



**FLOR ANTH 3318**  
**Understanding Modern Italy: An Anthropology of Contemporary Italian Society - A**  
**CAPA FLORENCE**

**Course Description**

This course presents a survey of contemporary Italy from an anthropological perspective, which is to say with a focus on the role of culture in contemporary Italian society. For anthropology, culture is the concept that describes the networks of shared meanings and values that underlie social practices and create distinct group identities. With this in mind, the course examines the operation of such universal cultural features as identity, social and political organization, family and gender issues in contemporary Italy, as well as considering local issues of Italian food culture and practices, immigration, Italian identity and cultural diversity. The course requires an ethnographic engagement with Florentine society, which provides an opportunity to recognize and apply anthropological concepts in a practical fashion outside of the classroom. Although this course is taught in English, the instructor will incorporate Italian and Italian cultural resources as much as possible in order to give students maximum exposure to the Italian culture.

**Course Aims**

By the end of the course, students will have a grasp of the key concepts of cultural anthropology. They will be able to recognize and describe the local, individual, and particular expressions of structures, practices, and trends, especially in the Italian context. By developing the ability to think critically about cultural and social situations, students will be better equipped to handle intercultural encounters both in Italy and in general.

**Requirements and Prerequisites**

100 or 200 level course in Anthropology, Sociology, Cultural Geography, Cultural Studies, or consent of instructor.

**Learning outcomes**

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- a) identify, define, and analyze cultural aspects of Italy;
- b) locate and critically evaluate information from scholarly literature;
- c) move in Italian society with a greater degree of intercultural competence;
- d) understand diverse philosophies and cultures within Italy and across societies;
- e) communicate what they have learned effectively;
- f) apply what they have learned towards improving the quality of their world citizenship.

**Developmental Outcomes**

Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & interdependence, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, appreciation of differences.

**Class methodology**

This course is based on an approach in which the assigned readings form a basis for group discussion, meaning that it is essential for students to keep up with assigned readings. Information supplemental to the readings will be provided in a

lecture format. We will take maximum advantage of our position to both apply and critically evaluate the course material by testing it against our own experiences and observations in Italy.

**Field Component(s):** CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in the field activity(s) for this course is required. You will actively explore the City you are currently living in. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Refer to the *Academic Handbook* for a complete outline of all academic policies. This page contains a summary only.

### **Attendance**

CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Students are also expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments **BEFORE** the class, and come in on time. Attendance is mandatory and is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and ultimately in a F for the course.

### **Unexcused absences**

All absences will be recorded on a central system by CAPA. If warnings are to be issued, they will be sent at the end of the week via email for first warnings, by letter and meeting for second or third written warnings, when home US institutions will be informed. If a student exceeds a Final Warning, she/he may be sent home at the discretion of the VP of Academic Affairs.

The warning process in the **contextual classes** is the following:

- ⊗ **First Absence:** email warning sent to student
- ⊗ **Second Absence:** written warning and meeting with student
- ⊗ **Third Absence:** home campus notified, final written warning and meeting with student
- ⊗ **Fourth Absence:** automatic drop from course, potential dismissal from the program

The instructor for the course may lower the student's participation grade based on the number of absences. For custom programs, some will follow our absence policy (like when CAPA sponsors visa) and some will not; see academic director for details.

### **Excused absences**

Any student seeking to be excused from class on the ground of a verifiable illness (i.e. doctor's note) or a family emergency, must email the DAA in advance of their class. The CAPA staff will then email the relevant Faculty member. Note that calling the CAPA Center (055-2466439) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. If a doctor's note is written to excuse a student from class, the student cannot use that time for personal travel. Please note: excused absences will **NOT** be granted to accommodate visiting friends or family. Students absent due to extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Director of Academic Affairs in advance of the missed class, including family emergency or verifiable health-related incapacity, remain responsible for meeting all class requirements. Faculty shall offer such students reasonable assistance in making up missed work (e.g. share handouts).

