

LUC ITALIAN PROGRAM



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From the Program

Ciao, Loyola Community!

Are you ready to embark on an enriching journey that bridges language, culture, and history? The Italian Studies Major at Loyola University Chicago is more than just a program—it's your gateway to exploring Italy, a land that has been a crossroads of civilizations from antiquity to the modern era and continues to provide a hub of art, history, and international connections. From its rich heritage to its vibrant role as a Mediterranean and global cultural epicenter, Italy is a story waiting to be discovered—and we invite you to join us in uncovering it!

At the heart of our program lies a passion for teaching and celebrating Italian language and literature. But that's just the beginning! Our interdisciplinary approach brings together fields like Classics, Environmental Studies, Fine Arts, Global Studies, History, Philosophy, Theology, Music, and Sociology. This unique blend places Italy's language and culture within Mediterranean, European, and global contexts, offering students a truly holistic and dynamic learning experience.

The Italian Studies curriculum is designed to offer a well-rounded and immersive experience! Dive into Italian language courses that cater to all proficiency levels, explore captivating Italian literature in both its original form and in translation, and take advantage of a 300-level internship course with the exciting opportunity to collaborate with international firms in Italy. Beyond these, you'll also engage with courses from other disciplines at Loyola, enriching your understanding of Italy's influence across various fields.

For further information on the Italian Studies and the Italian minor requirements, go to our website [here](#).

Italian Studies at Glance

ON NOVEMBER 6TH, THE DAY AFTER THE ELECTION, THE ITALIAN STUDIES PROGRAM ORGANIZED A SYMPOSIUM TITLED WARS OF RESISTANCE.

The Antifascist Resistance during World War II was a necessary movement aimed to oppose Nazi Germany. The resistance was a civil opposition that consisted of a diverse group of people with various views and backgrounds, all unified by the common goal of defeating the Nazi Fascists.

STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND THE COMMUNITY GATHERED TO DISCUSS THAT HISTORICAL MOMENT AND THE THREATS TO DEMOCRACY IN THE PRESENT OF BOTH EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES.



In collaboration with the Italian consulate general
On the occasion of the IX Week of the Italian Cuisine
in the World 2024,
on “Mediterranean Diet and Culinary Roots: Health
and Tradition,”
students learned how to make “CAVATELLI “,
a cooking class with chef Rossella Martinello
of “A Taste of Italy on Your Table”

Faculty Profiles

CRISTINA LOMBARDI-DIOP

Dr. Cristina Lombardi-Diop is Assistant Professor of Italian Studies & Director of the Italian Program. She is a dynamic scholar and educator whose career bridges continents and academic disciplines. Born and raised in Rome, Cristina earned her Laurea in Modern Languages and Literature at the Università di Roma Sapienza before traveling to the United States as a Fulbright Scholar, where she completed a terminal Master's degree in African Studies at Yale University and later pursued a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at New York University. She has published books and articles covering a wide array of fields, including colonial and postcolonial studies, migration studies, critical race theory, queer theory, and postmodern theory. Fluent in four languages, Cristina's passion for international education led her to Loyola, where her teaching transcends boundaries. Her courses delve into women and migration, Black Europe, Italian film genres, African literature, and Resistance stories, offering students rich, interdisciplinary insights. Cristina's leadership and dedication make the Italian Program a hub for cultural and intellectual exploration.



ELENA SPILIOTI

Elena Spilioti has taught Italian, French and German since 1995 and she currently studies Applied Linguistics and Foreign Language Teaching to Students with Dyslexia. She holds a MA from the University of Rome in addition to university degrees in other fields and her research includes alternative acoustic language teaching approaches and the role of linguistics as a tool in international politics of conflict to be published in 2025.



