



ITAL 401: Attualità e cultura italiana

Course Syllabus

Fall Semester 2025

Instructor: Luca Gatti, PhD

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: At least five semesters of college-level Italian and Placement Exam

Class Meeting Days & Time: Monday and Wednesday, 2:15pm-3:45pm

Office Hours: by appointment after a class

Course Type: Course taught in Italian

Course Fee: \$ 35

Course Description

This course provides a review of Italian Culture and history, where students will live. After an introduction about the history of the XIX century, the first part of the course will cover the Risorgimento in which we'll discover Perugia's important role; the movement towards national unity, and the impact of the First World War and Fascism. The second part of the course will focus on the postwar Republican era.

The aim of this course is to offer students a complete introduction to Italian culture, and to showcase themes of contemporary Italian history. The course pursues these goals through lectures, readings, site trips, films, discussions and, most importantly, walking tours. Some of the readings used in this course analyze the historical development of the country while others offer a choice of interpretations of some key historiographical themes.

Course Materials

Readings

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available. The course's Moodle site is the primary location for readings and assignments.

Assessment

Attendance	10%
Midterm Exam	40%
Final Exam	50%

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	93% - 100%	Exceptional Excellent
A-	90% - 92%	
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 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 (10%)

Attendance is an essential part of this course. If you attend all the meetings, you will receive 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

Midterm Exam (40%)

It consists of a series of questions. It will be closed-book and closed-notes. The exam focuses on in-class lectures, the reading materials presented during the course. It takes approximately 90 minutes to complete. Exams are evaluated on the basis of specificity, detail, accuracy, knowledge, logic, insight, and clarity.

Final Exam (50%)

The final exam will cover all material from the course. It will be closed-book and closed-notes and will consist of essay questions. A review guide will be distributed to students a week before the exam. The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.

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 & Lateness Policy

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. Regular attendance is a critical component of academic success and students are expected to attend all scheduled classes unless there is a legitimate reason for absence. Students are also expected to be on time for all classes and co-curricular activities. Each unexcused absence will affect the final grade by 1.5% up to a maximum of 10%. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 0.5% off the final grade. Excessive unexcused absences (8 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.

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 be considered the equivalent of two unexcused absences. As such, absence from the co-curricular field trip will lower students' final grade in that course by 3% (the equivalent of two unexcused absences).

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. 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.

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 a specific academic accommodation.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

(MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER- WEDNESDAY 10 JANUARY)

Introduction to Italian Culture

Meeting 1: Introduzione al corso di **Cultura italiana**. Descrizione del programma, analisi delle lezioni e full immersion nella realtà italiana

Meeting 2: “Le città e i borghi”. Analisi dell’Italia contemporanea partendo dalla divisione tra Città e Borghi, differenze, analisi e prospettive. Storia della Toscana.

(Film: *vedere Nuovo Cinema Paradiso*)

Grammatica: ripasso differenza tra modo Indicativo, Condizionale e Congiuntivo

Readings for the week:

Istat, *Città metropolitane d'Italia, come cambiano i territori e le scelte degli italiani*, 2023

La provincia italiana, Nuovo Contatto C1, Loescher Edizioni, Pag 49-51

Borghi o paesi, I borghi più belli d'Italia

Alessia Merati, *25 borghi più belli d'Italia*, I borghi più belli d'Italia, Corriere della Sera, 2023

WEEK 2

(MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER- WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER)

Tradizioni e riti

Meeting 1: L'Italia delle tradizioni e dei riti. Dal Carnevale e le sue maschere alla pausa caffè, due esempi di tradizioni e riti della cultura italiana

Meeting 2: Il Palio di Siena, tra storia e attualità

(Visita della Chiesa di San Francesco al Prato)

Grammatica: il Congiuntivo presente e passato

Readings for the week:

Storia del Carnevale

Prof. Paolo Balboni, *Voci dall'Italia: Il Carnevale*, Venezia, Loescher Edizioni, 2023

