ELEMENTARY ITALIAN I

Course description

This gateway course is the first half of a two-semester elementary sequence and an ampersand course. Our emphasis is on the development of basic oral and written competence, and reading and aural comprehension skills. In this course you will master the linguistic skills necessary to function in day-to-day circumstances in Italian, as you develop the ability to speak and understand Italian in a communicative and meaningful context. The course also challenges you to recognize, explore and understand cultural differences and similarities between your native culture and Italian culture. Grammar undergirds everything we do and say in this course: whether or not we are engaged in an explicit grammar exercise, you are always learning grammar that enables you to communicate effectively. Specifically, you will learn to talk about things in your immediate environment, such as family, friends, daily routine, likes and dislikes, and you will learn how to handle basic social interactions such as meeting people, planning events, eating out, inquiring about other people’s lives, and relating information in simple terms. We will explore roughly five units of the textbook; additionally, your linguistic experience will be broadened by reading authentic texts and by viewing, listening to, and discussing cultural artifacts such as films, songs, and commercials. Class is conducted entirely in Italian. Because you will work collaboratively with your classmates and your instructor, your attendance, participation and preparation are of the utmost importance.

Required Texts

- Melucci/Tognozzi, Piazza First Edition. Available at Broad Street Books and other venues online. You will use this textbook also in Italian 102.
- Piazza iLrn/Hein eSam Registration Card (included in a new textbook). Also used in Italian 102.
- An Italian dictionary (like Webster’s New World Italian dictionary; not a pocket dictionary!)


Criteria for assessment

| In-class participation and performance | 15% |
| Online workbook and assignments | 10% |
| Compositions | 20% |
| Written Exams | 30% |
| Oral interview and in-class presentation | 15% |
| Incontri with the Course Assistants | 10% |

Class Meetings

- Class meets three times weekly, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.
- You will attend one weekly incontro (meeting) with a Course Assistant. If you are unable to attend the incontri you will not be able to enroll in the course. The incontri will begin on the third week of class (after Drop/Add) and you may choose among different meeting times: Tuesdays or Thursdays, at 4:30-5:30pm, 7-8pm, or 8-9pm. You will sign up for your session (you must choose only one) during the first week of class.
Grading scale

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>A+</td>
<td>100-98</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>F</td>
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N.B.: Exceptionally strong students can receive ‘A+’ on individual assignments or quizzes; however, ‘A+’ for the overall performance in the course is not usually awarded.

Attendance

Language learning is a cumulative enterprise and your aim should be 100% attendance: the higher the number of absences, the fewer opportunities you have for language practice and acquisition. For these reasons, you will lose points as you accumulate absences. All absences are considered unexcused unless they fall within these categories:

- religious observance;
- university-sponsored athletic or academic activity (note from the coach or professor required);
- serious accident or illness (evidence that you visited the Health Center on campus/doctor’s note/accident report required);
- emergency in the immediate family (dean’s note required).

Each student may accumulate up to two absences over the course of the semester with no effect on his/her grade. Starting with the third absence (which is equivalent to a full week of classes), one point from the total final grade will be automatically deducted after every absence.

Repeated tardiness will count toward an absence (i.e., two late arrivals of about ten minutes will equal one absence).

If you accumulate three absences before the semester break, an Unsatisfactory Progress Report will be filed with the Dean. If you accumulate more than five absences, you and the instructor will discuss the possibility of withdrawal from the course.

In the event of an absence, students are responsible for finding out about the topics covered in class as well as the assigned homework. In the event of illness or an emergency, contact your professor as soon as possible. No extra work or extra-curricular activity may make up for missed class time unless specified by the instructor, so aim to attend every class.

In-class participation and performance

Outstanding participation involves:

- Punctuality;
- Voluntarily and actively engaging in the activities proposed including collaboration with other students;
- Speaking only Italian in class, avoiding English and any other language other than Italian;
- Making an effort to speak the best Italian you know in every class activity;
- Taking notes and focusing on class activities;
- Not using cell phones, laptops or other distracting devices in class (unless it is a medical requirement);
- Refraining from eating or chewing gum (which is an impediment to speaking in class).
iLrn online workbook

For every chapter of the book, there will be assigned online homework. You can access the online homework by registering your Piazza iLrn/Heinle eSam Registration card at http://ilrn.heinle.com. The instructor will distribute instructions to register your eSam card on iLrn and the course code on the first day of class. Before each class, it is important to:

- Complete all assigned grammar, vocabulary, audio, video and reading exercises on iLrn. You will also have to check the correct answer provided and self-correct. Failure to check the answer keys and self-correct will not only hinder your learning experience, but will also result in a lower grade for this section.
- Review the material (notes, grammar, and vocabulary) from the previous class.

The exercises on iLrn match pace and content with the course and it is for this reason that they must be completed at the times assigned by the instructor and indicated on the iLrn website.

Compositions and Assignments

There will be a composition for each chapter, for a total of five compositions, each with two drafts. For each composition, you will write a first draft; your instructor will highlight any inaccuracies and guide you in their correction. You will then rewrite and correct the first draft on your own. Your grade on these compositions will be an average of the two versions; however, please note that the grade for the revision will not be more than five points higher than the first. This is to encourage your best work from the beginning.

