

Virginia Commonwealth University
School of World Studies
Italian@VCU

<http://www.has.vcu.edu/wld/academics/minors/italian/italian.htm>

Syllabus: Italian 102-092, Fall 2007

Instructor: Melissa Johnston

E-mail address: johnstonma@vcu.edu; yalayla@gmail.com

Office hours: by appointment

Office: Lafayette Hall (312 N Schafer St) Room 316

Phone: (804) 399-2028; please leave a message if there is no response.

Class meeting: Business Building 1131, TTh 7:00pm-9:15pm

Instructional Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of Italian spelling and pronunciation (assessment: homework, oral participation in class, oral comprehension quizzes and tests, dictations);
2. Demonstrate a basic understanding of a good part of the Italian grammar and syntax (assessment: homework, computer assignments, essays, quizzes, tests);
3. Participate in conversations on topics on everyday situations such as work, education, food, time, weather (reinforced through in-class group activities);
4. Demonstrate more than basic reading comprehension skills (in-class or homework reading assignments—from textbook or Internet sites, quizzes, and tests);
5. Demonstrate some knowledge of Italian geography, history, culture, and daily life.

Textbook information:

Pronti... Via! Melis, D.; Yale

Pronti... Via! Quaderno degli esercizi; Melis, D. and Cooper, B.; Yale

Available at Virginia Book Company on the corner of Schafer and Franklin.

VCU Policies

VCU does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, or disability. Students with a disability should identify themselves to the instructor during the first class and arrange a brief meeting to discuss the need for any reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments.

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to abide by the VCU Honor Code. Please see

<http://www.provost.vcu.edu/index.html>. This code defines academic dishonesty as follows:

“The categories of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, any deliberate and dishonest act that results in, or could result in, a student receiving an unfair advantage in an academic matter:

- **Plagiarism:** Representing the words, ideas, facts, opinions, theories, illustrations, tables or any part of another’s work as one’s own on academic assignment without customary and proper acknowledgment of the source;
- **Cheating:** Receiving, giving and attempting to receive or give unauthorized assistance, such as materials, devices, information, notes or sources, on academic matters;
- **Lying:** Transferring, transmitting or communicating any false statements concerning academic matters;
- **Stealing:** Taking or making academic materials inaccessible, thereby temporarily or permanently depriving others of its use or possession, and;
- **Facilitation:** Helping or soliciting another person to commit an act of academic dishonesty.”

Students are urged to review and understand the VCU honor policy.

University Emergency Procedures

What to Know and Do To Be Prepared for Emergencies at VCU

1. Sign up to receive VCU text messaging alerts (<http://www.vcu.edu/alert/notify>). Keep your information up-to-date.
2. Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in on-campus classrooms.
3. Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities.
4. Know where to go for additional emergency information (<http://www.vcu.edu/alert>).
5. Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police (828-1234). Report suspicious activities and objects.

University-wide Calendar Dates:

See <http://www.vcu.edu/academiccalendars/pdf/ac0708.pdf> for more information.

Aug 29: Last day to add/drop class

Sept 7: Deadline for students to provide advance written notification to instructors to observe religious holidays

Oct 18: Reading Days; no class will be held.

Nov 2: Last day to withdraw with a mark of “W”

Nov 22: University closed; no class will be held.

Dec 11: Final exam

Course Policies

Italian 102 is a course for beginners. After successful completion of this course, students may take ITAL 201, 202, 205, 230, 320, 330, 391 here or in Italy (Perugia, Florence, Rome, Messina) to complete the requirement for the Italian Minor. Elementary Italian is conducted in Italian.

***Class attendance.** is mandatory and will be marked every day. Any absence from class may adversely affect the class participation/oral component used in determining final grades. Absences may also affect quiz and other grades, as no make up quizzes are allowed (see below), and late work is penalized. Three tardies (more than 10 minutes) will count as one absence. Early departure from class or prolonged stepping out of class will count at least as one or more tardies and possibly as an absence, depending on the amount of time missed. Per School of World Studies policy, students who miss more than two classes (or the equivalent) will receive a grade of F for the class.

***Homework.** Students are expected to spend at least **three** hours on homework to prepare for each class. Late assignments will receive a 50% reduction for each day they are late.

***Participation.** Students receive a grade for participation based on their in-class interaction with other class members and with the instructor, and their willingness to speak Italian as much as possible.

- **A** – Pays close attention to grammar and vocabulary explanations, and asks questions for clarification; shows initiative by participating fully and actively at all times and in all class activities; often takes leadership role in small group activities in class; does all homework thoroughly; and is respectful of classmates and their responses.
- **B** – Pays close attention to class explanations and answers readily; tries to participate in all class activities; usually does homework thoroughly; participates in all group activities, though not necessarily as a leader; and is respectful of classmates and their responses.
- **C** – Is more passive than students described above; cooperates in group and other types of activities; does homework; and is respectful of classmates and their responses.
- **D** – Participates grudgingly and unenthusiastically; generally does not participate actively in group activities; often comes to class unprepared.
- **F** – Is usually unprepared and uninterested in class; is disruptive and/or prevents others from learning or participating by talking, laughing, passing notes, reading magazines, etc.; is disrespectful of students and instructor.

Please: No eating, listening to headphones, talking on phones, or other similarly disruptive behavior. If it occupies your mouth or brain to keep you from speaking or focusing on Italian, don't do it.

***Quizzes.** Vocabulary, grammar, dictations, translations, compositions, and culture. Please see the following daily schedule for quiz dates. The lowest quiz score will be dropped. No make up quizzes are allowed. **Yes, spelling counts in this class.**

***Compositions.** Three compositions (120, 140, and 160 words) will be assigned during the term. Compositions must be **typed** and use this heading format:

name
Virginia Commonwealth University
Italian 102-902
M. Johnston
date

They must also have a title, and be **double spaced**. Compositions not formatted correctly will be returned to the student and assigned a late grade when they are resubmitted.