Denise Grosso, *Le maschere del Carnevale*, cetraro.it

Il palio di Siena, Adblog.it, 2008

Italiano per Stranieri, *La pausa caffè*, Loescher Edizioni

WEEK 3

(MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER - WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER)

Il Risorgimento

Meeting 1: Storia dell’Unità d’Italia (1815-1870): Firenze Capitale (1866-1871); Perugia 1859, *The New York Times* e la famiglia Perkins

Meeting 2: Perugia e il nuovo Regno d’Italia

(Visita alla Società Operaia di Mutuo Soccorso)

Grammatica: il Congiuntivo imperfetto e trapassato

Readings for the week:

Luca Gatti, *Il Risorgimento a Perugia*, 2023

Antonio Chiavistelli, «Una potenza accanto alle potenze». *Firenze Capitale d'Italia (1865-1870)* (abstract 17-18)

Mauro Pichiassi e Giovanna Zaganelli, tratto da *Il Gattopardo* di Tomasi di Lampedusa, *Angelica*, Contesti Italiani, Guerra Edizioni, 1994

WEEK 4

(MONDAY 29 SEPTEMBER - WEDNESDAY 1 OCTOBER)

Il 900, la prima guerra mondiale e il futurismo

Meeting 1: La Belle Epoque in Italia. Il Futurismo

Meeting 2: La Prima Guerra Mondiale, l'Italia e l'intervento USA. Ricerca su l'esperienza dello scrittore americano nella Grande Guerra (Ernest Hemingway).

(Visita all'Antica Latteria)

Grammatica: ripasso del Congiuntivo

Readings for the week:

Piero Melograni, *Storia politica della Prima Guerra Mondiale (1915-18)*, Mondadori Editore (handouts)

L'intervento in guerra degli Stati Uniti, Massimiliano Italiano, Lagrandeguerra.net

Marinetti e il futurismo, Adattato da Treccani.it

Antiche caffetterie di Perugia, Caffèaiello.it, 2020

WEEK 5

(MONDAY 6 OCTOBER - WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER)

Il Fascismo

Meeting 1: Conseguenze della Prima Guerra Mondiale. Introduzione al Fascismo

Meeting 2: Il fascismo.

(Visita dei luoghi del fascismo a Perugia)

Grammatica: il congiuntivo e i suoi connettivi

Readings for the week:

Antonio Scurati, *M. Il figlio del secolo*, Bompiani Editore (handouts)

Gaetano Salvemini, *Lettere americane*, Donzelli Editore (handouts)

Luca Gatti, *Trentasei*, la violenza fascista, Bertoni Editore (handouts) 2020

WEEK 6

(MONDAY 13 OCTOBER - WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER)

1945: Freedom

Meeting 1: La Resistenza e la liberazione

Meeting 2: Midterm Exam

(Film: vedere *Il partigiano Johnny*)

Readings for the week:

Marta Bonsanti, *La liberazione di Firenze, delle città d'arte e della Toscana nell'opinione pubblica anglosassone* (Pag 297-298)

Beppe Fenoglio, *Il partigiano Johnny*, Einaudi (handouts riadattata da Luca Gatti)

Storia dei blue jeans, Loescher Edizioni, 2023

Semester Break

WEEK 7

(MONDAY 27 OCTOBER - WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER)

Dopoguerra: Italia e Stati Uniti

Meeting 1: Italia e Stati Uniti, il Piano Marshall

Meeting 2: “La Ricostruzione” dell’Italia e il Neorealismo

(Film: Vittorio De Sica, *Ladri di biciclette*)

Grammatica: Il Periodo Ipotetico

Readings for the week:

Daniela Bartalesi Graf, *A guerra finita, quale futuro per la Nazione?*, L’Italia dal Fascismo ad oggi, Guerra Edizioni, 2019

David W Ellwood, *L’impatto del Piano Marshall sull’Italia*

Daniela Bartalesi Graf, *La ricostruzione e i partiti politici*, L’Italia dal Fascismo ad oggi, Guerra Edizioni, 2019