Faculty Profiles

ANNA CLARA IONTA

Anna Clara Ionta has been teaching Italian in the USA since 1987, when she first came to Chicago as the Italian Lecturer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy. She holds the Italian Laurea in Classical Studies from Università degli Studi di Roma "Sapienza", the DITALS Certificate of Competence in the Teaching of Italian as a Second Language from the Università per Stranieri di Perugia, Italy, and the Online Teaching Course Certification from Loyola University Chicago. She has presented extensively at professional conferences on pedagogy and the methodology of teaching Italian and on the Italian Culture at Italian American organizations of the Chicagoland. She co-authored the textbook *Mosaici* (Edizioni Farinelli). She has been nominated for multiple awards at Loyola University Chicago and in 2018 she received the honorary title of Ufficiale dell' Ordine della Stella d'Italia from the President of Italy.



CORIE MARSHALL

Dr. Corie Marshall teaches Italian language, culture, and literature-in-translation courses at Loyola University Chicago, where she also coordinates Italian 101-104. She earned her BA in Italian Language and European History from Sarah Lawrence College and her PhD in Italian from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, focusing on women's roles in the works of 18th-century playwright Vittorio Alfieri. Her year studying abroad in Florence solidified her commitment to pursuing a doctorate. Dr. Marshall has published on 20th-century Italian theater and is currently working on an article about Carlo Goldoni, inspired by her experience teaching his works. Her research interests include Italian theater, the 18th-century literary legacy, women's participation in theater, and early modern cross-cultural contacts between Italy and the Americas. In her free time, she enjoys collecting art books, walking in Chicago, birdwatching, listening to Italian artists Ghali and Mahmood, and attending live theater. Now in her second year at Loyola, she loves introducing students to the Italian language and culture.



Faculty Profiles

CLAUDIA DEFRAIA

After earning a Master's degree in Language Teaching Methodology and Linguistics from the University of Cagliari, Italy, C. Alessia Defraia won a scholarship to study at the Scuola di Specializzazione in Didattica della Lingua Italiana a Stranieri at the Università per Stranieri di Siena. There, she specialized in Italian language and literature teaching, linguistics, semiotics, education, and language testing. From 2005 to 2007, she taught Italian language and culture in Siena and Paris. She then moved to the US, working at the University of Massachusetts before joining Loyola University in Chicago, where she continues to teach. A dedicated advocate for CILS (Certificate of Italian as a Foreign Language), Defraia has become an expert in preparing students for the certification. In 2019, she joined the AP Reading and has since collaborated with colleagues on the Advanced Placement Italian Exam Committee. This led to further involvement with the American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI), where she served on the Distinguished Award Committee, was elected Director of Communication, and now curates the AATI Newsletter.



DENNIS MARTINEZ

Dennis Martinez teaches courses involving Italian film and literature, such as Italian Film and European Masterpieces, at Loyola University Chicago. He received a B.A in Psychology and Italian at the University of Arizona, then going on to receive an M.A in Italian from Middlebury College and an A.B.D in Romance Languages and Literatures from Indiana University, Bloomington. Before coming to Loyola, he served as Assistant to the Director, Scuola Italiana, at Middlebury College from 1998-2003 and as Director of Italian Study Abroad at Louisiana State University in 2005. His research interests include Italian prose, poetry, theatre, Latin American literature, Italian cinema, and Medieval and Renaissance Italian literature.



Student Spotlights

LANEY WATERS

Laney is a graduating senior majoring in Anthropology and Italian Studies. She was a Rome Start student, spending the entire 2021-2022 academic year at the JFRC. She was able to visit Italian cities such as Venice, Florence, Pisa, Mantova, Amalfi, Milan, Caprarola, Perugia, Pompeii, Naples, Bellagio, and more. One of her favorite memories from her time in Italy was spending a weekend in Abruzzo, partaking in agro-tourism where she learned to herd sheep, make cheese and pasta, and ate farm to table meals every day! This semester, Laney took on the role of becoming the Italian Program Assistant. She has helped Dr. Lombardi-Diop with classroom presentations, created this newsletter, shared information with student regarding courses and events, and more! She has been determined to get more students involved with the beautiful language and culture of Italy. After graduation, she hopes to attend graduate school with a specialization in archaeology /bioarchaeology. She hopes to build a career in uncovering and discussing evidence of children within the archaeological record.



