



Arcadia University Center for Italian Studies

ROMA RMML 350

At Home in Rome: Modern Life in the Eternal City

3 Credits

Course Description

Course focuses on complexities of contemporary life and culture in Rome: changing populations and identities, challenges of adapting to global economy, organizing life around ancient monuments and public spaces. Through lectures, class discussions, fieldtrips, readings, films, and individual research projects, students explore the city's cultural life and own reactions to it. The course aims to break down stereotypes, raise cultural awareness and enhance students' inter-cultural competency.

Learning Outcomes

The course will

- provide students with knowledge of the history of Rome since it became the Capital of Italy (and, in so doing, provide notions surrounding the unification of Italy)
- give students direct experience and background information on the social and cultural changes occurring in the contemporary city
- help the students become logistically independent in the city and explore areas outside of the historic center
- help the learner develop the ability to connect classroom learning with experiences outside the classroom
- give students the theoretical and practical tools with which to examine another culture objectively
- strengthen the learner's ability to observe different environments and people while interacting with them in sensitively and culturally appropriate ways
- help students develop the ability to recognize assumptions and, when necessary, put them aside in order to learn about, as well as learn from, different aspects of Italian culture
- help the learner acquire intercultural communication skills that will allow her/him to understand other cultures, including Italian, and respect the differences those cultures have from her/his own

Course Requirements

1. Required Readings:

Students will receive a reader and will be expected to do the required readings before each class as listed in the syllabus below.

2. Tests and Papers: Mid-term Exam, Final Exam , Rome Portfolio, Core Research Paper Project and Oral Presentation

3. A research project, presented both as an essay and as an oral presentation in class, will allow students to investigate in depth one aspect of Rome's historical or contemporary cultural life which particularly interests them. It will assess their ability to choose appropriate subject matter conducive to academic exploration and collect appropriate primary and secondary materials and analyze and present them in an original way, contextualized within the information discussed throughout the course.

4. Grading Criteria

20% Mid-term Exam

25% Final Exam

15% Rome Portfolio

30% Research Project (20% Essay, 10% Oral Presentation)

10% Participation

5. Possible Films

Il Primo Giorno di Dio (All Kinds of Saints) (2008)

Pranzo di Ferragosto (2008)

Romanzo Criminale (2005)

Monti Moments: Men's Memories in the Heart of Rome (2007)

La Notte Prima degli Esami (2006)

Anche Libero Va Bene (2006)

Tutta La Vita Davanti (2008)

La Pivellina (2009)

L'Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio (2006)

6. Guest speakers

Various guest speakers will be invited – please see schedule for more detail.

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- a) Mid-term and Final Exam will test students' ability to analyze material and theories presented during the course through short answers and essay questions
- b) A portfolio in which students keep a journal of their experiences and observations of cultural life in Rome and respond to homework questions and exercises aimed at developing their intercultural communication skills.
- c) An individual research project on a topic directly relevant to the course, chosen by the student, will assess their ability to collect appropriate primary and secondary materials and analyze and present them in an original way, contextualized within the information discussed throughout the course.
- d) Student's participation will be assessed based on the analytical quality of the comments and questions they contribute to the class, their engagement with reading assignments and lecture information and their willingness to share these with the group.

8. 300 Level Course

9. Course Outline

Schedule of Classes and Readings

N.B. All classes will also include a 30 minute cultural awareness exercise and discussion to encourage reflexivity, supported by selected readings.

- Week 1: Introduction to the course
What is Rome? Expectations and stereotypes. Exercise in cultural awareness. Visit Testaccio neighborhood
Reading: Rosenthal, Elisabeth, "A Cemetery of Poets is in Crisis in Rome"
New York Times Feb 8, 2006
- Week 2: Rome since 1870. Urban development and its contemporary consequences
Rome vs Italy: The Complexities of Local Identity
Reading: Caracciolo, Alberto, "Rome in the Past Hundred Years: Urban Expansion without Industrialization", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4(3) p27-41
- Week 3: Post-Industrial Rome and the Challenges of Globalization
Rome's Developing Status as a Cultural Hub
Visit Ostiense and Garbatella
- Week 4: The Role of the Church in the Lives of Romans. Post-war Changes in

Italian society.

Reading: Mignone, Mario, *Italy Today: Facing the Challenges of the New Millennium*, 2008. Extract on the Catholic Church pages 263-292

- Week 5: Multicultural Rome
Visit Piazza Vittorio and observations
Reading: Mignone, Mario, *Italy Today: Facing the Challenges of the New Millennium*, 2008. Extract on immigration pages 219-230
- Week 6: Visit Jewish Ghetto
Reading: Brockman, Elin Schoen, "In a Jewish Ghetto, Rome's Buried Past Feb", *The New York Sun*, Feb 26, 2007
Toronto, James, "Islam Italiano: Prospects for Integration of Muslims in Italy's Religious Landscape", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 28(1), 2008, p 61 – 82
- Week 7: Mid-term Exam
Lecture on Social Exclusion in the city
- Week 8: Life in the Historic Centre
Guided walk in Monti
Reading: Herzfeld, Michael, *Evicted from Eternity: The Restructuring of Modern Rome*, 2009 Extract p 7-37
Additional activity: Documentary *Monti Moments: Men's Memories in the Heart of Rome*
- Week 9: Guest speaker: Prof Vanda Wilcox
The Social Role of Soccer
Reading: Foot, John, *Calcio: A History of Italian Football*, 2007 Extracts p333-356
Additional activity: Go to a soccer game at Stadio Olimpico (or to a *circolo/pizzeria* to watch a game with neighbourhood locals)
- Week 10: Guest speaker/guide: Prof Ferruccio Trabalzi
Urban Farming
Reading: Mignone, Mario, *Italy Today: Facing the Challenges of the New Millennium*, 2008. Extract on urban chaos and food pages 414-426
Dickie, John, *Delizia: The Epic History of the Italians and their Food*, 2008, Extracts p293-315 and 331-350
- Week 11: Organized Crime in Rome
Reading: Mignone, Mario, *Italy Today: Facing the Challenges of the New Millennium*, 2008. Extract crime pages 414-426
Additional Activity: Watch *Romanzo Criminale*

- Week 12: Conclusions on contemporary Rome: the global and local city
Student In-Class Presentations on Research Project
- Week 13: Student In-Class Presentations on Research Project cont'd
- Week 14: Final Exam

Policies:

The course follows Arcadia University's policies on attendance and plagiarism (see Student Handbook and Academic Contract)

Pre-requisites:

None. Suggested readings/viewings.

Rationale:

Rome's immense artistic and monumental heritage has often led to its contemporary social realities being neglected both by scholars and visitors. Rome is a complex city which is changing very rapidly. It is full of divisions and tensions (social, geographical, political, economic) but it is also the site of great cultural and artistic dynamism and innovation. The course aims to provide students with the tools for observing and analyzing the city as it is experienced by its residents. Students will be encouraged to examine and overcome their own stereotypes about Rome and to fully immerse themselves in the city's cultural context. They will also be asked to focus on how the new intercultural skills they develop here can be of use to them when they return to the US and in their future lives.

Special Conditions:

A classroom with PC, DVD player and projector

Cost to students:

Bibliography:

See reader