Daniela Bartalesi Graf, *Il Neorealismo*, L’Italia dal Fascismo ad oggi, Guerra Edizioni, 2019

Mauro Campus, *L’Italia, gli Stati Uniti e il piano Marshall : 1947-1951*, Il Mulino Edizioni (*handouts*)

Italo Calvino, *L’avventura di due sposi*, Einaudi (*handouts*)

WEEK 8

(MONDAY 3 NOVEMBER- WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER)

La Dolce Vita

Meeting 1: Il boom economico

Meeting 2: *La Dolce Vita*, significato, storia e attualità

(Film: Federico Fellini, *La Dolce Vita*)

Grammatica: Il Periodo Ipotetico

Readings for the week:

Giuseppe Lupo, *Gli anni del nostro incanto*, Marsilio Editore (*handouts*)

Mauro Pichiassi e Giovanna Zaganelli, Natalia Ginsburg, *Vacanze in montagna*, Contesti Italiani, Guerra Edizioni 1994

WEEK 9

(MONDAY 10 NOVEMBER- WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER)

Il Made in Italy

Meeting 1: Storia del Made in Italy

Meeting 2: Brand Culturale

(*Film: Paolo Sorrentino, La Grande Bellezza, Indigo Film-Medusa Film*)

Visita di uno spazio Brand Culturale e incontro con Filippo Fettucciari, imprenditore

Grammatica: Il Periodo Ipotetico

Readings for the week:

Marco Fortis, *Il Made in Italy*, il Mulino (*handouts*)

La Storia della Vespa, italianolinguadue.it *Handouts*

Caterina Ruggi D'Aragona, *Campari, 162 anni di storia e oggi un successo sempre più globale*, Corriere della sera, 16 dicembre 2022

Paola Pollo, *Brunello Cucinelli, Ogni giorno è bello ma piango spesso*, Corriere della Sera, 7 marzo 2023

Storia della Nutella, italianolinguadue.it

WEEK 10

(MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER - WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER)

La cucina italiana

Meeting 1: Storia della cucina italiana

Meeting 2: La cucina regionale

(Preparazione e cena italiana in cucina)

Grammatica: l'imperativo per la cucina e Frasi idiomatiche

Readings for the week:

Alberto Capatti e Massimo Montanari, *La cucina italiana. Storia di una cultura*, Laterza Editore (*handouts*)

Pellegrino Artusi, *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene*, (*handouts Luca Gatti*)

Stanley Tucci, *La mia vita attraverso il cibo*, Baldini+Castoldi Editore

WEEK 11

(MONDAY 24 NOVEMBER- WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER)

La Mafia e il giornalismo

Meeting 1: La Mafia, ieri e oggi

Meeting 2: Letteratura, Leonardo Sciascia: il passato remoto

(Film: *I cento passi*)

Grammatica: il passato remoto

Readings for the week:

Storia della Mafia, estratto preso dal testo Magari, Alma Edizioni

Luigi Garlando, *Per questo mi chiamo Giovanni. Da un padre a un figlio il racconto della vita di Giovanni Falcone*,

Bur Edizioni (*handouts*)

Leonardo Sciascia, *Delitto, Il giorno della Civetta*, Einaudi 1961

WEEK 12

(MONDAY 1 DECEMBER - WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER)

I giovani italiani e l'Europa

Meeting 1: La nascita della CEE e dell'Unione Europea.

Meeting 2: L'euro, l'erasmus, l'Unione Europea

(Film: *L'appartamento spagnolo*)

Grammatica: ripasso e frasi idiomatiche

Readings for the week:

Handouts

Istituto Giuseppe Toniolo, *La condizione giovanile in Italia. Rapporto giovani 2022*, il Mulino

L'Erasmus, Riccardo Antonucci, Corriere della Sera, 2019

Handouts: Osservatorio Giovani. Il Progetto Erasmus

WEEK 13

Meeting 1: **Final Exam**