

ITA 301 Advanced Italian, Pt. II / ITA 373 Italian Film and Society,  
Department of Languages, Literatures, and Culture, Spring 2019

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

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Professor: Fabio Ferrari, Ph.D.

E-mail: [fferrari@fus.edu](mailto:fferrari@fus.edu)

Class location: Kaletsch Classroom 6

Class meeting times: Tuesdays and Fridays 11:30 – 12:45 pm

Office Hours: Kaletsch Office 6, Mondays and Thursdays, 8:30-11:30,  
and Wednesday mornings by appointment

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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ITA 301 is designed for students who have successfully completed five semesters of college-level Italian language study, or the equivalent. ITA 301 functions as a bridge course for students wishing to pursue a major or minor in Italian or Italian Studies. Students will be screening contemporary films and reading Italian texts on Italian cultural history, film criticism, conversing about the themes and topics that arise in these texts, performing research in Italian, preparing oral presentations, and crafting several writing assignments. Topics to be discussed, in relation to the readings and films, will include the Italian Post-War era and its relation to comedy as a form of social commentary and critique; *cinema d'autore* of the Boom as it connects to Left-wing cultural politics and ideologies, Italian stardom, the representation of Italian masculinity,

womanhood, children, business and industry versus family values, the desire for progress versus nostalgia for a simpler past.

By the end of this course, the student is expected to reach the high B2/C1 level, as articulated in the Common European Framework for language learning. The LLC Department checks successful achievement of this learning outcome through voluntary simulation testing, organized by the Italian area coordinator when appropriate.

This course is cross-listed with *ITA 373 Italian Film and Society*. *ITA 373* is both an upper-level Italian Studies and Film Studies course. The description and topics noted above are exactly the same, while the expectations for *ITA 373* students are different. *ITA 373* students should already be at the C1 or C2 level, or may be Italian native speakers, and they are expected to take leadership roles in class discussion, presentations, reading and research, and all aspects of course learning which they are expected to profit from at a higher level of comprehension and expression. They should consider themselves mentors to the *ITA 301* students, embracing the “learning by mentoring” philosophy which can be considered a signature feature of an FUS education. Additionally, *ITA 373* students also must demonstrate the ability to be self-starters in terms of the motivation and high-level output expected in all FUS upper-level classes.

## **RATIONALE**

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ITA 301 is not a Core Class. Beyond the required FUS Language Core (100-300) is most typically the first class that counts towards the Italian Studies (IS) Minor or Major.

ITA 373 counts for Italian Studies credit and as an elective in various programs of study at Franklin, including Film Studies.

## **COURSE GOALS**

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ITA 301 students normally begin the course at B2 level, depending on their degree of success in the ITA 100-300 language core. Students will have been exposed to all Italian grammar topics and communicative skills necessary to succeed in an advanced course and should not expect any formal grammar instruction in this class. Having said that, review may be necessary for some students and, in these cases, resources will be made available for these students so that they can progress more rapidly and do well in this course.

A primary goal of this course is for students to learn how to express their critical and reflective voices in Italian, both orally and in writing. Students will continue their practice with screening films and reading texts relevant to the broadest cultural understanding of the media under scrutiny. ITA 301 students gain practice with their scholarly essay writing, oral expression in Italian of critical thinking skills, teamwork and presentation skills, and video-making / publishing skills for students wishing to pursue Film as a minor (existing) or major (in progress). Students wishing to

Students in this course are expected to practice speaking, listening, writing, and reading at a high intermediate/advanced level of sophistication, expressing opinions on complex issues and sharing their own insights with increasing fluency.

Beyond goals related to the language arts, the main goal of the course is to cultivate film and media-related knowledge and expertise as these relate to several topics in Italian cultural history from 1960-2019. These topics are set to change from one iteration of the course to another but typically revolve around categories which include religion, tradition, race, gender, class, and sexuality.

### **SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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Upon successful completion of this course, ITA 301 students should expect to be able to:

	Understanding		Speaking		Writing
	Listening	Reading	Interaction	Production	
C1	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. I can understand television programs and films without too much effort.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialized articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skillfully to those of other speakers.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.

In addition to the outcomes articulated above, specific to the language arts and following European standards, students in this course are also expected to demonstrate working knowledge of the cultural contributions made by the filmmakers and authors to be studied; the themes they raise in their work and the pertinence of their social critique to both the era in which the films were produced and in contemporary Italy.

ITA 373 students are expected to demonstrate mediation and collaboration skills, sophistication of expression and critical interaction and analysis skills vis-à-vis the cultural contributions made by the filmmakers and authors to be studied; the themes they raise in their work and the pertinence of their social critique to both the era in which the films were produced and in contemporary Italy.

