Graduate Program in Italian Studies

The Department of French & Italian Studies is currently NOT ACCEPTING applications for the Master of Arts in Italian Studies. Please email graduate program adviser Sabrina Tatta at sabri@uw.edu if you have questions about graduate classes in Italian.

The Master of Arts Program

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Program overview

The Department of French and Italian Studies has undertaken a revision of its Master of Arts in Italian Studies program that reflects the many positive developments that have occurred over the past several years. In the past we have been successful in drawing not only regional students, but students from other states and abroad. We also have a very high rate of undergraduate majors who wish to pursue a Master of Arts degree in Italian at the UW. Our program is entrusted with a dual mission: to prepare our students for advanced doctoral work at the University of Washington or other universities, and to train our students to become excellent teachers of Italian language and culture in the greater Puget Sound area or elsewhere. We feel we have been successful in both missions, for we have placed students in Ph.D. programs such as Comparative Literature at the UW and Italian at Columbia University while also sending a number of our graduates on to teach locally in community colleges and other instructional venues.

Faculty

- Albert Sbragia, Associate Professor, 19th & 20th century Italian literature, cinema, cross-appointments in Cinema Studies and European Studies
- Susan Gaylard, Associate Professor, Renaissance Literature
- Beatrice Arduini, Assistant Professor, Medieval Studies, Dante Studies
- Claudio Mazzola, Senior Lecturer, Contemporary Italian culture
- Sabrina Tatta, Lecturer, Italian language

The Italian Studies Program has launched a series of new, intensive graduate seminars designed to engage our M.A. students and other graduate students on campus in the type of advanced analysis and critical thinking necessary for the profession including Literary Analysis and Stylistics and Italian Critical Theory. The program offers a 5-course sequence on Italian literary history: Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque and Enlightenment, Nineteenth Century, and Twentieth Century. In addition to course work, to M.A. degree students must complete a rigorous reading list spanning the Italian literary and cultural tradition and sit for both written and oral exams.
Requirements for the Master of Arts in Italian Studies

Applicants for a Master of Arts in Italian should present an undergraduate major or its equivalent in Italian literature and culture. Their preparation should be equivalent to the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree in Italian at the University of Washington. All applicants must prove proficiency in the speaking and writing of Italian language.

Effective Summer 2016

A total of 50 applicable credits are required for the Master in Arts of Italian. 40 of those credits (normally 8 courses) must be taken in 400- and 500-level course work.

- at least 18 of these credits must be at the 500-level or above
- at least 18 of these credits must be graded in department approved 400-level courses accepted as part of the major, and in 500-level courses. This excludes 499 and transfer credits

The coursework will include:

- ITAL 510 “Methodology of Italian Language Teaching” and ITAL 590: total 5 credits or equivalent (courses to be created)
- a designated “methods” course (ITAL 550, 551) or another course with approval of the GPC
- at least two courses whose content is largely drawn from pre-1800

10 credits in ITAL 600 will be given for a Master’s Project. The MA Project emphasizes independent research and creative projects. Possibilities include the writing of a publishable research essay (20-25 pages); a teaching portfolio; or a digital project (eg. an online edition or database). The Project will be devised in consultation with a chosen director, from the faculty of FIS. Upon completion, it will be defended before a faculty panel of two professors: the director and a second member.

MA students are, in addition, encouraged to complete a Graduate Certificate, which will encourage interdisciplinary work and add a further dimension to the students’ academic cursus. Those of particular interest to FIS MA students include: Secondary and Foreign Language Teaching; Textual and Digital Studies; Cinema and Media Studies; Public Humanities; Feminist Studies; Queer and Sexuality Studies. Graduate Certificates typically require 15-20 credits of courses and capstone work, of which 6 can overlap with the credits applied to the MA in French or Italian.

In order to remain in good standing the student must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of 3.6. The minimum acceptable grade for any given course is 2.7.

The M.A. program should normally be completed in 5 or 6 full-time academic quarters (with a Teaching Assistantship, full-time enrollment is 10 credits per quarter). The last quarter is usually reserved for study and exam preparation.

Prior to Summer 2016

A total of 50 applicable credits (400-level and above) will be required in course work, 30 of which must be taken at the 500 level (courses limited to graduate students). An additional 10 credits in Italian 600 will be given for exam preparation. To remain in good standing the student must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of 3.6. The minimum acceptable grade for any given course is 2.7. View the Italian M.A. Summary Sheet (PDF).

