

**IS 278, Italian Genre Crossings and Hybridity**  
**Department of Languages, Literature and Culture, Fall 2018**

**I. COURSE INFORMATION**

Instructor: Fabio Ferrari, Ph.D.

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Office hours: Tue/Fri 8:30 am - 11:30 am and Wed pm by appointment

Office location: Kaletsch Office 6

Class location: Kaletsch Classroom 3

Class meeting times: Wed 10:00 am - 12:45 pm

**II. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This project-based course on contemporary Italian culture offers an innovative look at Italian filmmakers, novelists, essayists, actors, philosophers, photographers, translators, singers, even caricaturists, who refused to be defined by one form of artistry and, instead, viewed work across genres and media as an important means to defying outmoded conventions. In so doing, these artists amplified the scope and range of their unique message, while also commonly embracing the value of cultural cross-fertilization and hybridity.

The artists to be studied will vary from year to year. This year we will be focusing on the work of Federico Fellini, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Michelangelo Antonioni, Amelia Rosselli, and Dacia Maraini.

There is a significant experiential learning and creative writing/video/audio production component to this class which asks students to venture into multimedia assignments (merging digital photography with short fiction, for example, or exploring the concept of liminality in both music and the prose poem).

**III. RATIONALE**

IS 278 counts towards completion of the Global Responsibility FUS Core under the category of Intercultural Competency. It also counts towards the Italian Studies minor.

#### **IV. COURSE GOALS**

Acquire familiarity with the historical development of Italy's literary and filmmaking traditions; with particular attention paid to 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century topics and trends.

Cultivate critical reading skills with translated literary texts and film texts and, when possible, to reflect meaningfully on the cultural and linguistic differences dividing the Italian original from the English-language translation.

To utilize one's own creative voice and expression as a means to explore and interpret the core meanings of the texts under scrutiny.

#### **V. LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will capitalize on their intercultural knowledge and skills to interact critically and creatively with the English translation of Italian texts they will encounter, interpret, and adapt.

In class discussion, oral presentations, and research papers, students will be able to analyze in diverse settings the impact of personal, interpersonal and cultural identities; for example, religion, race, ability, age, class, sexuality, and gender.

Students will be able to carry out systematic explorations of Italian literary works through the collection and analysis of textual evidence (primary and secondary sources), and will make resource of their critical thinking skills in solving questions or problems related to the topics in Italian culture and Italian literary history.

Students will also: construct a clear problem statement or research question regarding a specific issue related to the texts under scrutiny); develop a logical framework for organizing and communicating findings on these texts; gather and interpret pertinent evidence, making reasoned judgments and distinguishing quality data and analyses from unsupported opinions; propose solutions and/or state conclusions that are logical and indicate a deep comprehension of the question, problem, or issue.

Students will cultivate excellence in oral communication in English, projecting a strong level of comfort and confidence in academic communication situations such as class discussion and group presentations.

Students will be asked to effectively communicate ideas in written English in an articulate and culturally aware manner to the degree expected at a high quality international liberal arts institution.

Students will express positions in a convincing manner while remaining respectful to alternative views.

Students will learn to effectively respond to complex problems using their imaginative resources in the development of original works.

Students will exercise discipline in their artistic endeavors, following the creative process from start to finish, taking an idea from imagination through vision to full fruition.

## **VI. HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE**

The FUS university classroom is a place for you to spread your wings. Please feel free to contribute as actively as possible to this collective learning project. Don't fall behind on the readings, type up your notes and questions before each class meeting and share the results of your hard work.

What you read needs to be meaningful *to* you in order for it to stay *with* you. This does not mean that you will "like" every reading or video/film text, nor are you expected to. Making a text meaningful to you means finding its value as a document that has personal resonance for you as an individual. This resonance can be intellectual, emotional, even physical. Ideas may come to you right away, or they may need prompting through dialogue with other classmates. From this perspective, it is the student who will make this class rewarding and of lasting value. It is up to the student to invest the necessary energy and commitment for ideas to take form and mature over time. Challenge yourself. Enjoy the process. Share your enthusiasm for ideas, foster your own intellectual process, and create original work that you are proud of.

## **VII. REQUIRED TEXTS**

Umberto Eco. Trans. William Weaver. *Travels in Hyperreality*. San Diego, Harvest, 1983.

Federico Fellini. Trans. Isabel Quigley. *Fellini On Fellini*. Da Capo Press, 1996.

Pier Paolo Pasolini. Trans. Jack Hirschman. *In Danger. A Pasolini Anthology*. New York, City Lights Publishers, 2010.

Cesare Pavese. Trans. R.W. Flint. *The Moon and the Bonfires*. New York, New York Review Books, 2002.

Dacia Maraini. Trans. Dick Kitto and Elspeth Spottiswood. *The Silent Duchess*. The Feminist Press at CUNY, 2000.

Amelia Rosselli. Trans. Jennifer Scappettone, *Locomotrix: Selected Poetry and Prose of Amelia Rosselli*. Chicago, University Of Chicago Press, 2012

## VIII. ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This course is student-centered, project-based, and experiential. There are no formal papers for this class. Instead, there are six Student Work Presentation days for which students are encouraged to experiment with various forms of expression (writing of different genres such as the essay or the short story, photography, video/film, or monologues/performance). Student Work will be shared during class time and a well-reasoned 1-page Artist's Statement will be handed in on these days. The Artist's Statement must (1) reflect meaningfully on the cinematic or literary work that has been most recently discussed in class, (2) explain the conceptual nexus linking the work of Italian writers/filmmakers to student work, (3) articulate in what ways the work of the writer/filmmaker studied in class diverges from your own experience, interpretation, or vision.