## REQUIRED TEXTS, FILMS, AND MATERIALS

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Five out of six titles below should be purchased from the FUS Bookstore. Additional photocopied material may be distributed in class or projected as a slide. In the event of an absence, please ask a classmate for their notes as course material will not necessarily be uploaded to Moodle. Learn to take notes that are meaningful to you and potentially valuable for life-long learning. See Moodle for a complete course bibliography and filmography:

*Il gattopardo*, Lampedusa;

*Gli italiani*, Barzini;

*La grande bellezza*, Sorrentino;

*Commedia all'italiana*, Comand;

*Cinema d'autore degli anni Sessanta*, Morreale (see Moodle);

*The Cinema of Economic Miracles* (in English), Restivo;

*Zibaldone di pensieri*, Leopardi.

Students will be required to screen eleven films for this class. A digital library will provide access to these titles, shorthanded citations below, not including a few more titles for in-class use): All films have been uploaded, where appropriate, with Italian subtitles:

*Miracolo a Milano*, De Sica;

*Il sorpasso*, Risi;

*La ragazza con la valigia*, Zurlini;

*La strada*, Fellini;

*Il gattopardo* (The Leopard); Visconti;

*Caro diario* (Dear Diary); Moretti;

*Ladri di saponette*, Nichetti;

*Ieri, oggi, domani* (Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow), De Sica;

*I mostri*, Risi;

*La grande bellezza*, Sorrentino;

*Capriccio all'italiana*, Pasolini.

In class, use of pen and paper is preferred to digital notetaking for reasons that I will elaborate on briefly during our first lesson. While I encourage students to embrace their own paths to learning, it should be noted that I consider it extremely counterproductive when students' telephones are allowed to become an impediment to group discussion or collective work of any kind. Students are encouraged to use whatever technology they prefer in this class but to maximize learning they must learn restrain, discipline, and always show focus and self-initiative.

It is suggested that students invest in paper notebook for this class and, naturally, they are required to bring assigned reading materials to class and have writing instruments and paper on hand at all times for exercises, pop assessments, peer review. If a student feels strongly about using a laptop computer, tablet, or phone for notetaking in class instead of pen and paper, I leave it to their maturity and discretion; they will take care that the use of technology, as a tool for learning, never interfere with their dedication to teamwork and group participation. If I comment that the use of technology may be distracting or disturbing others, students should consider this an

invitation to use pen and paper instead, and to visibly redirect their attention away from their technology, attending courteously and collegially to the necessary interaction with human beings that any productive work meeting necessitates at our university.

Respect for your professor and classmates and the enterprise of education is a very basic requirement and I state this here so that we may cultivate more complex skills during valuable class time. Because this class is designed as a seminar where participation is carries an important weight, students' efforts to maintain professional discipline and contribute actively to discussion are considered essential. Your sustained positive attitude and constructive contributions will be recognized in my evaluation of your participation grade and work in general.

Your running portfolio document should be saved on a USB memory stick (not a cloud, not a telephone, not a pc, not a tablets) which students will diligently bring to class for quick access to your writing. Students are expected to overcome their shyness and share their work publically, volunteering to project their reflections or drafts of their writing or video compositions for feedback on your output throughout the semester.

## **ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**

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ITA 301 and ITA 373 student progress and a corresponding final grade will be assessed by rubric, related directly to the learning outcomes listed above, as applied to the following projects and activities. Students are encouraged to read:

- 1) Active In-Class Participation in a Seminar-Style Class Setting (15%):**

You will be evaluated on your effort and willingness to contribute actively and meaningfully to class discussions. This means: (1) referring to your portfolio homework in class (see below) and (2) helping to stimulate dialogue about the texts under scrutiny by sharing your insights, questions, and observations.

## **2) Portfolio of Homework Assignments (25%):**

For every set of readings and screenings assigned per lesson, students are expected to compose a critical reflection on the questions and topics raised that warrant further discussion in class. Critical reflections may begin or end with thought-provoking questions on, for example, the intention of the director, the specific historical context as it relates to a film's themes and representations, the role played by a specific Italian star or popular / foreign icon, the music of the film, the costumes of a film, the values and customs explored in the film, the language of the script, the main "take away" message(s) of the film, the insight into a film provided by readings which directly or indirectly pertain to and elucidate the film in various ways, etc.. Students should always familiarize themselves with the biographical/contextual frame through which any understanding of film text must inevitably pass. A sentence or two dedicated to this frame will suffice for the purposes of the portfolio.

Remember to label each portfolio entry by date and assignment.

The portfolio will be uploaded to Moodle for grading exactly one week prior to Midterm and on the morning of the class meeting prior to Finals.



The final version of the portfolio should include a carefully crafted author's preface of a paragraph or two in which you comment on the personal highlights, for you, in our course screenings and readings. What was/were, for you, the main "take away" message(s) of the course? The preface should conclude with a candid self-assessment of what you think you learned as a student and where you may still need to improve.