MAO REYNOLDS

Mao is a graduating senior in the Interdisciplinary Honors Program majoring in Multimedia Journalism and Italian Studies. He is the deputy arts editor and crossword editor of Loyola's student-run newspaper, The Phoenix, where he writes about pop culture, student life and local businesses in Rogers Park and Edgewater. In the fall of 2023, he studied at the JFRC and scored an internship at Romeing, a digital tourism magazine based in Rome and Florence. He loves all things language – words, linguistics, idioms and more – and has been learning Italian for 10 years now. Outside of school, he enjoys exploring Chicago, finding deals at thrift stores and making collages out of old magazines. He hopes to find a career in print news in Chicago or New York after graduation.

Internship Placements/ J Term Courses

Internships

All students pursuing a BA in Italian Studies will be required to complete an engaged learning credit, corresponding to ITAL 395 on LOCUS (ROST 370 at the JFRC).

Those of you who either need this requirement filled or simply would like the opportunity to work with an Italian organization should contact Dr. Lombardi-Diop as soon as possible for more information.

Internship placements in Chicago may include positions within companies such as:

- The Italian American Chamber of Commerce
- Casa Italia
- Francesca's Restaurants
- The Midwest Modern Language Association
- The Italian Program at LUC

Internships in Rome

Students can also complete this internship at our John Felice Rome Center! The internship course is ROST 370 and counts towards the Italian Studies majors and Italian minors.

Please reach out to Prof. Nadia Cristiani to find an internship placement at the Rome Center, she will work with you to find one that aligns with your interests! Her email is ncristiani@luc.edu

J-Term Courses

The Italian program is also offering the following J-Term courses this academic year:

- ITAL 101 Beginning Italian I
 - Prof. Fabio Caruso
 - January 2-10, 2025. 1:00pm-3:30pm
- LITR 202 – The European Novel
 - Prof. Dennis Martinez
 - January 2-10, 2025. 1:30pm-3:30pm

SPRING 25

ITALIAN COURSES



ITAL 101

INTRO LEVEL ITALIAN

- MWF, 8:15AM-9:05AM OR 9:20AM-10:10AM WITH PROF. ROMANO
- MWF, 10:25AM-11:15AM WITH PROF. VISCONTI
- MWF, 2:45-3:35PM, PROF. TBA
- TUTH, 11:30AM-12:45PM WITH PROF. SPILIOTI

ITAL 102

LEVEL 2 ITALIAN

PREREQ: ITAL 101

- MWF, 9:20AM-10:10AM WITH PROF. MARSHALL
- MWF, 10:25AM-11:15AM WITH PROF. IONTA
- TUTH, 10AM-11:15AM WITH PROF. SPILIOTI
- TUTH, 1PM-2:15PM OR 2:30PM-3:45PM WITH PROF. DEFRAIA



ITAL 103

LEVEL 3 ITALIAN

PREREQ: ITAL 102

- MWF, 10:25AM-11:15AM WITH PROF. MARSHALL
-

ITAL 104

LEVEL 4 ITALIAN

PREREQ: ITAL 103

- MWF, 11:30AM-12:20PM WITH PROF. IONTA



ITAL 251

COMPOSITION AND CONVERSATION II,

PREREQ: ITAL 104

- MWF, 2:45PM-3:35PM WITH PROF. IONTA

ITAL 270

MAIN CURRENTS OF ITALIAN LITERATURE I

- TUTH, 1PM-2:15PM WITH PROF. LOMBARDI



ITAL 290

THE ITALIANS

PREREQ: ITAL 250 & 251

- MWF, 1:40PM-2:30PM WITH PROF. IONTA

ITAL 300

TUTORIAL FOR CREDIT

- TBA WITH PROF. LOMBARDI



SPRING 25

ITALIAN COURSES



ITAL 395

INTERNSHIP

- PLEASE REACH OUT TO PROF. LOMBARDI FOR INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS

