

# ITALIAN

## Overview and Contact Information

The major in Italian seeks to foster linguistic fluency and appreciation of the multifaceted culture of the Italian people. In addition to acquiring advanced oral and written proficiency in the Italian language, majors and minors will have the opportunity to access Italy's rich literary and cultural heritage through cinema, literature, music, art, the Web. Besides selecting courses offered at Mount Holyoke and in the more extended Five College community, students are encouraged to investigate the many study abroad options available to them in such culturally diverse cities as Bologna, Florence, and Padova. A major in Italian language and culture can lead to a variety of national and international careers, from foreign service to fashion marketing, from international banking and trade to film, from a career in nonprofits to teaching.

The weekly Italian table provides a welcoming environment for spontaneous expression and cultural exchange, and the ongoing extracurricular activities of the Italian club, lectures, and films round out the multifaceted learning experience at MHC.

## See Also

- Romance Languages and Cultures (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/romance-languages-cultures/>)

## Contact Information

**Geoff Sumi, Chair**

**Denise Falk, Academic Department Coordinator**

112 Ciruti Center

413-538-2885

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/italian> (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/italian/>)

## Learning Goals

In connection with the College's learning goals, the major in Italian at Mount Holyoke prepares students to develop a comprehensive knowledge of Italian language and culture. It is the department's mission to inspire and motivate students to learn about Italian culture in all of its multifaceted aspects through:

- in-depth study of the Italian language in all of its components (speaking, writing, reading and listening), in order to achieve near-native proficiency. Through a communicative approach, students learn to express feelings, engage in discussion about any topic, develop complex ideas, and read and critically analyze original texts and films in Italian.
- in-depth study of Italian culture and literature to develop a rich, diverse and layered knowledge of Italian thought, history, cultural habits, geography, culinary tradition, gender issues and politics.
- in-depth study of the role of Italy and Italian culture in Mediterranean and world history through millennia of people's shifts, diasporas and migrations.

The department aims for students to become global citizens, through study abroad programs in Italy and internships in Venice, Florence and Rome. Dedicated faculty members believe in creating a relaxed and positive atmosphere that is conducive to learning, beyond the traditional classroom experience. Classes take frequent advantage of campus resources (museums, libraries, residence halls, and the Italian Living-

Learning Community) to organize events to continue teaching beyond the classroom in a consistent and constructive effort at community building.

## Faculty

**This area of study is administered by the Department of Classics and Italian. Italian faculty include:**

Ombretta Frau, Dorothy Rooke McCulloch Professor of Italian, Teaching Fall Only

Morena Svaldi, Faculty Director of the Language Assistant Program; Lecturer in Italian

Martino Lovato, Visiting Lecturer in Classics and Italian

## Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 32 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
ITAL-209	Conversation and Composition	4
ITAL-221	Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature I	4
or ITAL-222	Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature II	
Four 300-level courses in Italian literature and culture to be approved by the department <sup>1</sup>		16
8 additional credits in Italian		8
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>32</b>

<sup>1</sup> At least one 300-level course must be taken in the senior year.

## Additional Specifications

- Courses lower than ITAL-209 cannot be counted toward the major.
- Independent Study (ITAL-395) may not be used as part of the minimum major requirements.
- One 200- or 300-level course may be in English translation but must be approved by the department.
- Students thinking about a major in Italian or studying abroad should contact Professor Frau or Language Instructor Svaldi.

## Requirements for the Minor

A minimum of 16 credits

Code	Title	Credits
ITAL-209	Conversation and Composition	4
ITAL-221	Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature I	4
or ITAL-222	Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature II	
At least one course at the 300 level		4
One additional course at the 200 or 300 level		4
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>16</b>

## Additional Specifications

- Courses lower than ITAL-209 cannot be counted toward the minor.
- Independent Study (ITAL-395) may not be used as part of the minimum minor requirements.
- One 200- or 300-level course may be in English translation but must be approved by the department.