### **3) Research Presentations (15%):**

Prior to Midterm, you will be asked to perform general research tasks (using Italian-language sources) and present your findings in a short oral presentation (approximately 15 minutes). Presentations will be accompanied by a few PowerPoint slides. The PowerPoint slides should be uploaded to Moodle prior to assigned presentation and not e-mailed to the professor. On the morning you are scheduled to present, please come to the classroom a few minutes early and download your presentation to the classroom computer desktop. If the classroom is locked come and find me in my office so that we can proceed directly to your presentation in class without delay sometimes caused by technical problems. ITA 373 students will sign up for a second presentation, assessing close reading and critical thinking for native and advanced Italian speakers, typically scheduled after Academic Travel.

### **4) Research Paper (20%):**

Please choose an author or filmmaker studied in this course and write a short research paper (6-7 pages for ITA 301; 10-12 pages for ITA 373.) in which you advance your interpretation of their work through independent research, close reading, analysis, and argumentation. A bibliography should be included (using MLA or Chicago style guides). You will be expected to articulate your thesis statement and illustrate your argument in a final oral presentation.

**5) Final Paper Presentation (15%):**

The final oral presentation, based on your research paper findings and a working final draft that is ready to be shared for peer review and professor's feedback on content quality (not mechanics, nor style which you should work on independently, availing yourself to WLC resources and writing tutors). The presentation should be executed using PowerPoint slides and should be timed so as not to exceed 15 minutes (not including video clips, where relevant, and required follow-up discussion questions). As with all oral presentations in Italian Studies courses, students should not read aloud from notes but practice with spontaneous speech production as much as possible.

**6) Final Panel Discussion Preparation and Programming (10%):**

A final research conference in panel format will be planned by students as a final team project.

**GRADING**

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**Assignment Grades:**

A : 94-100   B+ : 88-89   C+ : 78-79   D+ : 68-69   F: 0-59

A- : 90-93   B : 84-87   C : 74-77   D : 64-67

B- : 80-83   C- : 70-73   D- : 60-63

#### **Final Grade:**

A : 4.0   B+ : 3.3   C+ : 2.3   D+ : 1.3   F: 0.0

A- : 3.7   B : 3.0   C : 2.0   D : 1.0

B- : 2.7   C- : 1.7   D- : 0.7

#### **POLICIES & REQUIREMENTS**

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Regular attendance is expected and required. Only one absence is excused automatically. After a second absence, whatever the reason, the student's grade may be dropped. In the event of a fourth absence, the student may receive a failing grade for the course. Documented health issues will be the only exception here and the professor reserves the right to assign a zero for poor attendance, at his discretion, if the student chooses not to document their illness by availing themselves to the guidance of the university nurse or healthcare support staff.

The number of total absences allowed includes those attributed to normal seasonal illness. These absences need not be discussed with the professor. I remain open to more pondered consideration of exceptional circumstances which impact your ability to study: these situations should be discussed confidentially with the professor, a campus health professional, or the Academic Dean. In cases of ongoing illness or a family emergency, make an appointment in a timely and professional manner to discuss your difficulties, and provide the professor with any relevant documentation if applicable.

With regard to minimum standards of conduct in the classroom, rude behavior such as checking social media or messaging will result in a lowering of your participation grade. If disruptive behavior persists after a

warning there may be other more serious consequences. Students wishing to avoid conduct issues will remember to manage their phone/tablet/pc use and to take notes instead of doodles; practicing here, as elsewhere, with the craft of the language arts in your notetaking skills.

Respect for other students, their opinions, and the learning process is a priority in this course and all courses at FUS.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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Please refer to Franklin's Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism in the FUS Academic Catalog 2018-2020 for the full version (page 199), 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 the hard work of drafting and editing your own paper or project, unless collaboration is formally authorized by the professor in exceptional circumstances, are to be considered 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 (unless otherwise indicated) the use of notes, cell phones, talking to others, or copying of the exam of others.

A student whose actions are deemed by the University to be out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives or the spirit of good conduct as fostered by the University and Swiss community, may be placed on

Disciplinary Probation or become subject to dismissal from the University. Cheating is a dishonest action out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives and spirit of the University. Furthermore, cheating reflects negatively on one's personal integrity and is unjust to those students who have studied.

For your own protection, I advise you to work on your own computer or desktop login when writing papers or working on pros, to keep record of your work progress (notes, drafts, etc.).

