Intensive Language and Culture Proseminar

Spring 2016

Syllabus

**Description.** The Intensive Language and Culture Proseminar is a mandatory course designed to prepare students enrolled in the program to function well within the academic and social context of Bologna and to deepen their knowledge of the environment in which they will be living for the duration of the semester.

**Format:** 60 contact hours + guided excursions.

The first 45 contact hours take place during the first four weeks of the program, prior to the start of university courses (points 1, 2 and 3). The other 15 contact hours include activities continuing throughout the semester (points 4 and 5). Students will receive separate grades for each component (except the excursions, which you are nevertheless expected to attend). The final grade will reflect a combination or average of all components. Completion of all activities is **required** in order to receive credit for the Proseminar (1 out of 4 credits for the semester).

The Proseminar includes five components:

1) Intensive language and culture (25 contact hours):(grade=30%)

2) Italian History (20 contact hours):(grade=30%)

3) Guided excursions: Jan. 9, 16, 30  (attendance required, no grade assigned)

4) Discovering the hidden Bologna (15 contact hours): February 25; March 18; April 7, 21; May, 5. OR: Workshop *Let’s Make a Movie!* (15 contact hours): March 18; April 6, 15, 19; May 4.

5) Final project: due May 30 (grade= 40%, includes *Discovering the hidden Bologna*. See below)

1. Language (all language and culture sections are taught in Italian by our staff)

   a) Intensive Intermediate
   b) Intensive Advanced
The two sections are the equivalent of intensive second-year or third-year language courses. They are meant to provide students with a solid knowledge of the Italian language and equip them with the comprehension, writing, and speaking skills they will need when they enroll in regular classes at the University of Bologna.

Upon arrival, each student will take a language placement exam, the results of which will determine the level of language class and the section to which he or she is assigned. The exam will consist of a written section plus an oral test. The format includes lectures, drills, discussions, reading of an Italian novel, viewing of Italian films, reading of Italian newspapers and magazines, weekly compositions, oral presentations.

2. Introduction to Italian Contemporary History (taught by Prof. Massimo Donattini of the University of Bologna)

A survey of the major problems and events in Italian history, from the fall of Fascism to the post-Berlusconi era. The main goal of this course is to allow students to deepen their critical knowledge of contemporary Italy within a historical perspective that considers the main political, economic and cultural developments of contemporary Italian society. Main topics are: the fall of Fascism and the “Resistenza”; the birth of the “first” Italian Republic; the Catholic hegemony; the economic boom of the 1960s; the transformations of society and culture; terrorism; the passage to the “Second Republic”; Berlusconi’s Italy and its aftermath. The final grade for this component will result from active participation in class, a written test and a final oral exam.

3. Excursions

The Bologna staff will organize guided tours of Bologna and of the neighboring art cities of Ravenna, Padova and Parma. All excursions take place on a Saturday (Jan. 9, 16, 30). This component is designed to familiarize students with Italian art history and local culture. Students are expected to participate as part of the Proseminar course requirements. A more detailed program for each excursion will be provided during orientation in Bologna.

4. a) Discovering the hidden Bologna: an exploration of Bologna’s true identity through art & history (taught by Professor Piergiacomo Petrioli)

Piazza Maggiore, the Nettuno fountain, the two towers and the porticoes are the first things that come to mind when thinking of Bologna. Yet, going through this town, best explored on bicycle or
by foot, one immediately realizes there is much more to discover. Bologna is a town which one comes to know bit by bit: behind its gates, monasteries, churches and palaces, under its porticoes, one stumbles upon the true essence of this town, its real magnificence, its undisclosed tribute to the history and the art of Italy. By making detours from the main streets, we will explore the colorful and secret history of Bologna, by looking at unusual places and works of art we will come to know the past and the present of this fascinating town. The final grade for this component will result from active participation, 5 reaction papers in Italian (1 page each) for each visit (February 25; March 18; April 7, 21; May, 5) and 2 pages in Italian of your final journal on a place we visited.

4. b) Workshop: Let’s Make a Movie! (15 contact hours)
Bologna is also renowned for the Cineteca, one of its most important cultural institutions. Following this tradition of passion for cinema and restoration, in this workshop students will learn how to write and shoot a short movie or a remake (10-12’), under the guidance of award-winning director Adriano Sforzi. Students will collaborate in writing the script, scouting locations, shooting the film and acting in it as well, according to their interests. Minimum enrollment: 4 students; maximum: 10.

5. Final Project
Students are required to keep throughout the semester an individual journal in Italian of at least 2000 words, with their observations, impressions, sketches etc. of their neighborhood and the city as a whole. Deadlines: May 23rd (first draft) and May 30th.

A series of field exercises will help you recognize differences and similarities among the neighborhoods of Bologna, enriching your local knowledge of the people, art, history, music, customs, products, and values which compose the tapestry of the city. In order to help you deepen your knowledge of Italian society, on February 18th there will be a meeting with a group of immigrants leaving in Bologna (attendance is mandatory!).

Guidelines: in addition to your personal impressions and observations about everyday life in your neighborhood, the journal must include the following:

- A 2 pages report of one of the places/museums/palaces visited with Professor Petrioli
- An interview with one of the people living in your neighborhood about Bologna in general and
the local community of the area in which you live, in particular (this should be a person you meet regularly in your daily life in Bologna: for example, the barman in the bar where you drink your coffee every morning, the grocery shop person, etc.)

Suggestion for students: you may want to consider to include also:

· A list of the 10-20 most significant things that, according to you, make Bologna special.
· A series of photographs and/or sketches of the most significant landmarks in your neighborhood
· An interview / dialogue with an Italian classmate.