Students are encouraged to take up to 10 credits in disciplines other than their major field of study. The credits must be approved by the Graduate Advisor at the time of registration, and should be related to the student’s field of specialization. Credits in such supporting or related fields are allowed only for courses numbered 400 or above.
The M.A. program should normally be completed in 6 full-time academic quarters, the last quarter being usually reserved for study and examination preparation.

M.A. candidates must pass a foreign language reading ability examination in a language other than the major or their native language. Students will stipulate their choice at the time of first enrollment, after consultation with the Graduate Advisor. Examinations will be scheduled by the student and the language department administering the examination. Examinations can also be taken at the Educational Assessment Center (440 Schmitz Hall).

The Graduate Program Coordinator, in consultation with the student and appropriate faculty members, appoints a committee of three Italian and Italian adjunct faculty members. The supervisory committee should be formed no later than the first week of the quarter prior to the examination.

The M.A. examinations (written and oral) are to be taken in the final quarter of study. The examination format is as follows:

- A three-day take-home written examination based on a reading list available in the Graduate Program Coordinator's office. Students are expected to write informed essays on three broadly defined periods of Italian literature and culture. Two of these examinations will be written in English; the third will be written in Italian. Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to synthesize and draw parallels between periods, genres and systems of representation.
- If the student fails the written examinations, no re-examination will be offered and the student will not advance to the oral examination. If the student has been successful in the written portion of the examination, an oral examination of two hours duration will follow not more than two weeks after the written examination. The oral examination, conducted in Italian, will consist of a discussion of the student's written examination essays and of the reading list.

**Integration of Italian Studies at the UW & Intellectual Mission**

The Italian Studies graduate program is fully committed to providing our students with interdisciplinary learning experiences. The Italian Studies program actively collaborates with many other UW departments and programs. We offer jointly listed courses on Italian Cinema, Italian Fascism, Rome with professors in Cinema Studies, History and Art History in which our graduate students are able to interact with other faculty and peers on campus. These courses also present unique opportunities for our students to serve as teaching assistants in challenging courses other than language instruction. We collaborate closely with faculty in these programs and others as well; in particular, Comparative Literature, Classics, Studio Art, European Studies, Comparative History of Ideas, and English. Italian Studies' involvement at the UW Rome Center has been growing and promoting new interdisciplinary links for our graduate students. The University of Washington sends more students to Italy than to any other country in the world and the Italian Studies undergraduate and graduate programs are centrally involved in these efforts. Our greater integration into the UW academic life is predicated on our commitment to bringing the unique contributions of Italian culture and critical thought to the campus intellectual community. In the first place, we strive to bring to the fore the pivotal role the Italian tradition plays in the complex suture between the classical heritage and our modern times. At the same time, we seek to communicate the specifically Italian contribution to the contemporary critical debate, that is to say, its sound philological tradition, which, based on a focused attention to the historical, literary and cultural document as artifact, brings to the fore a collaboration of linguistic, archaeological, historiographic, and textual analyses. In this sense, Italian philology has a crucial role to play in dialogue with current methodological approaches such as new historicism or textual studies.

**International Exchanges**

While integrating our Masters program into the larger intellectual life on campus and the Rome Center, we have also been pioneering exchange efforts with Italian universities. A few years ago, the UW and the University of Bologna signed a faculty and student exchange/ cooperation agreement. As part of the student exchange, the Italian Studies program has sent both graduate and
undergraduate students to take courses and work with faculty at the University of Bologna. The exchange is a wonderful opportunity to expose our graduate students to the excellent faculty and graduate programs of the oldest and most prestigious university in Italy. More recently we have entered into similar agreements with the University of Pavia, the University of Perugia and the University for Foreigners in Perugia.

**Instructional Experiences for Graduate Students**

It should be noted that together with the academic preparation of our students, we take very seriously our other mandate of preparing our Masters students to become dynamic and effective teachers of Italian language and culture. Many of our Masters students constitute the core of the future teachers of Italian language and culture in the K-12 grades and community colleges in Washington state and it is a special matter of pride for our program to ensure that they bring to our schools excellence and the very highest standards in teaching. The Italian Studies program faculty and graduate teaching assistants are enthusiastic participants in the annual World Language Day on campus for high school students. The program has language coordinators to professionally manage the Italian language program and to train our teaching assistants. The language program has become very popular on campus and we consider it to be one of the very best in the nation. Teaching assistants are trained and monitored very closely by the coordinator and are involved in all phases of the program from the preparation of materials and examinations to assisting in the training of their newer peers. TAs are integrated into all levels of the language sequence. New accelerated, intensive, and overseas courses have been instituted which prepare undergraduates for early access to upper division courses and provide a greater range of instructional experiences for our graduate student teaching assistants.

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