### **Class Participation**

Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

### **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from you, the student, a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

### **Use of electronic equipment in class**

All devices such as laptops, I-pods, I-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Director of Academic Affairs or the Resident Director at the beginning of Term.

### **Late Submission**

Late submission of papers due, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late

submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

### Behavior during Examinations

During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.

Grade Breakdown and Assessment of Learning Outcomes			
Learning Outcomes	Assessment task	Grade %	Due Date
a), c), d), e)	Class participation	10%	Weekly
c), d), e)	Essay: Expectations and Encounters	10%	Week 5
a), b), e)	Mid-term exam	25%	Week 6
a), d), e), f)	Research Paper	30%	Week 13
c), d), e), f)	Final Exam	25%	Week 14

**Overall Grade: 100%**

DESCRIPTOR	ALPHA	NUMERIC	GPA	REQUIREMENT/EXPECTATION
Outstanding (High Distinction)	A	93+	4.0	Maximum grade: In addition to description for grade "A-", the student shows detailed understanding of materials about which he or she can show independent analytical ability. This means the ability to question an issue from different perspectives and evaluate responses in an objective manner.
Excellent (Distinction)	A-	90 - 92	3.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond the textbook/class hand-outs/class notes, and the work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for evaluation.
Very good (High Credit)	B+	87 - 89	3.3	Shows evidence of a capacity to generalise from the taught content, or the material in literature, or from class lectures in an informed manner. Also, the work demonstrates a capacity to integrate personal reflection into the discussion and an appreciation of a range of different perspectives.
Good (Credit)	B	83 - 86	3.0	The work is well organised and contains coherent or logical argumentation and presentation.
Good (Credit)	B-	80 - 82	2.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond the textbook and/or notes, and, there is evidence of additional reading.
Average (Good Pass)	C+	77-79	2.3	The work demonstrates a capacity to integrate research into the discussion and a critical appreciation of a range of theoretical perspectives. Also, the work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question and its theoretical implications and demonstrates evidence of additional reading.
Adequate (Pass)	C	73 - 76	2.0	Shows clear understanding and some insight into the material in the textbook and notes, but not beyond. A deficiency in understanding the material may be compensated by evidence of independent thought and effort related to the subject matter.
Below Average (Borderline Pass)	C-	70-72	1.7	Shows some understanding of the material in the textbook and notes. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought related to the subject matter.
Inadequate (Borderline Fail)	D+	67 - 69	1.3	Fails to show a clear understanding or much insight into the material in the textbook and notes
Poor (Fail)	D	60 - 66	0.7 - 1.0	Besides the above for D+, student has not shown interest or engagement in the class work or study.
Poor (Fail)	F	<60	0	Shows little or no understanding of any of the material
Incomplete	I			Please see CAPA policy in the Faculty Handbook.

### Assignment, Final Project & Exams

- Submission Policy for Assignments

Assignments are accepted in either hard or electronic copy. Hard copies are to be submitted at the start of the class period in which they are due.

- **Essay Assignment: Encounters and Expectations**

What were your expectations of Italian culture before you arrived here? Are those expectations being met? Were you aware of any of the ideas presented? How have these readings and our discussions of them affected your perspective on Florence and Italy? Answer these questions with a thoughtful and well-composed essay of 4 to 6 pages (typed, double spaced, 12pt font) that makes reference to your experiences as well as readings and class discussions. Due in or by the start of class on Week 5.

- **Final Project: An Ethnographic Snapshot of Florence (Essay)**

For this project you will carry out a small-scale ethnographic inquiry into some aspect of Florence. Choose any topic of relevance to the culture of contemporary Italy that you would like to learn more about and, using source materials from academic literature, your own participant-observation, and – if possible – some ethnographic interviews, develop your own “snapshot” of some aspects of the Italian contemporary society. You must write up your findings in a thoughtful, well-researched essay of 10 to 15 pages, complete with in-text citations and a bibliography. Due by the start of class on Week 13.

