

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
Undergraduate College
AR260 Intro to Italian Arts and Culture
Section A, Spring 2025

Course Information

- Professor: Lisa Truax and assisting faculty Dean Beckman
- In person Tuesdays 7:00-8:30 pm, March 7 - April 24, Travel to Italy May 4-21.
- Credit Hours: 3 credits
- Email Address: ltruax@smumn.edu
- Telephone Number: office: 507-457-1669 cell: 507-279-9104
- Office Hours/Location: Class will be held in SJ156 the 'art history' room, Faculty office SJ15C, office hours TR 12:15-1:15 and as arranged.

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to study Italian history, art, architecture, religion, and culture, through a classroom setting and an experiential multi-city tour. Students are challenged to use critical thinking skills and develop creative perspectives to enable them to get the most out of their international experience. By reflecting on the historical and cultural traditions of Italy, students gain a deeper appreciation of cultural similarities and differences, as well as how a significant part of our culture is based in the Western tradition. As the world becomes "smaller" and we interact more across cultures, the ability to adapt to and bridge these cultural differences becomes an increasingly important skill set. Travel and study in Rome, Florence, Paderno del Grappa, Venice, and the surrounding Veneto region of Northern Italy will be the focus of this course. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course fulfills one CE requirement in the Integratus General Education program, and is part of the Global Diversity and Social Justice Integratus minor and the Self, Society and the Sacred Integratus minor in the Arts and Communication category.

Course Materials

Required Materials/Textbook(s)/Technology

- None Required

Recommended/Optional Readings/Materials

- Lonely Planet: Italy

Assignments and Grading

Participation, semester and in class discussion, reflection: (16.5%; 100 points): Participate in class discussion both in class and in country. Attendance and attention during class.

Presentation (16.5% 100 points): Presentation on assigned topic during semester class.

In-Country Journal and Analysis: (67%; 400 points): In depth and thoughtful journal entries based on class assignment, one in each major area visited: Venice, Rome, Florence, and Paderno del Grappa area.

Assignments 600 points total:

Presentation in class: 100 points

During the class component (spring semester) students will present a 15 minute presentation on a chosen topic that includes points of destination, significant artworks and museums, Italian cuisine and fashion, or churches. These presentations will give historical background, note important events or landmarks, and discuss key artists, politicians, and religious clergy instrumental to the discussed topic. Each student will have one topic from the list below.

Topics List:

1. The history of Rome and the Roman Empire
2. The history of Florence as a city and the Medici family
3. The history of Venice, St. Marks, and the Doges
4. The history of the Vatican, St. Peters, Vatican City
5. The key artists and artworks at the Uffizi
6. The key artists and artworks at the Borghese
7. The Colosseum, Forum, Trevi Fountain, and Pantheon in Rome
8. Pisa and the leaning tower of Pisa
9. The Duomo and Accademia in Florence
10. The history and contemporary practice of weaving and glass work in Venice, Murano, and Burano
11. Passagno and Antonio Canova
12. Mosaic and Fresco history and techniques
13. The Renaissance
14. The Sistine Chapel, and the Vatican museum
15. Ponte Vecchio, Piazza Michelangelo, the Ecstasy of St. Theresa, Santa Maria della Vittoria
16. The development of Italy as a country after the Roman empire, Italian history, culture, and politics.

In class discussion, and in country discussion and reflection: 100 points

During class, participate in discussions and reflections of places we visit, and utilize knowledge appropriately based on in class learning from the semester portion of the class. Participate in class during the semester.

Journal and analysis assignment on location (4 main assessments): 400 points

In Italy, students will choose one subject from each of the main areas we will visit, Florence, Rome, Venice, and Paderno Del Grappa area or Pisa. This could be a piece of architecture, artwork, or antiquity. Student will reflect and analyze in depth in their digital journal, based on class knowledge from the presentations during the semesters and their careful observations of the choice of subject. Each reflection will be 350-500 words. These reflections should be done shortly after observing the subject, while it is fresh in your mind. Take reference pictures where appropriate to assist in your writing. These reflections are due upon completion of the trip.

Letter Grading Scales

Add the grading system followed for your course below. Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows. At the end of the semester, the numerical grades earned for each written assignment will be averaged and translated into letter grades using the following formula.

A	(93% of the total points and above)
AB	(89 to 92.99%)
B	(83 to 88.99%)
BC	(79 to 82.99%)
C	(73 to 78.99%)
CD	(70 to 72.99%)
D	(60 to 69.99%)
F	(59.99% or below)

Course Topics and Schedule

There are multiple ways to communicate the course topics and schedule. Below are two different approaches. An outline of course topics and schedule is required.

