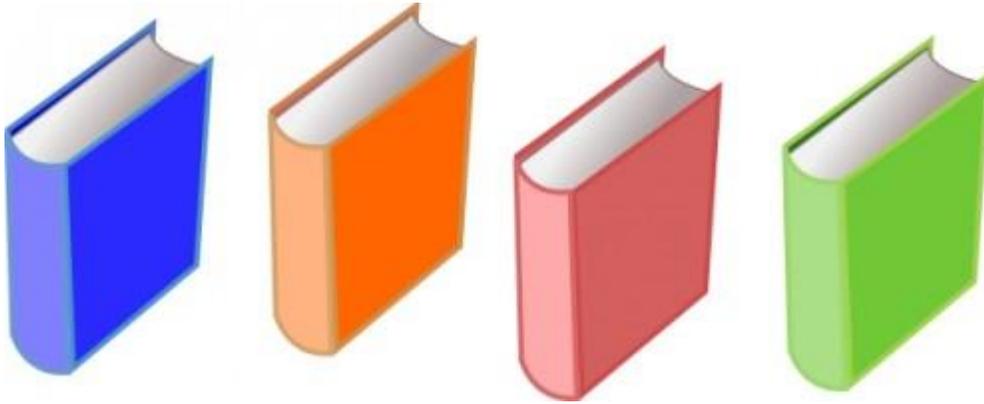


Western University
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
Masterpieces of Contemporary Italian Literature
Italian 3328F-Fall 2017



INSTRUCTOR

Prof. Luca Pocci (lpocci@uwo.ca)

Arts & Humanities Building, 3G28E

519-661-2111, ext. 86062

Office hours: TBA

Classes: Monday 12:30-1:30 & Wednesday 12:30-2:30; UCC 58

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND AIMS

You can't build a thorough understanding of today's global culture if you don't have any familiarity with the literary treasures of modern and contemporary Italy. In this course you will be introduced to a number of Italian writers who have contributed to shape the way in which we have come to think of ourselves and the world in the past one hundred years or so. The works of Luigi Pirandello, Eugenio Montale, Italo Calvino, Primo Levi, among others, will provide us with the literary platform to explore such topics as national and personal identity, memory, love, justice, crime. Discussion of a variety of novels, short stories, memoirs, and poems will allow us to reflect on the often fuzzy boundary between fiction and reality, as well as on the role of Italian writers in the evolution of literary genres and styles. **The course is taught in Italian** and aims to achieve the following:

- expose students to a broad variety of literary works and genres from the early twentieth-century to the present
- guide students into grasping the major techniques and stylistic features of narrative prose (novels, short stories, memoirs) and poetry
- examine the unique contribution that Italian authors have given to the evolution of literary genres and styles
- explore the relationships between literary movements and their socio-political and technological environments

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- understand the historical evolution of genres and conventions from the early twentieth-century

to the present

- grasp the specificity of the languages of narrative prose and poetry, and describe the style and techniques of major authors and movements
- discuss the role of Italian authors within the wider context of European literature from the early twentieth-century to the present
- connect literary movements with their cultural, political, and technological contexts.

Students will improve their ability to express themselves on these and other related topics, both orally (through in-class presentations) and in writing (in the form of essays).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Participation & Preparation (10%): students are expected to complete all required readings before coming to class and to maintain regular attendance. Participation is assessed on the basis of day-to-day preparation and contribution to in-class activities and discussions. If a student has a legitimate reason to be absent from class (sickness, family crisis, religious holiday), s/he should contact me beforehand so that we can arrange how to make up any missed material.

B. In-Class Group Presentation (15%): 20 minutes, to be followed by class discussion. Each group will be assigned a specific topic to cover and present to the rest of the class. Topics and groups will be communicated to students in advance so as to give each group sufficient time to meet before the presentations. It is expected that students will organize their group work autonomously. In other words, the instructor can be consulted for help but will not arrange their work. Students will be evaluated for their individual performance (i.e., capacity to develop and illustrate a particular aspect of the topic assigned to their group) and for their contribution to the performance of the group (i.e., how individual performance fits in and adds to the group's performance). Acting and role-play are warmly welcomed.