- **The mid-term exam** consists of short questions with short open answers (approx. 60 minutes) covered until that point in class and in the readings assigned at home.

- **The final exam** consists of short questions with short open answers (approx. 60 minutes) covered in class during the second part of the semester and in the readings assigned at home.

### **Textbook**

A course reader has been created for this course. All required readings will be available on Canvas in electronic format.

The following required readings are included in your course reader:

Ryall Nolan “Anthropology A Science of Discovery”, from *Development Anthropology. Encounters in a Real World*, 2002, Westbridge Press, Cambridge, MA.

Hofmann, *The Two Italies*

Dickie, *Geographies and Imagined Italies*

Coluzzi, *Minority and Regional Languages*

Montanari, *Culinary Tourism as a Tool for Regional Re-Equilibrium*

Hofmann, *Pasta, Pizza, and Espresso*

Cipriani, *Temperal Trends in Food and Wine Consumption in Italy*

Anunziato, *The Amanda Knox case: the representation of Italy in American Media Coverage*

Folks, *Mediterranean travel Writing: from ‘Etruscan Places’ to ‘Under the Tuscan Sun’*

Ferragina, *The never-ending debate about Amoral Familism*

Saraceno, *The Italian Family from the 1960s to the Present*

Puccio-Den, *Sicilian Mafia Transformation to Global Evil*

Covino, *Gomorra and Naples*

Small, *Giordana’s “I Cento Passi”: Renegotiating the Mafia codes*

Sigona, “Gypsies out of Italy!”

The Economist, *Addio Dolce Vita. A Survey of Italy*

Barigazzi, *Agony and the Ecstasy. Italy barely functions. Yet its people are happy. What explain this?*

### **Suggestions for extra Reading**

#### **Highly recommended for individual project research and background information:**

Bull, Martin J. *Contemporary Italy: A Research Guide*. Westport, Ct: Greenwood Press 1996.

Coppa, Frank J. and William Roberts. *Modern Italian History: An Annotated Bibliography*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990.

Forgacs and Lumley, eds. *Italian Cultural Studies. An Introduction*. 1996, Oxford University Press, NY.

Jones, Tobias 2003: *The Dark Heart of Italy. An Incisive Portrait of Europe’s Most Beautiful, Most Disconcerting Country*, North Point Press.

Mammone, G. and A. Veltri (eds.): *Italy Today. The Sick Man of Europe*. Routledge 2010.

Turner, Barry (Ed.) *Italy Profiled*. London: Macmillan Reference, 1999 (SYB Factbooks).

#### **On Italy, with a special focus on food culture and multiculturalism:**

Counihan, Carole . *Food and Culture A Reader*. 1997, Routledge, NY.

Counihan, Carole “Molto, Ma Buono?” from *In Around the Tuscan Table: Food, Family, and Gender in Twentieth-Century Florence*, Pp. 177-195. New York: Routledge 2004

Counihan, Carole *Around the Tuscan Table. Food, Family and Gender in Twentieth-Century Florence*. 2004, Routledge, NY.

Grillo, Ralph and Pratt, Jeff (eds) *The Politics of Recognising Difference: Multiculturalism Italian Style*. 2002, Aldershot, Ashgate.

Pratt, Jeff, 2007: “Food values. The local and the authentic”, in *Critique of Anthropology*, 27(3), 285-300, Sage, London.

### Assessment of Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to describe, interpret, and respect the differences within their student community and between their home country and the host country.
- Students will be able to reflect on the differences and similarities within their student community and between their home and host environments and be able to describe and interpret these through their writing.
- Students will be able to understand concepts of privilege, and inequality in urban environments as well as develop a greater appreciation of cultural differences and respond accordingly through their writing.