Example 1: Typed list

Week 1

Tuesday March 4 Course and Trip Introduction

- Cover syllabus, class, and trip basics
- Cover topics for presentations, assignments, and trip structure
- Cover Italian food and culture

Week 2

Tuesday March 11, Class run by [Dean Beckman](#) with special guest Professor Emeritus Preston Lawing

- No assignment, just learn some interesting facts and places!

Week 3

Tuesday March 18

- Cover Italy travel and safety
- Cover Art in Italy

Week 4

Tuesday March 25

- In country topics and videos
- Rick Steves videos

Week 5

Tuesday April 1, Student Presentations

- 5 students will present today, 15 minutes each.

Week 6

Tuesday April 8, Student Presentations

- 5 students will present today, 15 minutes each.

Week 7

Tuesday April 15, Student Presentations

- 6 students will present today, 15 minutes each.

Final Exam Date:

- Tuesday April 22, 7-9pm
- Final trip and travel details
- Cover in-country journal assignment
- Set up digital journals

Communication

The best way to contact me is through email, ltruax@smumn.edu. You can also text or call me, my number is at the top of the syllabus. I will respond within one business day.

Course Policies

- Inclusivity statement: All students and people in this course will be treated with respect and dignity by both faculty and classmates.
- Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions. Absence from any class session weakens the learning experience.

The student should be aware that excessive absence for any reason may affect his or her course grade, course enrollment, eligibility for financial aid, and continued enrollment at Saint Mary's. More details and descriptions on the [Class Attendance Policy](#) are referenced in the Undergraduate Course Catalog.

- Late work will lose 5% for every class period it is late. This class is to encourage professional practices, and completing work and drafts in a timely fashion is important as you move into a professional role after graduation.
- A great deal of information and guidance are necessary and provided along the way, so attendance is mandatory. If a student misses one day (since class is only weekly) without well-documented illness or emergency (serious trouble, not inconvenience or personal drama) their final grade will be reduced by five percent. The grade will be lowered another five percent for each additional unexcused absence. The student is responsible for finding out about and completing all material presented in their absence. Three tardies or any instance of leaving early without permission will count as an unexcused absence. Eight unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.
- Emergency class cancellation plan: Students will be notified via email and as a Canvas announcement if class must be canceled.
- Classroom expectations: Meeting in person during class times and appropriate behavior and attention in Italy.
 - Students may listen to music during work time only, as long as it doesn't disturb others, and is at a low enough level that you can hear faculty and other students. The use of distractions during class such as social media and texting are to be strictly limited to keep to a minimum.
- Syllabus subject to change at any time, based on class progress and needs. Updates will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.
- Writing style - MLA
- Academic Honesty/Plagiarism: As this is a professional practices class, plagiarism will not be tolerated, either on written assignments or art/design pieces. It is important to ensure you are not creating artworks that are copied from or strongly derivative from the work of others, and it is your responsibility to ensure that your work follows copyright law. Work that violates copyright will not be accepted for assignments or allowed to be shown in the senior exhibition. Art and design concepts should be checked before beginning to ensure they will not violate this policy, especially if you intend to exhibit them or put the works online anywhere.
 - The lectures delivered in this class and the course materials created and distributed (including PowerPoint presentations, videos, outlines, etc.) are protected by federal copyright law. Students are permitted to take notes of lectures and to use course materials for their private study, scholarship, or research. However, students are not authorized to reproduce or distribute notes of lectures or course materials or make any commercial use of them without my express written consent. You are responsible for adhering to copyright laws (Title 17, U.S. Code) if you use any lectures and/or course materials.

SMUMN Academic Policies and Procedures

It is important for all students to be familiar with University policies and procedures. All policies are outlined in the Undergraduate Course Catalog with specific academic policies linked on each course Canvas site. Visit our course Canvas site Home Page to find the link to these policies.

- o College Class Attendance Policy
- o Learning Management System (Canvas)
- o Minimal Technical Hardware Requirements
- o Statement about Academic Integrity
- o Student Success Center and First Generation Initiative
- o Library Services
- o Writing Services
- o Access Services: Accommodation Services
- o Copyright Notice

Course and Program Alignment of Learning Objectives and Assessment

Column Course and Program Alignment

Course Objectives	Disciplinary Objectives/ Outcomes	Integratus Program Objectives	Assignments and Activities
Learn about Italian arts, culture, history, religion, and architecture	Explore and express and appreciation of and understanding of Italian arts, culture, and architecture.	4.2.1 T1 Students articulate awareness and understanding that they belong to a variety of global, national, and local communities, including the college campus, and that citizenship in those communities comes sometimes with overlapping and conflicting.	In country journal assignments.

--	--	--	--