Additional written assignments include the ShareIt! blog entries, and miscellaneous written activities assigned in class, to be completed at home. These assignments will develop your ability to communicate accurately and fluently. All written assignments must be turned in on the due date, and they will not be accepted after two class meetings, that is: if an assignment is due Friday, you may turn it in Monday and suffer a penalty of 5 points for your delay (these 5 points will be deducted from the final grade for this assignment). After Monday, you may no longer hand in your work and you will receive 0. For compositions, if you only turn in one draft, your final grade will be divided by two (the two drafts that you should have written; i.e. if your composition is worth 86, you will receive 43). You may ask your instructor for an extension before the due date for an assignment, if there are compelling and justifiable reasons for you to do so.

Written Exams

There will be an exam for each chapter, for a total of five written exams—each 50 minutes in length—which will test the specific grammatical structures and vocabulary acquired and practiced in each chapter of the book. Exams are modeled on the activities that you do in class and at home; therefore, it is of the utmost importance that you regularly complete and self-correct all exercises assigned, pay attention when an exercise is being corrected in class, and carefully review all corrected written production. Failure to show up for an exam without previous notice with a serious justification will result in a 0 for that exam.

Incontri

These meetings with the Course Assistants are designed to implement and complement the work done in the course. They are part of the class, and constitute a fourth weekly meeting. A variety of activities will offer many opportunities for conversation and practice, as well as exploration of cultural artifacts such as songs and commercials. In the event that you cannot attend your weekly incontro, you will be allowed to attend a different section for that week, and you will have to notify your assistant that you are going to do so (this can only happen
twice per semester). Your active participation and regular attendance are expected just as if it were a lesson with your instructor. For this reason, absences, repeated tardiness and poor participation will lower your grade in the *Incontri* section.

**Oral Interview and Presentation**

There will be one oral presentation over the course of the semester, based on one of the four chapters in the book (specifically, the section *Presentazioni orali* on page 86, 122, 164, or 200). You will sign up for a presentation date during the first week of class, and present it with one/two classmates in class. At the end of the semester, you will be evaluated on a final oral presentation individually (10-15 minutes in length). This presentation will concern one of the themes listed in the book in the section *Insieme in piazza*, on page 50, 86, 122, 164, or 200. The meeting will be scheduled with your instructor. It will take place either during the last week of class or during the Final Exam Days, and it will consist of a conversation in which you will show how well you can communicate with the language you have acquired thus far. It may not be scheduled during Reading Days, which must, according to the Registrar, be observed.

**Office hours**

It is a great idea to visit your instructor during office hours to:
- Chat in Italian and practice outside of class;
- Ask for clarifications regarding grammatical structures you have problems with or mistakes you continue making;
- Discuss anything you may want to.

You are required to visit your instructor at least once before Fall Break (October 21-25), to discuss your performance in the course so far, and discuss ways to improve and maximize your experience in the course. My office hours are: **Monday and Wednesday, 1:00-2:00 PM.**

**Extra-curricular activities and extra-credits**

- **Caffè italiano**: students and the Italian FLTA meet weekly for coffee and conversation. Place, days and times will be announced soon. Students who attend at least 2 caffè will receive an extra credit in *In-class participation and performance* at the end of the semester. Participation is optional but strongly encouraged in order to practice Italian in an informal setting.
- **Italian films**: viewing of one (or more) of the films presented by the Italian FLTA throughout the semester and/or one of the Italian films featured in the WesFilm series is not only a wonderful opportunity to further explore Italian culture through cinema, but may also redeem one (and only one) absence from the *Incontri* OR grant you an extra credit in *In-class participation and performance* at the end of the semester. Participation is optional but strongly encouraged.
- **Other extra-curricular activities** may take place over the course of the semester.

**Honor Code Statement**

You are expected to observe Wesleyan’s Honor Code, for which you already filed a note of compliance with the Dean in the first semester of your first year. You will also sign a pledge statement for Italian 101 in class, indicating your intention to comply with the Honor Code as well as with the course policies.

**Tutoring, receiving help and use of online translating services**

If you work with a tutor you will not be allowed to have him/her check your exercises or written essays and indicate what has to be corrected or how. All work must be your own, and your own only. When working with a tutor you
may practice the linguistic structures (verbs, adjectives, pronouns and so forth) that are more problematic to you, by completing exercises that you already did in class and at home, or by doing new exercises, drills and conversation. Ask your instructor to direct you to a tutor if your overall grade falls below B and you would like to get help.

You cannot have an Italian friend, relative, an advanced student or anybody else well versed in Italian correct or do your homework for you. Likewise, the use of online translating services is strictly forbidden, as it clearly represents a violation of the Honor Code Statement. Any violation of these policies will result in a lowered grade.

Students with disabilities

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible.

The guide to elementary and intermediate Italian

Read the document “Guide to elementary and intermediate Italian,” (on Moodle) which expands and complements the information presented in the present syllabus, by helping you to understand the rationale behind the course’s approach and structure, things to expect and suggestions for a successful experience.

I HAVE READ THIS SYLLABUS AND I ACCEPT ITS STIPULATIONS

Name ____________________________ Date ____________________________

Signature ___________________________________________________________