexcused absences will adversely affect a student’s academic performance and will result in a reduction of the student’s final course grade by 1% per absence up to a maximum of 10%. Excessive unexcused absences 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.

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 will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will lower the students’ grade by half a letter grade (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

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

Absences relating to illness may be excused by the Director, but only if a medical certification is provided.

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.

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. Please note that cell phones must be set on silent mode before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices (for example, ear buds) cannot be used during class lectures and discussions for anything other than note-taking, unless there has been specific academic accommodation.

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.

Immersion Italian Week: Jan. 13, 14, 15, 16

NB: Check your orientation schedule for class division during the Immersion Italian Week

Tuesday: Prendere il caffè

Textbook: "Allora!" – Immersion Day 1

Activity: Getting a coffee at a local bar

Competencies:

- Presentarsi
- Salutare
- Domande di "sopravvivenza"
- Chiedere il significato di una parola, "Come si dice in italiano...?"
- Chiedere l'identità a qualcuno

Grammar:

- Alfabeto
- Numeri
- Essere/avere
- Pronomi soggetto
- Pronomi interrogativi

Wednesday: La spesa

Textbook: "Allora!" – Immersion Day 2

Activity: Shopping at the grocery

Competencies:

- Quanto costa?
- Fare richieste al supermercato (ripresa di vorrei)
- Chiedere il prezzo
- Conoscere gli oggetti

Grammar:

- Singolare/plurale
- Sostantivo
- Articoli indeterminativi
- Presente di essere/avere
- mi piace/mi piacciono

Thursday: La Casa

Textbook: "Allora!" – Immersion Day 3

Activity: Around the apartment Interactive Game

Competencies:

- Nomi dei negozi
- Fare richieste di oggetti.
- Descrizione appartamento (per utilizzare c'è/ci sono)

Grammar:

- Accordi aggettivi e nomi
- Articoli determinativi
- C'è/ci sono
- Verbi in -are e verbo irregolare fare

Friday: Il viaggio

Textbook: "Allora!" – Immersion Day 4

Activity: Field trip to Pian di Massiano by Minimetrò

Competencies:

- Descrizione della Stazione
- Chiedere informazioni alla biglietteria

Grammar:

- Tre coniugazioni -are -ere -ire
- Ripresa dei numeri per l'orario
- Orario

Week 1: Jan. 19, 20, 21, 22

Textbook: "Allora!" Week 1

Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- "La giornata 'tipo'"
- Chiedere e dire l'ora
- Chiedere e dare informazioni sugli orari
- Fare domande e rispondere a domande sulla vita quotidiana
- Parlare delle proprie abitudini"

Grammar:

- Presente indicativo dei verbi regolari in -are, -ere, -ire (-isc)
- Presente indicativo (1° persona singolare) dei verbi fare, andare, uscire
- e di alcuni verbi riflessivi (svegliarsi, farsi la doccia, addormentarsi...)
- Alcune preposizioni semplici e articolate: in, a, al, alla, alle, all'
- Da... a.../dalle...alle
- (giocare con le collocazioni)
- Amare + infinito, verbi modali. I mesi e le stagioni
- c'è/ci sono

Week 2: Jan. 26, 27, 28, 29

Textbook: "Allora!" Week 2

Quiz on Moodle

Outdoor activity: "Alla scoperta della Rocca Paolina", Jan. 29

Co-curricular activity: Tandem Language exchange 101 C, D

Competencies:

- Parlare del tempo libero
- Parlare di ciò che (non) si sa fare
- Esprimere volontà
- Formulare una richiesta cortese (vorrei...)
- Chiedere il conto

Grammar:

- Presente indicativo di alcuni verbi irregolari (venire, stare, dare)
- Presente indicativo dei verbi modali: volere, potere, dovere, sapere
- Sapere + infinito
- Mi piace/mi piacciono
- Mi piace + infinito
- Ripresa preposizioni: a, al, in + alcuni luoghi
- Vorrei + infinito
- Aggettivi possessivi

Week 3: Feb. 2, 3, 4, 5

Textbook: “Allora!” Week 3

Quiz on Moodle

Activity: *ViviPerugia activity: go to your favorite place in Perugia, take a photo, and explain why you like it*

Co-curricular activity: Tandem Language exchange 101 A, B

Competencies:

- Descrivere attività e luoghi di vacanza
- Esprimere preferenze sul viaggio
- Chiedere per avere
- Chiedere e dare informazioni
- Chiedere di raccontare e raccontare fatti passati

