Intensive Language and Culture Proseminar

Fall 2017

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: Sept. 2, 9, 23 (attendance required, no grade assigned)
4) Italian Food and Culture (15 contact hours): October 5 or 12, 6, 20, Nov. 10-12.
5) Research project: due December 15 (grade= 40%, includes Italian Food and Culture. 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 (Sept. 2, 9, 23). 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. & 5. Italian Food and Culture & Research Project (taught by Professor Piergiacomo Petrioli)

Overview:
The research project is an individual or group paper which represents 40% of the final Language and Culture Proseminar grade.

Students select a topic, idea or question (related to the main topic of the semester) which they wish to explore and which is directly linked to their current surroundings: Bologna, Emilia Romagna and/or Italy. Taking advantage of local resources not available at their home institution, they are guided throughout the semester to better their knowledge on the chosen topic and invited to choose one of the topic/ideas from the list provided, or to suggest one topic by themselves previously discussed with the Professor.
The research project includes four study trips. Students will be asked to write a response paper for two study trips. They will also receive some pre-departure readings before their arrival to Bologna and will be required to
submit a response paper based on required readings by September 30th. Study trips will be introduced by readings and/or conferences on specific topics related to the trip. Readings, conferences and study trips are mandatory.

During the fall 2017 the central theme is: Italian food and culture.

- Day trips (organized in collaboration with Il Gelatauro of Gianni Figliomeni):
  o 5 or 12 October: cooking class (Reader, 1-4)
  o 6 Oct: visit to an organic rice farm (Reader, 5-7)
  o 20 Oct: visit to an organic honey producer (Reader, 8-10)
- Weekend trip:
  o 10-12 Nov: Chianti and Val d’Orcia (Tuscan wine and cheese) (Reader, 11-20).
    - Introductory conferences by Prof. Petrioli on Thursday, November 8th (“Tuscan Wine”) and Friday, November 9th (“Cinta senese”).

Objectives:
- Improve/enhance the abroad experience through contact with local organizations, associations and section of society beyond the university setting.
- Attain in-depth knowledge of the selected topic (the culture of food in central Italy).
- Take advantage of the sojourn to carry out a comparative research, through which students will also increase their awareness of their own [1][2]country.
- Increase students’ immersion in local surroundings.
- Start research that could be further developed on return to the students’ home campuses.
- On-site exploration of the interdisciplinary field of food studies

Topics/Ideas:
- Food, Nutrition and Culture in Italy
- Food and History, Art, Literature, etc
- Biodiversity
- Mediterranean Diet
- American Food Culture vs. Italian Food Culture
- Wine Culture
- What do we mean with the word “nutrition”? What is “nutrition” about?
- Nutrition and Health
- Neighborhood open-air markets in Italy
- Food multinational corporations vs. food local producers
- Products “a KM. zero”
- Food and Media
- Food regional traditions
– Food production, distribution and consumption in Italy
– Food products: artisanal and mass-produced
– Food Systems and Sustainability

Recommended Readings:

O. Farinetti, Ricordiamoci il futuro, Feltrinelli, Milano, 2017.
C. Petrini, Buono, pulito e giusto, Slow Food-Giunti, 2016.

Assessment:

Final assessment will consist of the following:

A. Attendance and participation (readings, conferences and study trips): 40%

Each study trip is worth 5% of the final grade and assistance and active participation in the classroom sessions is worth 20%. (If a student is unable to attend a study trip, s/he should notify the professor immediately. The student should in any case submit an essay on the topics covered during the trip and based on a series of specific readings).

B. Two essays: 30% (15% each)

Students submit essays based on two separates study trips. The submission deadline is one week after the study trip.

Requirements

• Written paper between 2-3 pages, 1.5 spaced.

C. Research Project: 30%

Requirements

• Written paper between 8-10 pages, 1.5 spaced.
• Multimedia submission (photographs, short videos, etc.) also welcome, accompanied by an introductory text (2-page written report—why and how the project was carried out).

Timeline

• During orientation: introductory group session _ explanation, timeline and methodology
• Before September 28: submission of the selected topic
• September 30: submission of the required reaction paper.
• **During October:** develop a brief status of the issue, define the topic and draw up outline.
• **End of October:** selection of topic and outline due.
• **Before November 18:** meeting with professor.
• Monitoring/revision of the project with the professor via email or meetings.
• **Before December 4:** first draft due.
• **Before December 15:** final submission deadline.