

An interdepartmental program

Italian Studies

Courses of Study:
Minor
Major (BA)

Objectives

Italian studies provides an interdisciplinary major and a minor for those who wish to extend their study of Italian beyond language and culture to areas of Italian literature, history, film, art history, and music. The study of Italian within a variety of cultural contexts enables students to deepen their understanding of a national heritage beyond the boundaries of a single time frame, region, gender, genre, or academic discipline. Students are encouraged to study abroad in their junior year and to take advantage of resources within the Boston Area Consortium (Boston College, Boston University, Tufts University, and Wellesley College).

How to Become a Major or a Minor

Students in the major and the minor work closely with an adviser to develop an individualized plan of study that balances the exploration of a broad range of topics and sectors with a focus on a single discipline or cultural period.

Committee

Richard Lansing, Chair and Undergraduate Advising Head
(Romance Studies)

William Kapelle
(History)

Alice Kelikian
(History)

Charles McClendon
(Fine Arts)

Benjamin Ravid
(Near Eastern and Judaic Studies)

Paola Servino (on leave spring 2009)
(Romance Studies)

Jonathan Unglaub (on leave 2008–2009)
(Fine Arts)

Requirements for the Minor

A minor in Italian studies consists of five semester courses:

- A.** An advanced language course: ITAL 105a or ITAL 106a.
- B.** A literature course: ITAL 110a, ITAL 120b, or IECS 140a.
- C.** Any two of the Italian-related culture courses listed in requirement C above, or two other courses approved by the student's advisor.
- D.** Any elective course from the listings in A, B, or C.

How to Fulfill the Language Requirement

The foreign language requirement is met by successful completion of a third semester course (numbered in the 30s) in the language program.

How to Choose a Course at Your Level

To choose the appropriate course, students need to take a placement exam. It is a self-graded exam that can be accessed online at www.brandeis.edu/registrar/italtest.html. After finishing the exam, students complete the questionnaire online. A faculty member will then contact students to discuss their placement. Students who fail to take the placement exam will not be permitted to enroll.

If a student has a score of 620 or above on the Italian SAT II, or a score of 4 or 5 on the Italian AP exam, language requirement is automatically fulfilled and the students is eligible to enroll in 100-level courses. See "How to Become a Major or a Minor" above.

Requirements for the Major

The major in Italian studies consists of a minimum of nine semester courses, including the completion of one advanced language course, three literature courses, four courses from the related disciplines, and completion of the senior option. Students seeking honors will take a minimum of ten courses, configured as follows.

- A.** At least one advanced language course: ITAL 105a or ITAL 106a.
- B.** Three literature courses: ITAL 110a, ITAL 120b, ITAL 128a, IECS 140a, COML 102a, or COML 103b.
- C.** Any four of the following courses relating to Italian culture, or other courses approved by the student's advisor:

FA 45a
FA 51a
FA 58b
FA 60a
FA 197b

HIST 123a
HIST 139b
HIST 170a
ITAL 128a
MUS 52a
NEJS 151b

St. Peter's and the Vatican
Art of the Early Renaissance in Italy
High and Late Renaissance in Italy
Baroque in Italy and Spain
Methods and Approaches in the History of Art:
Leonardo da Vinci)
The Renaissance
Fascism East and West
Italian Films, Italian Histories
Mapping Modern Italian Culture
Opera
Ghettos, Gondolas, and Gelato:
The Italian Jewish Experience

D. Students must complete either ITAL 97a or b (Senior Essay) or ITAL 99d (Senior Thesis) in their senior year, or an equivalent course or courses in a cognate department that results in the writing of a senior essay or senior thesis on a subject relating to Italy.

E. Students are strongly encouraged to study abroad during their junior year for either one or two semesters. Equivalent or appropriate courses taken abroad may count toward the concentration. Students who are unable to engage in study abroad are encouraged to avail themselves of relevant courses offered by consortium institutions in the Boston area (principally, Wellesley College, Boston College, Boston University, Tufts University).

Courses of Instruction

(1–99) Primarily for Undergraduate Students

ITAL 10a Beginning Italian

Prerequisite: Students enrolling for the first time in an Italian course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam at www.brandeis.edu/registrar/italtest.html.

For students who have had no previous study of Italian. A systematic presentation of the basic grammar and vocabulary of the language within the context of Italian culture, with focus on all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Usually offered every year.
Staff

ITAL 20b Continuing Italian

Prerequisite: ITAL 10a or the equivalent. Students enrolling for the first time in an Italian course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam at www.brandeis.edu/registrar/italtest.html.

For students with some previous study of Italian. Continuing presentation of the basic grammar and vocabulary of the language within the context of Italian culture and practice of the four language skills. Special attention to reading and writing skills, as well as guided conversation. Usually offered every year.
Staff

ITAL 30a Intermediate Italian

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Prerequisite: ITAL 20b or the equivalent. Students enrolling for the first time in an Italian course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam at www.brandeis.edu/registrar/italtest.html.