C. Reading Commentaries (20%): two 2-page assignments based on questions prepared by the instructor. The questions will be about key textual features and major thematic aspects of works studied in class.

D. Midterm (25%): 2 hours; it will consist of identification and essay questions.

E. End-of-Term Research Paper (30%: 6-8 pages): The topics will be announced one month prior to the deadline. Accordingly, students are expected to hand in their essays by the due date. A late penalty of 5% per day will apply unless relevant documentation is submitted. The essays will be evaluated for structure, clarity of argument, proper use of academic sources, evidence of independent research, and writing quality (style, grammar, punctuation). For citations and bibliography students should follow the MLA format. It is important to keep in mind that a good essay is the result of a coherent structure which, in turn, derives from

- 1) the logical development of ideas and/or a thesis;
- 2) the correlation between the parts and the whole.

N.B. E-mail will be used extensively for communication. Students must make sure that their UWO account is in order.

TEXTS (available at the University bookstore)

Required

Ammaniti, Niccolò. *Fango*. Milano: Mondadori, 1996. ISBN 9788804468646

Calvino, Italo. *Il barone rampante*. Milano: Mondadori, 1993 (1957). ISBN: 8804370858

Ortese Anna Maria. *Il mare non bagna Napoli*. Milano: Adelphi, 2001 (1953). ISBN 8845922855

Levi, Primo. *Se questo è un uomo*. Torino: Einaudi, 2014 (1947). ISBN 8806219359

Pirandello, Luigi. *Il fu Mattia Pascal*. [CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform](#), 2014 (1904). ISBN: 1499361610

Tabucchi, Antonio. *Il gioco del rovescio*. Milano, Feltrinelli, 1991 (1981). EAN:9788807811746

Recommended

Brand Peter and Pertile Lino, Ed. *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature (revised edition)*. Cambridge University Press, 1999 (Paperback). ISBN 0521666228

Please note: this book will also be available on course reserve at Weldon



TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 (September 11 & 13)

Course presentation

L. Pirandello, *Il fu Mattia Pascal*

Week 2 (September 18 & 20)

L. Pirandello, *Il fu Mattia Pascal*

Week 3 (September 25 & 27)

L. Pirandello, *Il fu Mattia Pascal*

Italian Poetry: G. D'Annunzio, E. Montale

Week 4

October 2

Reading Commentary 1 Due

Italian Poetry: G. Ungaretti, A. Palazzeschi, G. Caproni

October 4

Italian Poetry: G. Ungaretti, A. Palazzeschi, G. Caproni

Week 5: Reading Week (October 9-11)

Week 6 (October 16 & 18)

P. Levi, *Se questo è un uomo*

Week 7

October 23

P. Levi, *Se questo è un uomo*

October 25

Midterm

Week 8 (October 30 & November 1)

A.M. Ortese, *Il mare non bagna Napoli*

Week 9 (November 6 & 8)I. Calvino, *Il barone rampante*Week 10November 13I. Calvino, *Il barone rampante*November 15A. Tabucchi, *Il gioco del rovescio*Week 11November 20A. Tabucchi, *Il gioco del rovescio*November 22**Reading Commentary 2 Due**Film Screening: *L'ultimo capodanno* (dir. Marco Risi, 1998). Based on N. Ammaniti's "L'ultimo capodanno dell'umanità".Week 12 (November 27 & 29)N. Ammaniti, da *Fango*, "L'ultimo capodanno dell'umanità"Week 13December 4:**End-of-Term Research Paper Due****In-Class Presentations**December 6**In-Class Presentations****Antirequisite(s):****Prerequisite(s):****Corequisite(s):****Pre-or Corequisite(s):** Italian 2200 or permission of the Department.**Extra Information:** 3 hours, 0.5 course.

Note: Taught in Italian.

Please note: You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites (or have special permission from your Dean to waive the prerequisite) and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. If you are not eligible for the course, you may be removed from it at any time, and it will be deleted from your record. In addition, you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions can not be appealed.

The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures Policies (which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in the department's courses) are available [here](#). It is your responsibility to understand these policies, and thus ignorance thereof cannot be used as grounds for appeal.