## Teacher Licensure

Students interested in pursuing licensure in the field of Italian can combine their course work in Italian with a minor in education. In some instances course work in the major coincides with course work required for licensure; in other cases, it does not. For specific course requirements for licensure within the major of Italian, please consult your advisor or the chair of the Department of Classics and Italian. Further information about the minor in education (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/psychology-education/#minortext>) and the Teacher Licensure program (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/psychology-education/#teacherlicensuretext>) is available in other sections of the catalog, or consult Professor Lawrence in the psychology and education department.

Licensure also requires a formal application as well as passing scores on the Massachusetts Test of Educator Licensure (MTEL) in both the literacy component and the subject matter component. Copies of the test objectives for the MTEL are available in the Department of Classics and Italian and in the Department of Psychology and Education.

Additional information about the Licensure Program, including application materials, can be found on the Teacher Licensure Program website (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/teach/>).

## Course Advice

### Guidelines for New Students

All courses satisfy distribution requirements unless otherwise indicated.

Courses are normally conducted in Italian. Courses offered in translation are listed at the end of the Italian course descriptions.

Students with no previous training in Italian should elect ITAL-101–ITAL-102.

Students with two years of high school study should elect ITAL-201. Students whose proficiency in the Italian language is superior and who wish to study literature should elect ITAL-221 or ITAL-222, in the fall semester. Students who are unsure about their level should contact Professor Frau for a proficiency test.

Students contemplating a junior year in Italy should elect an Italian course in the first semester of their first year.

## Course Offerings

### ITAL-101 Elementary Italian I

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 4*

This course emphasizes understanding, speaking, and writing in a contemporary context. It also promotes creativity with presentations and original group projects. It includes Web activities, films, short stories, and frequent conversation sessions with language assistants.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*O. Frau, M. Lovato, M. Masterson, M. Svaldi*

*Notes: Successful completion of both ITAL-101 and ITAL-102 will give students a full grammatical knowledge of basic Italian and it is highly recommended.*

### ITAL-102 Elementary Italian II

*Spring. Credits: 4*

This course emphasizes understanding, speaking, and writing in a contemporary context. It also promotes creativity with presentations and original group projects. It includes Web activities, films, short stories, and frequent conversation sessions with language assistants.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*M. Svaldi*

*Prereq: ITAL-101.*

### ITAL-112 Bridge to Italian 201 Part 1

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 2*

This course is particularly designed to create a new path for students who are taking (or have taken) Italian 101 and wish to have the necessary preparation to take Intermediate Italian (Italian 201) the following fall semester. They will be provided with the skills necessary to: understand, speak, and write Italian at the advanced beginner level, learn about contemporary Italian society, and develop the competence, interest and enthusiasm for the language that will inspire them to proceed to more advanced levels.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement*

*M. Svaldi*

*Advisory: For students who are taking, or have taken, ITAL-101.*

*Notes: Second half of semester.*

### ITAL-113 Bridge to Italian 201 Part 2

*Fall. Credits: 2*

This course is particularly designed to create a new path for students who have taken Italian 112 only. They will be provided with the skills necessary to: understand, speak, and write Italian at the advanced beginner level, learn about contemporary Italian society, and develop the competence, interest and enthusiasm for the language that will inspire them to proceed to more advanced levels.

*Applies to requirement(s): Meets No Distribution Requirement*

*M. Svaldi*

*Prereq: ITAL-112.*

*Notes: Half-semester course.*

### ITAL-201 Intermediate Italian

*Fall. Credits: 4*

After reviewing essential grammar and vocabulary, Intermediate Italian will expose students to new and more complex lexicon and communicative grammatical structures. Through authentic materials (videoclips, music, newspaper articles, websites etc.), the course emphasizes reading, writing, listening, and speaking. A realistic picture of modern Italy replaces stereotypical images of Italy with contemporary representation. Class time emphasizes group conversations and builds accurate use of the language in an interactive and dynamic way. Projects will give a solid foundation that provide opportunities for cultivating interests and help prepare students for more advanced study of Italian.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*M. Svaldi*