Readings in contemporary Italian short stories, newspaper and journal articles, and short essays of cultural interest will be supplemented by video presentations (opera, film, "filmati," and "telegiornale" from RAI) designed to enhance oral comprehension. Typical themes include social conflicts (Fascism, the problem of the "Mezzogiorno") and cultural phenomena (feminism, art, geography). Review of grammar includes written exercises and short compositions. Usually offered every fall.
Staff

ITAL 97a Senior Essay

Students should consult the undergraduate advising head before enrolling. May not be taken for credit by students who have satisfactorily completed ITAL 97b.

Offers students an opportunity to produce a senior essay under the direction of an individual instructor. Usually offered every fall.
Staff

ITAL 97b Senior Essay

Students should consult the undergraduate advising head before enrolling. May not be taken for credit by students who have satisfactorily completed ITAL 97a.

Offers students an opportunity to produce a senior essay under the direction of an individual instructor. Usually offered every spring.
Staff

ITAL 98a Independent Study

May be taken only with the written permission of the advising head and the chair of the department.

Reading and reports under faculty supervision. Usually offered every year.
Staff

ITAL 98b Independent Study

May be taken only with the written permission of the advising head and the chair of the department.

Reading and reports under faculty supervision. Usually offered every year.
Staff

ITAL 99d Senior Thesis

Students should consult the undergraduate advising head before enrolling.

Usually offered every year.
Staff

(100–199) For Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students

ITAL 105a Italian Conversation and Composition

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Prerequisite: ITAL 30a or the equivalent.

Provides students with an opportunity to develop their oral and written proficiency in Italian, while familiarizing themselves with different facets of contemporary Italian culture and society. Readings will be supplemented by films and recordings. Usually offered every second year.
Ms. Servino

ITAL 106a Advanced Readings in Italian

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Prerequisite: ITAL 30a or the equivalent.

Close study and analysis of representative works of Italian literature (prose, poetry, drama) and culture (art, history, music, cinema, politics) designed to enhance the student's reading skills. Usually offered every year.
Mr. Lansing

ITAL 110a Introduction to Italian Literature

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Prerequisite: ITAL 30a or the equivalent.

Surveys the masterpieces of Italian literature from Dante to the present. It is designed to introduce the student to the major authors and literary periods, styles, and genres and present an overview of the history of the literature. Conducted in Italian. Usually offered every second year.
Mr. Lansing

ITAL 120b Modern Italian Literature

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Prerequisite: ITAL 30a or the equivalent.

Analysis of major works by Svevo, Pirandello, Moravia, Silone, Lampedusa, Pavese, Primo Levi, Montale, and Vittorini with respect to the political, economic, and social problems of post-Risorgimento Italy. Conducted in Italian. Usually offered every second year.
Mr. Lansing

ITAL 128a Mapping Modern Italian Culture: Inherited Conflicts

[hum oc]

Prerequisites: ITAL 105a or 106a. Conducted in Italian with Italian texts.

Covers a broad range of cultural topics that exemplify creative responses to historical events and social dilemmas that have shaped contemporary Italian culture. Usually offered every second year.
Mr. Lansing and Ms. Servino

ITAL 134b Nella cultura ebraica italiana: cinema e letteratura

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Prerequisite: ITAL 105a, 106a, or equivalent. Conducted in Italian. Materials fee: \$30.

Analyzes Italian Jewish representations in Italian culture from the founding of the ghetto in Venice in 1516 to modern times. Works of Italian Jewish writers and historians are examined as well as Italian movies that address Jewish themes within the mainstream of Italian culture. This course has an interdisciplinary approach while focusing on advanced Italian language skills. Special one-time offering; was offered spring 2008.
Ms. Servino

IECS 140a Dante's *Divine Comedy*

[hum]

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation.

A close study of the entire poem—*Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, *Paradiso*—as a symbolic vision of reality reflecting the culture and thought—political, philosophical, theological—of the Middle Ages. Readings to include the *Vita Nuova*, the *Aeneid* (Bk. 6), and selections from the Bible, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and St. Thomas' *Summa Theologicae*. Usually offered every second year.
Mr. Lansing

Electives

The following courses are approved for the program. Not all are given in any one year. Please consult the *Schedule of Classes* each semester.

COML 102a

Love in the Middle Ages

COML 103b

Madness and Folly in Renaissance Literature

FA 45a

St. Peter's and the Vatican

FA 51a

Art of the Early Renaissance in Italy

FA 58b

High and Late Renaissance in Italy

FA 60a

Baroque in Italy and Spain

HIST 123a

The Renaissance

HIST 139b

Fascism East and West

HIST 170a

Italian Films, Italian Histories

IECS 140a

Dante's *Divine Comedy*

MUS 52a

Opera

NEJS 151b

Ghettos, Gondolas, and Gelato: The Italian Jewish Experience