



KIIS Italy, Winter 2019-20

ITAL 105 Introduction to Italian Culture

Professor: Dr. Shayne Confer

Email: sconfer@unionky.edu

Syllabus subject to change

Course Description: Through a series of readings, discussions, and (far and away most importantly) excursions and hands-on experiences, this course will explore the development of Italy from Roman times through the modern age, using the cities of Florence and Rome as living texts which can teach us about the artistic, cultural, historical, political, and social contexts of Italy throughout its history. These explorations will provide a window into Italy's unique contributions to the world story.

Required Textbooks: In keeping with the idea that Rome and Florence themselves are our texts, I have selected two required books that use one aspect of each city (architecture and art, respectively) as windows into their history, politics, and culture. You must purchase each of these before we leave and bring them with you.

Barlag, Phillip. *The History of Rome in 12 Buildings*. New Page Books. 2018

Testa, Judith. *An Art Lover's Guide to Florence*. University of Chicago Press. 2012.

Recommended Prior Reading: While the brevity of the course makes it difficult to require these books, I HIGHLY recommend reading them prior to our departure; they are very readable and invaluable to a full understanding of place.

Beard, Mary. *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*. Liveright. 2015.

D'Epiro, Peter and Mary Desmond. *Sprezzatura: 50 Ways Italian Genius Shaped the World*. Anchor Books 2001.

Hooper, John. *The Italians*. Penguin. 2015.

Film Screenings: There will be films screened on Union College's campus prior to our departure; I will make every effort to choose films that are easily accessible/streamable for free for students from other campuses to view as well. This list will be updated as I find films that fit the above criteria, to a total of (hopefully) three.

PBS, *The Medici: Godfathers of the Renaissance*, 2012 (3 parts)

Course Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students will

1. Have a working knowledge of how the cultural, political, and social history of Rome and Florence inform the present moment of Italian history;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of Italian (from Rome to present day) contributions to world history and culture;
3. Explain the historical, political, and social contexts of the art, architecture, literature, and cuisine experienced during the course.
4. Meaningfully and effectively communicate the experience of encountering a different culture

Tentative Assignments: Detailed instructions and expectations for the following forthcoming:

“Mapping” Florence and Rome: an assignment demonstrating LO 1 on either a micro (specific building/Street/neighborhood, etc.) or macro level.

“Culture in Context” Journal: a daily journal, informed by the required readings, which will both analyze (examine in terms of its constituent parts) and reflect (explain one’s personal aesthetic/spiritual/other reactions to) the excursions, sights, and experiences of the day, in accordance with Los 3 and 4.

Final paper: the above assignments will inform a final paper submitted by the student, wherein he or she will turn from an examination of Italy in the context of itself to Italy as contributor to the world at large, per LO 2.

Grades: The course will be graded with roughly 1/3 of the final grade coming from each assignment above. Other minor coursework or quizzes may also be included in the calculation of the final grade.

Attendance Policy

KIIS program participants are expected to be punctual to and in attendance at all classes, presentations, meetings and required excursions, and to remain with the program for the full academic period.

Unexcused absences from classes and/or mandatory meetings will result in a lowering of the student’s final grade, as will excessive tardiness. Multiple unexcused absences could result in expulsion from the program. Any absence from an academic class session must be excused for medical reasons.

Disability Accommodation

KIIS will make every reasonable effort to provide accommodations for program participants with special needs or disabilities, but we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Be aware that many foreign countries do not have comprehensive legislation comparable to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As a result, businesses and other establishments operating in foreign countries may not be able to provide accommodations.

If you have a disability accommodation need, we recommend you contact your KIIS Campus Representative, <https://www.kiis.org/about-kiis/contact-us/campus-representatives/> early in your program selection process so that s/he has time to discuss any specific needs, including which KIIS programs may be best suited. You also are welcome to contact KIIS Assistant Director, Rebekah Golla, rebekah.golla@wku.edu, to discuss your disability accommodation needs (e.g. housing, transportation, excursions, class schedule, etc.).

Immediately after acceptance, notify KIIS Assistant Director, Rebekah Golla, or KIIS Office Manager, Haley McTaggart, haley.mctaggart@wku.edu, if you have a special need or disability that might require any form of accommodation abroad. Failure to notify KIIS may prevent you from participating on your KIIS program.

If you require any accommodations abroad, you must provide KIIS Assistant Director, Rebekah Golla, or KIIS Office Manager, Haley McTaggart, an accommodation letter from your home campus’ disability accommodation office that lists the accommodations you are eligible to receive. Please do not request accommodations directly from your KIIS Program Director or other KIIS Faculty; the KIIS Office will notify your KIIS Program Director and/or Faculty after we have received your above accommodation letter.

In some cases, you may need to make arrangements for a caregiver to join you on your KIIS program, should your physician, campus disability accommodation office, or KIIS make such a recommendation or require it.

Title IX / Discrimination & Harassment

Recent attention to gender discrimination and sexual harassment at colleges and universities reminds us of the importance of adhering to standards of ethical and professional behavior. KIIS Study Abroad is committed to supporting and encouraging safe and equitable educational environments for our students, faculty, and program directors. Students, faculty, and program directors are required to be civil and treat each other with dignity and respect. As such, harassment and/or discrimination of any kind will not be permitted or tolerated.

Sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual/dating/domestic violence) and sex discrimination are violations of KIIS policies. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to a) KIIS Assistant Director Rebekah Golla (+1-270-779-8091) or KIIS Executive Director, John Dizgun (+1-270-227-2288), b) WKU's Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson (270-745-5398 / andrea.anderson@wku.edu) or WKU's Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe (270-745-5429 / michael.crowe@wku.edu) or Joshua Hayes (270-745-5121 / joshua.hayes@wku.edu). Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a KIIS program director and/or faculty member, KIIS program directors and faculty are considered "Responsible Employees" of Western Kentucky University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator.

If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center, <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/> at 270-745-3159.

For more information on KIIS Title IX, see <https://www.kiis.org/students/health-safety/title-ix-clery/>; additional Title IX resources can be found here <https://www.wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/titleixbrochure.pdf>.

Everyone should be able to participate on a KIIS program, attend a KIIS event, or work in a KIIS environment (e.g. KIIS office) without fear of sexual harassment or discrimination of any kind. Be respectful of each other.