A note on compositions: The best compositions are written in Italian the first time, not written in English and then translated into Italian. When you work in Italian, you naturally find ways to stick to the language you know how to use. When you write in English, you tend to gravitate toward complex grammatical structures that you haven't learned to use yet in Italian.

Do not use translation sites such as Babelfish. Not only will this result in an inferior product, it is a form of cheating and directly against the VCU Honor Code.

I suggest using www.wordreference.com, an excellent online dictionary that allows you to see the different nuances of the word you are seeking.

***Oral Presentations.** Near the end of the term, each student will select and present a topic of his/her choice. Presentations will be 5 minutes long. Please prepare a brief outline (in Italian) with selected vocabulary words explained as a handout for each member of the class and for the instructor. Students must present without reading from a script. **Students who read all or most of their presentation will receive a grade of F.** An excellent presentation is well-rehearsed, but not memorized: the goal is to know how to talk about your topic well enough that you can speak normally about it in Italian. Students are welcome to use PowerPoint or other presentation aides.

***Activities and events at the computer lab:** In mid-September, we will begin holding some classes at the computer lab (4th floor Hibbs). Assignments will be completed at the lab for a grade. Again, full participation is mandatory, as late assignments will be penalized and not all assignments will be able to be made up.

***Final Exam** (comprehensive). Oral comprehension, reading comprehension, writing, grammar, culture. Please see final exam date above. Please, no travel or wedding plans!

***Grading criteria:**

Homework, participation, class attendance: 20%

Quizzes: 25%

Compositions (3): 10%

Lab activities and oral work: 15%

Oral presentation: 5%

Final Exam: 25%

***Grading Scale:**

A ten-point scale will be used to calculate grades:

90-100: A

80-89: B

70-79: C

60-69: D

0-59: F

***Calendario di lavoro**

A basic outline of the expected pace of work follows. Students are expected to study ahead, as outlined in class. The following calendar is approximate and the instructor will add more detailed information or update due dates as needed during the term. *Lab dates are subject to final confirmation.*

giovedì il 23 agosto

Ricapitolazione:

(Articoli, aggettivi possessivi, preposizioni articolate, verbi regolari nel presente, verbi irregolari nel presente, verbi riflessivi, vocab capitoli 1-2)

HW:

martedì il 28 agosto

Ricapitolazione:

(sapere e conoscere, pronomi di oggetti diretti e pronomi di oggetti indiretti, vocab capitoli 3-4)

HW:

giovedì il 30 agosto

Ricapitolazione:

(passato prossimo con *avere* e passato prossimo con *essere*, piacere e altri verbi piacere, vocab capitoli 5-6)

HW:

martedì il 4 settembre

Quiz: Ricapitolazione

Capitolo 7

HW:

giovedì il 6 settembre

Capitolo 7

HW:

martedì l'11 settembre

Due: Composizione 1 (at least 120 words). Write a story with narration and dialogue. Use at least 5 object/reflexive pronouns, 6 verbs in passato prossimo, 6 verbs nel presente, including at least 3 verbi irregolari.

Capitolo 7

HW:

giovedì il 13 settembre

Capitolo 7

HW:

martedì il 18 settembre

Quiz: capitolo 7

Capitolo 8

HW:

giovedì il 20 settembre – *meet in lab 7:00-8:30*

Capitolo 8

HW:

martedì il 25 settembre

Capitolo 8

HW:

giovedì il 27 settembre

Capitolo 8

HW:

martedì il 2 ottobre – *meet in lab 7:00-8:00*

Due: composizione 2 (140 parole)

Capitolo 8

HW:

giovedì il 4 ottobre

Quiz: capitolo 8

Capitolo 9

HW:

martedì il 9 ottobre

Capitolo 9

HW:

giovedì l'11 ottobre

Capitolo 9

HW:

martedì il 16 ottobre

Quiz: Capitolo 9

Capitolo 10

HW:

giovedì il 18 ottobre – Reading Day, no class.

martedì il 23 ottobre – *meet in lab 7:00-8:30*

Capitolo 10

HW:

giovedì il 25 ottobre

Capitolo 10, partitives, *ci* e *ne*

HW:

martedì il 30 ottobre

Due: Composizione 3 (160 parole)

Capitolo 10, partitives, *ci* e *ne*

HW:

giovedì il primo novembre – *meet in lab 7:00-8:30*
Capitolo 10, partitives, *ci e ne*
HW:

martedì il 6 novembre
Quiz: Capitolo 10, partitives, *ci e ne*
Capitolo 11
HW:

giovedì l'8 novembre
Capitolo 11
HW:

martedì il 13 novembre
Catch-up *or* film in italiano

giovedì il 15 novembre – *meet in lab 7:00-8:30*
Capitolo 11
HW:

martedì il 20 novembre
Presentazioni: gruppo 1 (1/4 of class)
Capitolo 11
HW:

giovedì il 22 novembre – University closed, no class

martedì il 27 novembre
Presentazioni: gruppo 2 (1/2 of class)
Capitolo 11
HW:

giovedì il 29 novembre – *meet in lab 7:00-8:30*
Presentazioni: gruppo 3 (1/4 of class)
Quiz: capitolo 11
HW:

martedì il 4 dicembre

Ripasso: gruppo 1 (1/2 of class)

HW:

giovedì il 6 dicembre

Ripasso: gruppo 2 (1/2 of class)

HW:

martedì l'11 dicembre

Esame finale