*Prereq: ITAL-102.*

### ITAL-209 Conversation and Composition

*Spring. Credits: 4*

Offers practice of colloquial and idiomatic speech patterns in Italian to emphasize correct pronunciation and intonation. Includes oral presentations as well as frequent compositions, from short reports to full-length essays. Uses newspapers, magazines, and literary texts to discuss issues and lifestyles concerning Italian society.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*M. Svaldi*

*Prereq: ITAL-201.*

**ITAL-221 Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature I****ITAL-221CT Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature I: 'Cities in the Italian Renaissance'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course is a journey through five exceptional Italian Renaissance cities: Florence, Rome, Venice, Mantova and Ferrara. Through these cities' history and literature, we will explore the cultural, historical and social conditions that contributed to make the Renaissance a unique period. We will read texts and learn about art, architecture, theatre, poetry and society.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*The department*

*Prereq: ITAL-209.*

*Notes: Taught in Italian*

**ITAL-221LC Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature I: 'children Stories: Italian Children Culture: Italian Literature for Children 1800-Today'**

*Fall. Credits: 4*

This course explores the development of Italian identity through books and stories aimed at children in the 1800s, 1900s, and today. From Collodi's *Pinocchio*, to Rodari's theory of story-telling, we will examine gender roles and narratives, racism, colonialism, and the influence of television, cinema, and social media.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*O. Frau*

*Notes: Taught in English. May be taken for 300-level credit in Italian with permission of instructor. Students who wish to take this course at the 300-level in Italian should expect an additional weekly meeting and different assignments.*

**ITAL-222 Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature II****ITAL-222MB Introduction to Italian Culture and Literature II: 'Mystery Boutique: The Modern Short Story in Italy'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Writing short stories is a challenging art. Starting with Boccaccio, Italian authors are considered masters of the novella. This course will explore the universe of the short story in modern Italy, from realism to mystery, from love to rebellion, from the hardships of child labour to the fantastic. Readings will include DeAmicis, Capuana, Verga, Neera, Marchesa Colombi, Serao, Pirandello, Ginzburg, Buzzati, Pavese, Landolfi, Calvino, and Scego.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*O. Frau*

*Notes: Taught in Italian.*

**ITAL-241DA Italian Topics Taught in English: 'Global Dante: A Journey through Hell'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

In this course, we investigate what makes Dante's *Divine Comedy* one of the major classics of world literature, and why this poem is still relevant in today's imagination and politics. By reading *Inferno (Hell)* in its entirety, we will establish a foundation for Dante's influence as a national, regional and global source of inspiration across the ages, and explore the major themes of the *Comedy*: love, sin, freedom, religion, violence, and politics. Dante's encyclopedic knowledge will be our reference map to navigate the complexity of our age. Through in-class discussions, journal entries and peer collaboration, you will increase your academic skills and contribute to make our collective journey into hell a lively exploration of the present world.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*M. Lovato*

*Notes: Taught in English. Students interested in taking this course as a 300-level for Italian credit should contact instructor, Martino Lovato.*

**ITAL-241EF Italian Topics Taught in English: 'Elena Ferrante, an Italian Mystery'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course explores the writings of Elena Ferrante. In particular, we are going to concentrate on Ferrante's four volume epic known as the *Neapolitan Quartet* and its two female protagonists, Elena and Lila. We will examine Ferrante's notion of female friendship and solidarity, love, marriage and motherhood. We will pay special attention to working class women in post-WWII Naples and their unique lives. We are going to follow Elena and Lila's complex journey around Naples, Pisa, Rome, Ischia etc. while we try to understand and unmask the literary sensation that reclusive Ferrante has become.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*The department*

*Notes: The course is taught in English. Students who wish to obtain Italian credit at the 300 level, please contact Professor Frau.*