### Week by week breakdown of academic calendar:

<b>Lesson 1</b>	<b>Introductions: Italy, Anthropology and Us</b>
	Introduction to the course and to Anthropology. Italy: concepts, symbols, stereotypes and culture(-s). Intercultural skills and strategies for your time here.
<b>Lesson 2</b>	<b>Locating and Defining Italy</b>
	Italy between Geography and History. A general introduction. Defining "Italy": multiplicities within the nation-state. Language, Nationalism, and Identity. Presentation of Essay assignment: "Expectations and Encounters".  <b>Readings:</b> Hofmann, <i>The Two Italies</i> . Dickie, <i>Geographies and Imagined Italies</i> . Coluzzi, <i>Minority and Regional Languages</i> .
<b>Lesson 3</b>	<b>Representations of Italy (I)</b>
	Italy: "A paradise inhabited by devils". The creation of the Grand Tour: travel reports and Italian stereotypes. + Walk through streets and <i>piazas</i> of Florence. Participant-observation exercises outside of the classroom.  <b>Readings:</b> Folks, <i>Mediterranean travel Writing: from 'Etruscan Places' to 'Under the Tuscan Sun'</i> .
<b>Lesson 4</b>	<b>Italy: Country of Migrants</b>
	Italy as it was. A country of migrants: a review of Italian international and domestic migratory movements (1870-1970s'). The making of Italian-ness abroad. The Hollywood stereotype of Italians and Italian Americans.  <b>Readings:</b> Immigration in Italy, REPORT + handouts will be distributed.
<b>Lesson 5</b>	<b>Immigrant Communities in Italy. Ethnicity and Discrimination in Italy</b>
	Italy as it is. A country of immigrants. A review of the largest ethnic communities currently present in Italy. Ethnicity, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Italy.  Mid-Term Review.  <b>Assignment:</b> Essay "Expectations and Encounters".  <b>Readings:</b> Sigona, "Gypsies out of Italy!".
<b>Lesson 6</b>	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>
	<b>Mid Term Exam</b>

	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>Lesson 8</b>	<b>Representations of Italy (II): The Italian bitter-sweet 'flavor'</b>
	<p>"The paradise inhabited by devils" revisited.  The Paradise: Italy and the film industry.  The Devils: Italy and the American media in the Amanda Knox case.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Handouts will be distributed</p>
<b>Lesson 9</b>	<b>Family , Gender and Society in Italy</b>
	<p>From 'Amoral Familism' to contemporary urban family dynamics.  The main changes of the Italian family structure.  Connecting family patterns to the wider community.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Ferragina, <i>The never-ending debate about Amoral Familism</i>.  Saraceno, <i>The Italian Family from the 1960s to the Present</i>.</p>
<b>Lesson 10</b>	<b>The 'Larger' Family: Organized Crime and Political Corruption</b>
	<p>'Amoral Familism' exported: from Sicily to Global.  Historical and social dimensions of Mafia in Italy.  The structure and function of the Italian political state and the interconnection between politics and organized crime.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Puccio-Den, <i>Sicilian Mafia Transformation to Global Evil</i>  + handouts.</p>
<b>Lesson 11</b>	<b>Foodways: National Values and Local Traditions</b>
	<p>An overview of Italian food culture.  The symbolic representation of food consumption.  The Mediterranean Diet and the Slow Food Movement.  + Walk and Ethnographic activity: street food and its vendors in Florence</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Hofmann, <i>Pasta, Pizza, and Espresso</i>.</p>
<b>Lesson 12</b>	<b>The Italian Society: A Few Tentative Conclusions</b>
	<p>We will use our last class to review some of the main themes addressed throughout the semester, in a seminar format and in a very informal way, also in view of the final exam.  This could also be the best chance for all to table some open questions and issues about the Italian Society addressed during the semester (and whatever else would have been worth deepening).</p> <p>Final Exam Review.</p> <p><b>DUE:</b> Essay Paper to hand in</p>
<b>Lesson 13</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>