



ITAL 201 Experiencing Perugia: Intermediate Language, Culture, and Reflection Course Syllabus Spring Semester 2026

Instructor: Livia Matarazzo, MA; Luca Gatti, Ph.D

Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 60

Office Hours: By appointment, Italian Language Office, first floor Umbra Institute

Email: n/a

Course Type: Standard course

Pre-requisites: Two semesters of college level Italian or permission of the Instructor

Lab Fee: USD\$95

Course Description

Experiencing Perugia is an interdisciplinary course that focuses on achieving and strengthening an Intermediate level in cultural and linguistic-communicative competences (speaking, writing, reading and comprehension) regarding main points of clear standard input on familiar and more complex matters regularly encountered in work, school, and leisure and while traveling. At the same time, it asks students to reflect on various aspects of contemporary Perugian life and Italian culture, asking them to analyze their own experience of immersion in a different cultural environment. This course has three pillars: language, culture, and reflection. Advanced Intermediate Italian language instruction is at the core of the class. Students will consolidate fundamentals of the Italian language already learned and be exposed to new grammatical concepts in order to interact on a more sophisticated basis 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, maintaining a reflective course journal, 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 strengthen and improve upon their skills in speaking, reading, 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. At the end of the semester, students should reach the level B1 of the Common European Framework in the four basic competencies: listening, speaking and interacting, reading, and writing.

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 are required to purchase their personal copies of the following:
QuiItalia, beginner edition (A1 to A2/B1), Le Monnier (ISBN 978-8800802680)

Assessments

Final grades will be based on the following:

Attendance in class (10%)

Attendance is an essential part of this course. You are allowed 2 unexcused absences per course 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.

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%.

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!

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.

Midterm Exam (20%)

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 Exams (25%)

The final exam will assess student mastery of course content during the first half of the semester and the final exam will be cumulative of the entire semester. In addition to a written component, each exam will include an oral component that will assess students' language competency.

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 Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A A-	93% - 100% 90% - 92%	Exceptional Excellent
B+ B B-	87% - 89% 83% - 86% 80% - 82%	Superior
C+ C C-	77% - 79% 73% - 76% 70% - 72%	Satisfactory
D+ D D-	67% - 69% 63% - 66% 60% - 62%	Low Pass
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 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 Week: Jan. 13, 14, 15, 16

Tuesday: Prendere il caffè

Activity: Getting a coffee

Competencies:

- Espressioni utili in un bar
- Descrizione
- Richieste gentili

Grammar:

- Presente indicativo
- Uso di *vorrei*

Wednesday: La spesa

Activity: Shopping at the grocery

Competencies:

- Chiedere il prezzo e la quantità del cibo
- Esprimere i propri gusti alimentari

Grammar:

- Preposizioni
- Verbi modali

Thursday: La Casa

Activity: Around the apartment Interactive Game

Competencies:

- Chiedere e dare informazioni sulla casa
- Descrivere la casa

Grammar:

- Preposizioni semplici e articolate
- Alcune preposizioni improprie

Friday: Il viaggio

Activity: Field trip to Pian di Massiano by Minimetrolò

Competencies:

- Chiedere indicazioni stradali
- Chiedere e dare informazioni su orari e prezzi

Grammar:

- Ci vuole/ci vogliono
- Uso di venire e andare

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

Textbook: Unit 4

Quiz on Moodle

Co-curricular activity: Tandem Language Exchange

Competencies:

- Chiedere e dire l'ora
- Chiedere e dare informazioni sugli orari
- Parlare delle proprie abitudini
- Chiedere e dare informazioni per darsi appuntamento

Grammar:

- Presente indicativo dei verbi regolari e irregolari
- Presente indicativo dei verbi riflessivi
- Preposizioni semplici e articolate
- Avverbi di frequenza

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

Textbook: Unit 5

Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Parlare del tempo libero
- Formulare, accettare e rifiutare un invito
- Esprimere volontà
- Esprimere obbligo o necessità

Grammar:

- Presente indicativo dei verbi modali
- I verbi sapere e piacere
- Ci locativo
- Avverbi di quantità
- Espressioni di frequenza

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

Textbook: Unit 6

Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Chiedere di raccontare e raccontare al passato
- Raccontare la biografia di qualcuno

Grammar:

- Passato prossimo
- Passato prossimo riflessivi
- Espressioni di tempo al passato

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

Textbook: Unit 7

Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Chiedere per avere
- Chiedere e dare informazioni

Grammar:

- Scelta dell'ausiliare nel passato prossimo dei verbi iniziare, finire, ecc...

- Alcuni suffissi diminutivi

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

**Review week
Midterm Exam: February 18**

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

Textbook: Unit 8
Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Chiedere e dire il prezzo
- Chiedere il permesso
- Chiedere una quantità
- Chiedere qualcosa in modo gentile
- Chiedere di raccontare e raccontare al passato

Grammar:

- Pronomi diretti
- Ne partitivo
- Ce l'ho
- Ci vuole/ci vogliono

***** March 2 - 6: Semester Break*****

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

Textbook: Unit 10
Quiz on Moodle

Co-curricular activity: Tandem Language Exchange

Competencies:

- Raccontare al passato
- Descrivere al passato
- Ricordare
- Descrivere abitudini al passato
- Fare confronti (tra il presente e il passato)

Grammar:

- Imperfetto
- Espressioni di tempo relative al passato (*una volta, da bambino, all'epoca...*)

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

Textbook: Unit 9
Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Chiedere ed esprimere i propri gusti
- Esprimere gradimento e non gradimento

Grammar:

- Pronomi indiretti
- Presente e passato del verbo piacere

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

Textbook: Unit 11

Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Esprimere un desiderio
- Chiedere e dare consigli
- Dare informazioni (esempio: in un annuncio)

Grammar:

- Condizionale semplice

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

Textbook: Unit 12

Quiz on Moodle

Solo Italiano Challenge

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:

- Descrivere un regalo
- Raccontare una festa
- Fare programmi

Grammar:

- Pronomi combinati
- Futuro semplice

Week 11: Apr. 7, 8

Textbook: Unit 13

Quiz on Moodle

Competencies:

- Descrivere un regalo
- Raccontare una festa
- Fare programmi
- Dare istruzioni

Grammar:

- Imperativo diretto e indiretto, imperativo negativo, imperativo con pronomi

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

Review week

***** Final Exam : April 15 *****