**ITAL-295 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*

**ITAL-311 Advanced Topics in Italian****ITAL-311DE Advanced Topics in Italian: 'A Florentine Lockdown: College-Aged Florentines Storytelling i Boccaccio's Decameron'**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

An Italian masterpiece and one of the most important collections of short fiction in the history of world literature, *The Decameron* is also the story of ten college-aged Florentines who isolate themselves in the countryside in an attempt to escape from the plague. Sound familiar? The community they form and the tales they tell each other are as pertinent to our lives today as they were in the years of the bubonic plague.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*M. Papio*

*Prereq: 8 credits in Italian.*

*Notes: Taught in Italian*

**ITAL-311GM Advanced Topics in Italian: 'Bric-a-Brac, Trinkets, Needlework, Pen and Paper Gendering Material Culture in Italy'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

In this course we examine female and male spaces in the Italian home through modern works of literature and art. We will analyze how objects can define a personality, a space, a life. Spaces examined include intellectual/writing spaces, working spaces, eating/cooking spaces, clothing, décor. Authors include Mara Antelling, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Guido Gozzano, Oscar Wilde, Jolanda, Aldo Palazzeschi, Marchesa Colombi, Matilde Serao, Virginia Woolf.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*The department*

*Notes: Taught in Italian*

**ITAL-341 Italian Topics Taught in English****ITAL-350LC Topic: 'Once upon a Time: Literature for Children in Italy from the 1500s to the 1900s'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course explores the development of gender roles, gender narratives, and patterns and metaphors of society through books and short stories aimed at children and young adults. Readings include classics such as Basile's *Pentamerone*, Collodi's *Pinocchio* and DeAmicis' *Cuore*, and less-known works by Salgari, Baccini, Capuana, Vamba, and Rodari. We will also examine the evolution of children's textbooks (with particular attention given to fascist schoolbooks), children's magazines, and the media.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*The department*

*Notes: Taught in Italian*

**ITAL-361 Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures**

This interdisciplinary seminar will focus on a comparative study of Romance languages or literatures. Topics will vary from semester to semester. Seminar discussions will be conducted in English, but students wishing to obtain language credit are expected to read works in at least one original language. Papers will be written in either English or the Romance language of the student's choice.

**ITAL-361AV Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'About Vanguards and Revolutionary Ideas'**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

This course addresses cultural relations between Latin America and Romance languages and cultures through the concept of vanguard: the Latin American poetic vanguardias of the early twentieth century and controversies with the Italian and Spanish vanguardias; the influence of the Négritude anti-colonial movement in Latin American decolonial thinking and the political avant-garde movements and guerrillas of the '60s and '70s; the intersections between French surrealism and Latin American magic realism; and the emergence of the Cinema Novo and New/Third Cinema (the vanguard of political cinema in Latin America) in the context of Italian neo-realism and the French nouvelle vague.

*Crosslisted as: ROMLG-375AV, FREN-321AV, SPAN-360AV*

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language; Multicultural Perspectives*  
*A. Pitetta*

*Prereq: 8 credits at the 200 level in language or literature.*

*Notes: Taught in English. Students wishing to obtain 300-level credit in French, Italian, or Spanish must read texts and write papers in the Romance language for which they wish to receive credit.*

**ITAL-361MT Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'The Mind of the Traveler: Journeys, Expeditions, Tours'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Travel literature has always been a precious source for the study of culture, politics, arts, and last but not least, people. From Tacitus to Marco Polo, from Stendhal to Camilo Jose Cela, we will read and discuss authors who traveled for political, personal, and recreational reasons. We will also pay special attention to tales of emigration and immigration in the third millennium.

*Crosslisted as: SPAN-360MT, FREN-321MT, ROMLG-375MT*

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*O. Frau*

*Advisory: For language majors; two courses in culture and literature at the 200-level.*

*Notes: Note: Students wishing to obtain 300-level credit in French, Italian, or Spanish must read texts and write papers in the Romance language for which they wish to receive credit.*

**ITAL-395 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*