The online FUS Academic Catalog, linked below, provides the most updated version of the full FUS statement and policy to prevent plagiarism: <https://www.fus.edu/files/FUS-academic-catalog.pdf>

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

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### **Important Note on Reading Assignment:**

Italian will be the native tongue for several students in this class, while other students (ITA 301) are still refining and perfecting their language skills. ITA 301 are expected to challenge themselves to read as much as possible and must keep up with all screenings. ITA 301 students must self-assess and monitor their reading skills as the semester progresses and take note in their Portfolio notes of the exact pages they were able to read with the kind of care necessary to contribute actively to class discussion. ITA 373 students are also not assigned specific page numbers for each class but must complete every assignment and note their progress in terms of pages read for each lesson in their Portfolio notes.

**January 22**

Reading Syllabus and Taking Note of Professor's Expectations: How to Succeed in this Course

Practicing with Reading and Screening Reflections  
and Class Participation Expectations

**Defining and Conceptualizing *Commedia*;  
From Dante to De Sica; from Calvino to Moretti**

Sign up via e-mail for presentations by Friday morning if you have specific dates you wish to reserve for showcasing your work. If I don't hear from you will be assigned dates at random.

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| January 25 | <i>Ieri, oggi, domani (Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow)</i><br><i>Gli italiani</i><br><b>Presentation 1.1: Italian Stardom; Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni</b> |
| January 29 | <i>La grande bellezza</i><br><i>Gli italiani</i><br><b>Presentation 1.2: Illusion and Cagliostro and the Eternal Baroque</b>                                     |
| February 1 | <i>Capriccio all'italiana</i><br><i>Gli italiani</i><br><b>Presentation 1.3: 'Perché e per cosa?' Pier Paolo Pasolini</b>  |
| February 5 | <i>Il sorpasso</i><br><i>Gli italiani</i><br><b>Presentation 1.4: Speed as a Film Metaphor and Italian Automobile / Motorcycle Design</b>                        |
| February 8 | <i>I mostri</i><br><i>Commedia all'italiana</i>  |

**Presentation 1.5: I perdenti che fanno ridere**

February 15	<i>Miracolo a Milano</i> <i>Commedia all'italiana</i> <b>Presentation 1.6: Cesare Zavattini and Vittorio De Sica</b>
February 19	<i>Ladri di saponette</i> <i>Commedia all'italiana</i> <b>Presentation 1.7: Maurizio Nichetti and Vittorio De Sica</b>
February 22	February Break / No Classes
February 26	<i>La strada</i> (screened in class) <i>Cinema d'autore degli anni Sessanta 1.1</i> (Moodle)
March 1	<i>La strada</i> (screened in class) <i>Cinema d'autore degli anni Sessanta</i> (Moodle)
March 5	<i>La dolce vita</i> <i>Cinema d'autore degli anni Sessanta</i> (Moodle) <b>Presentazione 2.1 Cinema italiano e francese.</b> <b><i>La teoria di un genere mancato (pro)</i></b>
March 8	<i>La dolce vita</i> <i>Cinema d'autore degli anni Sessanta</i> (Moodle) <b>Presentazione 2.2: Cinema italiano e francese.</b> <b><i>La teoria di un genere mancato (contro)</i></b>
March 9 – 24	Academic Travel
March 26	<i>Caro Diario</i>

*Zibaldone di pensieri*

**Presentazione 2.3: Nanni Moretti e Leopardi?**

**March 29**

*Caro Diario*

*Zibaldone di pensieri*

**Presentazione 2.4: Ancora Nanni Moretti e Leopardi??**

**April 2**

*La ragazza con la valigia*

*The Cinema of Economic Miracles (ITA 301)*

*Zibaldone di pensieri (ITA 353)*

**April 5**

*Il gattopardo, Visconti*

*The Cinema of Economic Miracles (ITA 301)*

*Il gattopardo, Tomasi di Lampedusa (ITA 353)*

**April 9**

*Il gattopardo, Visconti*

*The Cinema of Economic Miracles (ITA 301)*

*Il gattopardo, Tomasi di Lampedusa (ITA 353)*

**April 12**

Paper Presentations (1,2) and Peer Review

**April 16**

Paper Presentations (3,4) and Peer Review

**April 19**

Paper Presentations (5,6) and Peer Review

**April 23**

Paper Presentations (7,8) and Peer Review

**April 26**

Portfolio Progress Spot Check and “Pop”  
Assessment in the form of a Quiz Competition  
(name that Italian director, name that actor,  
remember the year of production, what is the film



about, what does this character represent, what does this industry term mean, etc.)

**April 30**

**Final Portfolios Due (9.00 am)**

Final Panel Discussion Organization and Prep

**May 3**

Final Panel Discussion Organization and Prep

Final Panel Discussion Program Due (to be coordinated independently and submitted as a single PDF document via e-mail by panel discussion mediators)

**May 14 (8:30 - 10:30 am)**

**Final Papers Due (8:00 am)**

Final Panel Discussions

*Professor's Salute*