Grammar:

- Ripresa: l’uso di mi piace, mi piacciono
- Il verbo partire + da/per
- Il passato prossimo
- Il passato prossimo dei verbi regolari con l’ausiliare avere
- Il passato prossimo dei verbi regolari con l’ausiliare essere

Week 4: Feb. 9, 10, 11, 12

Textbook: “Allora!” Week 4

Quiz on Moodle

Co-curricular activity: Tandem Language exchange 101 E, F

Outdoor activity: “Alla scoperta di Via della Viola” , Feb. 12

Competencies:

- Chiedere di raccontare e raccontare fatti passati
- Raccontare un viaggio o una vacanza passata

Grammar:

- Alcuni participi passati irregolari (aprire - aperto, bere - bevuto, fare – fatto...)
- Altri participi passati irregolari (rimanere-rimasto, dire-detto, leggere-letto...)
- Espressioni di tempo al passato (ieri, l’altro ieri, ...scorso...fa, stamattina)
- Avverbi di tempo (prima, poi, dopo)
- Preposizione in + mezzi di trasporto

Week 5: Feb. 16, 17, 18, 19

Textbook: “Allora!” Week 5

Co-curricular activity; Tandem languages exchange 101 G, H

Grammar Review:

- Presente Indicativo dei verbi regolari e irregolari
- Verbi modali
- Passato Prossimo

Midterm exam: February 18

Week 6: Feb. 23, 24, 25, 26

Textbook: “Allora!” Week 6
Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Prenotare servizi
- Ordinare cibi e bevande
- Conoscere i nomi di piatti e cibi tipici italiani

Grammar:

- Ripresa di vorrei
- Alcune preposizioni di luogo:
al ristorante; al bar; in pizzeria; in prosciutteria..

March 2 - 6: Semester Break

Week 7: Mar. 9, 10, 11, 12

Textbook: “Allora!” Week 7
Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Parlare degli acquisti e delle proprie abitudini in merito
- Fare la spesa in un negozio di alimentari ed esprimere i propri desideri al riguardo
- Chiedere e dire il prezzo
- Chiedere una quantità
- Chiedere qualcosa in modo gentile

Grammar:

- Pronomi diretti con i tempi semplici e composti
- Ne partitivo

Week 8: Mar. 16, 17, 18, 19

Textbook: “Allora!” Week 8
Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Descrivere l'abbigliamento
- Dire la taglia
- Chiedere per avere
- Chiedere qualcosa in modo gentile
- Chiedere ed esprimere i propri gusti

Grammar:

- Ripresa dei pronomi diretti e ne con i verbi modali
- Verbi riflessivi (vestirsi, mettersi)
- Aggettivi dimostrativi

Week 9: Mar. 23, 24, 25, 26

Textbook: "Allora!" Week 9
Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Chiedere e dare informazioni
- Chiedere e dare indicazioni stradali
- Descrivere un percorso

Grammar:

- Imperativo diretto dei verbi in -are, -ere, -ire
- Imperativo dei verbi andare e stare
- Imperativo negativo

Week 10: Mar. 30, 31, Apr. 1, 2

Co-curricular activity:

Textbook: "Allora!" Week 10
Quiz on Moodle

SoloItaliano Challenge

Group activity: choose an Italian personality associated with the city of Perugia and present it while enjoying coffee at a local bar

Competencies:

- Dare istruzioni
- Dare consigli
- Scrivere una ricetta
- Parlare del cibo e delle abitudini alimentari
- Commentare il sapore di un alimento

Grammar:

- Ripresa imperativo diretto e negativo
- Imperativo diretto e negativo dei verbi dare, fare, essere, avere
- Imperativo (diretto e negativo) con i pronomi diretti
- Le forme ci vuole, ci vogliono
- Ripresa degli avverbi di tempo (prima, poi, dopo...)

Week 11: Apr. 7, 8

Textbook: "Allora!" Week 11
Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Ricordi
- Descrizioni situazioni e fatti del passato
- Raccontare le abitudine dell'infanzia
- Descrizione di luoghi e persone

Grammar:

- Imperfetto di essere e avere
- Imperfetto indicativo dei verbi regolari
- Usi dell'imperfetto

Week 12: Apr. 13, 14, 15, 16

Textbook: "Allora!" Week 12

Grammar Review:

- Presente indicativo
- Passato Prossimo
- Pronomi diretti
- Imperativo
- Imperfetto

Final Exam: April 15