ITALIAN STUDIES

Italian Studies

Humanities Quadrangle, 203.432.0595
http://italian.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
Millicent Marcus

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Affiliated Faculty
Paola Bertucci, (History of Science, Medicine, and Public Health), Howard Bloch (French), Jessica Brantley (English), Francesco Casetti (Film and Media Studies), Joanna Fiduccia (History of Art), Jacqueline Jung (History of Art), Laurence Kanter (Yale University Art Gallery), Gundula Kreuzer (Music), Morgan Ng (History of Art), Jessica Peritz (Music), David Quint (English; Comparative Literature), Ayesha Ramachandran (Comparative Literature), Kevin Repp (Beinecke Library), Lucia Rubinelli (Political Science), Pierre Saint-Amand (French), Gary Tomlinson (Music)

Visiting faculty from other universities are regularly invited to teach courses in the department.

FIELDS OF STUDY

The Italian Studies department brings together several disciplines for the study of the Italian language and its literature. Although the primary emphasis is on a knowledge of the subject throughout the major historical periods, the department welcomes applicants who seek to integrate their interests in Italian with wider methodological concerns and discourses, such as history, rhetoric and critical theories, comparison with other literatures, the figurative arts, religious and philosophical studies, medieval, Renaissance, and modern studies, and the contemporary state of Italian writing. Interdepartmental work is therefore encouraged and students are accordingly given considerable freedom in planning their individual curriculum, once they have acquired a broad general knowledge of the field through course work and supplementary independent study.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

The department recognizes that good preparation in Italian literature is unusual at the college level and so suggests that students begin as soon as possible to acquire a broad general knowledge of the field through outside reading. Candidates must
demonstrate proficiency in two languages in addition to English and Italian; these could be other Romance languages, Latin, or non-Romance languages relevant to the research interests of the individual student. Students are reminded that it is difficult to schedule beginning language courses during the academic year and are therefore encouraged to take them in the summer. (Yale Summer Session offers online language-for-reading courses as well as Latin instruction each summer, for which incoming and continuing students will receive a tuition fellowship.) All language requirements must be fulfilled before the Ph.D. qualifying examination.

Students are required to take two years of course work (normally sixteen courses), including two graduate-level term courses outside the Italian department. After consultation with the director of graduate studies (DGS), students who join the graduate program with an M.A. in hand may have up to two courses waived. Students who have had little or no experience in Italy are generally urged to do some work abroad during the course of their graduate program. At the end of the first and second years, students’ progress is analyzed in an evaluative colloquium. The comprehensive qualifying examination must take place during the third year of residence. It is designed to demonstrate the student’s mastery of the language and acquaintance with the literature. The examination, which is both written and oral, will be devised in consultation with a three-member committee, chosen by the student. In the term following the qualifying examination, the student will discuss, in a session with faculty members, a prospectus describing the subject and aims of the dissertation. Students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus. Admission to candidacy normally occurs by the end of the sixth term.

Teaching is considered to be an important component of the doctoral program in Italian Studies. Students will be appointed as teaching fellows in the third and fourth years of study. Guidance in teaching is provided by the faculty of the department and specifically by the director of language instruction.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAMS

Italian and Early Modern Studies

The Department of Italian Studies also offers, in conjunction with the Early Modern Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Italian and Early Modern Studies. For further details, see Early Modern Studies.

Italian and Film and Media Studies

The Department of Italian Studies also offers, in conjunction with the Film and Media Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Italian and Film and Media Studies. For further details, see Film and Media Studies. Applicants to the combined program must indicate on their application that they are applying both to Film and Media Studies and to Italian Studies. All documentation within the application should include this information.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.)
M.A. Students who withdraw from the Ph.D. program may be eligible to receive the M.A. degree if they have met the requirements and have not already received the M.Phil. degree. For the M.A., students must successfully complete two years of course work (normally sixteen courses), including two graduate-level term courses outside of Italian studies. Candidates in combined programs will be awarded the M.A. only when the master’s degree requirements for both programs have been met.

Program materials are available upon request to the Director of Graduate Studies, Italian Studies, Yale University, PO Box 208311, New Haven CT 06520-8311.

COURSES

ITAL 691a, Directed Reading  Serena Bassi

ITAL 781a / CPLT 705a, The Decameron  Millicent Marcus
An in-depth study of Boccaccio’s text as a journey in genre in which the writer surveys all the storytelling possibilities available to him in the current repertory of short narrative fiction — ranging from ennobling example to flamboyant fabliaux, including hagiography, aphorisms, romances, anecdotes, tragedies, and practical jokes — and self-consciously manipulates those forms to create a new literary space of astonishing variety, vitality, and subversive power. In the relationship between the elaborate frame-story and the embedded tales, theoretical issues of considerable contemporary interest emerge — questions of gendered discourse, narratology, structural pastiche, and reader response among them. *The Decameron* is read in Italian or in English. Close attention is paid to linguistic usage and rhetorical techniques in this foundational text of the vernacular prose tradition.

ITAL 820a, Affect Studies and the History of Emotions  Heather Webb
Focusing on transhistorical literary affect and histories of emotions, this course surveys the uses and possibilities of affect studies in a variety of historical periods. The bulk of work on affect is in modern literary studies; what happens when we extend these concepts into the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period? As cultural-historical frames change, how do conceptions of body, feeling, sensation, emotion, cognition, and affect inflect one another? Through readings in critical theory, historiography, and primary texts (mostly but not exclusively Italian), we explore the lenses of atmosphere, mood, emotions, passions, and affect.