

ACCF SOITS 360S ITALIAN STYLE AND CULTURE

Course	Italian Style
Professor	Veronica Morelli / Maria Antonietta Casciabanco
Sessions offered	Summer session

Course Description	<p>This course will explore the multifaceted categories regarding the current notion of “Italy”, considering the country’s history and development. Students will be guided into an in-depth analysis of multiple aspects of Italian identity as it is manifested in a variety of products and expressions (language and media; food and handicrafts; design and fashion), seen in the context of the deep structure and constant changes in Italian society. The focus will be on different disciplines ranging from theories to final products. The course is organized into two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part I: we will analyze the complex question of Italian identity in social and historical context; • Part II: we will explore major aspects of Italian culture, especially the postwar period up to the present time. Subjects considered include Cinema, Media, Craft and Food. <p>Students rise above initial perceptions and stereotypes to explore the texture and reasons of Italy’s many striking contradictions: beauty and squalor, wealth and poverty, and so on. The course asks whether we can define an Italian style or styles. If so, what is the secret of its enduring success, which seems to be a mixture of quality, imagination, and force?</p>
Learning Objectives and Outcomes	<p>The course examines basic aspects of Italian culture leading the students towards an understanding of the most common perceptions of Italy and Italians, comparing their respective images, as projected over the world and perceived from outside. Students will be encouraged to make connections and ask questions and, by the end of the course, they are expected to have accumulated a series of elements which allow them to consider the Italian identity from an informed point of view.</p> <p>This introductory course is designed to equip students to analyze many features of Italian culture, history and society. They will come away from the course with more precise knowledge about specific themes and personalities, but also a subtler understanding of an ethos, of Italian identity.</p> <p>Students will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a basic scheme of Italy’s historical development, above all in the last 60 years • a working knowledge of the basic features of modern Italian culture • close familiarity with the secondary literature on these features • an ability to make links between politics, history, and society on the one hand and the products of industry, media, and the arts on the other
Student Assessment	<p>Regular attendance, punctuality, responsible and active participation in class is all-essential to the successful completion of the course. Students will carry out individual or group research project on a topic of personal choice, outlined during the course, presenting it to the class with an in depth analysis (with PowerPoint support). The mid-term exam will be a written quiz about the first part of the course, covering the topics presented in class and including basic information about Italian history. The final exam will consist of a written examination regarding the contents of the second part of the course.</p>

Evaluation Scale	The evaluation scale is based on the US Grading System (letter grades).
Bibliography, Webography, Filmography	<p>Reference texts Z.G. Baranskj and R.J. West (edited by), <i>The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture</i>, Cambridge, University Press, 2001. David Forgacs and Robert Lumely (edited by) <i>Italian Cultural Studies. An introduction</i>, edited by Oxford University Press, 1996.</p> <p>General Bibliography (selected) <i>N.b. Additional bibliography on specific topics and other items will be suggested in class.</i> Harry Header, <i>Italy a short history</i>, Cambridge, 2nd ed. 2001 John A. Davis, <i>Italy in the Nineteenth Century 1796-1900</i>, Oxford, University Press, 2000. (in Accademia library) John Dickie, <i>Cosa Nostra. A History of the Sicilian Mafia</i>, Hodder and Stoughton, 2004. (in Accademia library) Paul Ginsborg, <i>A history of contemporary Italy. Society and Politics 1943-1988</i>, London, Penguin, 1990. (in Accademia library) Paul Ginsborg, <i>Italy and its discontents 1980-2001</i>. London, Penguin, 2001. (in Accademia library) <i>Revisioning Italy, National Identity and Global Culture</i>, edited by Beverly Allen and Mary Russo, Minnesota, University Press, 1997. (in Accademia library) Charles Richards, <i>The New Italians</i>, London, Penguin, 2nd ed. 1995. (in Accademia library)</p>

Week 1	Beyond Stereotypes. Introduction, course structure. Presentation of the course's aim and reading syllabus.
Week 2	Who are the Italians? Brief outline of Peninsula's history, from Antiquity to Modern Time. Nation-building problem: the Italian State and the "notion" of Italy. The North-South "divide" in the comedy "Benvenuti al Sud" (<i>Welcome to the South</i>).
Week 3	Speaking Italian. The birth of Italian national language: the Florentine. Analysis of linguistic variety within Italy: dialects today and the regional identity. How to speak Italian without saying a word: the gestures. " <i>Following Dante & Beatrice, a fascinating and unrequited love story</i> ": a walking tour inside the neighborhood where Dante grew up and where he first met Beatrice, his angel-woman.
Week 4	How Catholic culture influences social identities in Italy. Family is everywhere, the family as the enduring center of Italian life. Popular traditions and superstitions between Catholic and non-Catholic practices: beliefs and rituals, symbols, <i>Malocchio</i> and <i>Tarantella</i> .
Week 5	Seasons and Reasons. Italian cuisine and the main reasons for its worldwide fame. The Mediterranean Diet and the "philosophy" of food: the Slow-Food Movement. The varieties of traditions. Lunch/Snack together and live class in a typical Florentine place.
Week 6	The Mafia in the media and in reality. The Mafia as a social and economic phenomenon. Analysis of main characteristics of " <i>Cosa Nostra</i> ", " <i>Ndrangheta</i> " and " <i>Camorra</i> " by selected readings and video-clips proposed to the class.
Week 7	Mid-term exam
Week 8	Italian handicraft. A walking tour in <i>Santo Spirito</i> : the small village of artisans.
Week 9	The music of Italy: from Verdi to Italian hip hop. Opera, folk music and popular songs. Italian folk music.

Week 10	Italy on the big screen: Italian Cinema. From the beginnings to the present days. A journey through the most iconic movies and representative actors. Group research in class.
Week 11	Fashion for everybody. The value of the Costume. Italian Fashion from its début to today. Biographical review of several Italian designers (Valentino, Ferragamo, Gucci et al.)
Week 12	<i>Facciamo Festa!</i> National Holidays, historical festivals and legends of Italy. "Flipping" through the pages of the Italian calendar. "Exported" celebrations and competitive events.
Week 13	Student presentations Italy Today, the most recent Italian performance: latest news, society and curiosities. Reading and discussion in class using the most important online newspapers.
Week 14	Final Exam