At least 24 hours prior to each Wednesday meeting, students will be required to e-mail the professor 3 well-developed and properly contextualized discussion questions based on the assigned reading. The questions will serve as prompts for stimulating animated group discussion.

In addition to the readings or viewings assigned for class, there will be photocopied material distributed in class and in-class screenings not listed on the syllabus. These additions will seek to respond to the questions posed by students, the direction of their work, and any challenges encountered as we move through the semester.

### **Grading Criteria:**

The student's grade will be determined based on the following:

1. Class Preparation; Participation; punctual submission of stimulating Discussion Questions (35%)
2. Five Student Work Presentations and 1-page Artist's Statements (30%)

Presentations should take no more than 10 minutes. Whatever medium you choose for your work, it must be visually provocative and intellectually linked in some interesting way (that you will explain in an Artist's Statement) to the work of Italian writers/filmmakers under scrutiny. A final portfolio of all your Student Work should show, as a whole, an ongoing willingness to experiment and produce quality work, with a clear evolution indicative of intellectual and creative growth.

3. Midterm Examination (15%)

4-6 Essay Questions. Expected to be based on student-submitted questions.

#### 4. Final Examination (20%)

6-8 Essay Questions. Expected to be based on student-submitted questions.

#### **Grading Scale:**

Grading Scale for Examinations:

<b>A</b> : 94-100	<b>B+</b> : 88-89	<b>C+</b> : 78-79	<b>D+</b> : 68-69	<b>F</b> : 0-59
<b>A-</b> : 90-93	<b>B</b> : 84-87	<b>C</b> : 74-77	<b>D</b> : 64-67	
	<b>B-</b> : 80-83	<b>C-</b> : 70-73	<b>D-</b> : 60-63	

Final Course Grade (based on an average of letter grades according to the following grade points):

<b>A</b> : 4.0	<b>B+</b> : 3.3	<b>C+</b> : 2.3	<b>D+</b> : 1.3	<b>F</b> : 0.0
<b>A-</b> : 3.7	<b>B</b> : 3.0	<b>C</b> : 2.0	<b>D</b> : 1.0	
	<b>B-</b> : 2.7	<b>C-</b> : 1.7	<b>D-</b> : 0.7	

### **IX. POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

**Attendance Policy:** A total of two absences will be tolerated during the course of the term as long as efforts are made by the student to make up all homework and missed in-class work. A third absence will automatically result in a grade reduction from the final grade (i.e. a B+ would drop to a B). Five unexcused absences will result in a report to the dean and the registrar.

Please note that late arrival to class may be recorded as an absence.

Students failing to complete the assigned readings may, in some cases, be considered equivalent to an absence.

Respect for other students and the learning process as a whole is a priority in this course. Disrespect of any kind will not be tolerated.

Internet surfing or messaging during class time will result in an automatic lowering of your participation grade.

Late papers/written assignments will be penalized 10 percentage points per academic day without documented evidence of a major disruption to your work. No papers will be accepted more than 5 days after the deadline. Students must retain a final draft until the work is returned.

### **X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Please refer to Franklin's Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism in the Academic Catalog for the full version but, to summarize here, you are to do your own work. Behavior such

as copying the work of others, using third-party services, or any other circumvention of doing your own work are dishonest and not acceptable in this class or at this institution. For papers and presentations, this includes proper use of references and citations. Copying text without the use of quotations, or paraphrasing the ideas of others without proper citations, are both examples of plagiarism and thus unacceptable.

For testing situations, this includes the use of notes, cell phones, talking to others, or copying off of the exam of others.

The first case of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic grade of a zero on the assignment and a report to the Dean. The second case will result in expulsion from the university.

## **XI. COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **WEEK 1**

29 August:

Introduction to Course. *Zabriskie Point* (in class); *Travels in Hyperreality*, 1-21 (in class); *Italy, Exile Country* (in class).

### **WEEK 2**

5 September:

*Travels in Hyperreality*, 21-58; "Astral America," 28-78 (Moodle).

### **Student Work Presentation 1**

### **WEEK 3**

12 September:

*The Moon and the Bonfires*, 3-90; *Disaffections* (Moodle).\*

### **WEEK 4**

19 September: *The Moon and the Bonfires*, 90-154.

### **WEEK 5**

26 September: *Antonioni. Centenary Essays*. 134-154 (Moodle); *L'Avventura* (in class).

### **Student Work Presentation 2**

**WEEK 6**

3 October:

*L'Avventura* (in class).

**WEEK 7**

10 October: *Love Meetings* (in class).

**Student Work Presentation 3****WEEK 8**

17 October:

Midterm Exam

**WEEK 9 & 10** (20 October – 4 November): ACADEMIC TRAVEL

**WEEK 11**

7 November: *Art & Multitude*, 3-98 (Moodle); *Mamma Roma*; *A Certain Realism*; 18-46 (Moodle).\*

**WEEK 12**

14 November: *In Danger* (Selected Poems). *Loco Motrix* (Selected Poems).

**WEEK 13**

21 November: *Fellini on Fellini*, 1-166; *La Dolce Vita*, (in class)

**Student Work Presentations 4****WEEK 14**

28 November: *La Dolce Vita* (in class); *The Silent Duchess*, 9-181.

**WEEK 15**

6 December: *The Silent Duchess*, 181-235.

## **Student Work Presentation 5**

### **WEEK 16**

12 December (Kaletsch Classroom 3, 11:00 – 13:00: Final Exam)