LITR 161

INTRO TO ITALIAN CULTURE

- MWF, 1:40PM-2:30PM WITH PROF. MARSHALL



LITR 200

EUROPEAN MASTERPIECES

- W, 4:15PM WITH PROF. MARSHALL

LITR 202

EUROPEAN NOVEL RESISTANCE STORIES

- TUTh, 11:30AM-12:45PM WITH PROF. LOMBARDI



LITR 264

ITALIAN FILM GENRE

- TUTh, 10AM-11:15AM WITH PROF. MARTINEZ
- TUTh, 11:30AM-12:45PM WITH PROF. MARTINEZ

LITR 283

TRANSLATION DANTE

- TUTh, 8:15AM-9:05AM WITH PROF. POSNER



PLEASE REACH OUT TO
DR. LOMBARDI-DIOP OR
LOYOLAITALIANPROGRAM@GMAIL.COM
WITH ANY QUESTIONS!

Eportfolios

All students pursuing a BA in Italian Studies will be required to create an eportfolio that they will then present to the Italian Program faculty or to their advisors. Presentations should be roughly 7-10 minutes and done fully in Italian. Reach out to Dr. Lombardi-Diop for information regarding due dates and to schedule your presentations.

Instructions

1. Academic Progress Demonstrated (3 files)
 - Best Paper at the 250 or 251 level (If you received AP or IB credits for both 250 and 251, simply select two 300 level best papers)
 - Best Paper at the 270 or 271 level
 - Best Paper at the 300 level
 - Selecting your "best paper" asks you to consider pertinence of the topic, and the highest level of essay writing you achieved at each level.
2. Immersion Experience (study abroad, internship, or if you have not done either of these, a project you worked on) (1 file)
 - Choose 2 documents (they can be photos) that relate to one experience. This experience may have occurred on foreign soil, or locally in the USA, as long as you were immersed in the target language. Then explain the experience and what you learned.
3. Culminating Reflection (1 file)
 - *The prompt below is normally for a longer reflection, so we realize you cannot get to everything. Think of it as a guide for what ideas you might address in your short reflection.
 - The reflection should be 150-200 words in the target language (i.e., Italian).
 - Your overall objective for this Culminating Reflection is to clearly demonstrate growth and achievement under each of the three general outcomes.
 - Academic Excellence
 - Appreciation of Cultures
 - Realization of Loyola mission

Alumni Updates

Gabriella Piscopo, Class of 23

Since graduating in May 2023, I took a gap year to spend the summer with my family in Italy & to work & save up some money for grad school. Now I am currently in my first year at National Louis University in their school psychology masters program, where I still have two more years to go! Even though I still have a bit of way to go I am excited to see what the future holds and I can continue to incorporate my Italian studies and language background into my life. My favorite professors were Anna Clara Ionta & Dr Lombardi. I really would not have had the amazing experience I had with the Italian department and program without them! Especially Dr Lombardi, she gave me so many opportunities and advice and she really helped shape my college experience, what I want for myself in the future, and who I am. I am so grateful to her and owe her so much! My favorite classes were the Italian in business class with Professor Ionta and the Italian culture class with Dr. Lombardi. I especially enjoyed the business class because it improved my Italian skills so much and learning about business and professionalism within Italian culture and language was so so interesting and a great tool to have in your back pocket!



Benjamin Meitzler, Class of 24

Just four months after graduating from Loyola University Chicago in May, 2024, I moved abroad to Rome to pursue my master's degree in International Relations at LUISS Guido Carli. Living here in Rome, and having studied two semesters before at LUC's John Felice Rome Center, I have been able to explore Italy, the Belpaese, extensively. To that effect, I can say with certainty that my many experiences in Italy have been vastly enriched by the time I spent at LUC studying Italian! Having taken over 10 Italian courses at LUC, I feel not only comfortable speaking the language with my Italian friends, but I also feel incredibly knowledgeable about Italian history, culture, and literature, which has been an incredible gift to have traveling around Italy and living in Rome; the Italian Department at LUC did an amazing job preparing students for the Italian lifestyle. Dr. Lombardi enables students to pursue the Italian language at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, and having begun my pursuit of Italian from ground zero, I can speak to the high quality of teaching at each level (with a special shout-out to Professor Ionta!) In fact, if it weren't for LUC's amazing Italian program, I'm not sure I would have ever considered the life-changing opportunity to study in the Eternal City.



