**Master Syllabus**

**ITA 204: Italian Literature in Translation I**

**Cluster Requirement: 3A**

**The Cultural World: Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding - Literature**

**Course Description:**

In this introduction to Italian literature, we read in English translation and analyze key Italian texts produced between the 13th and 16th centuries that stand out for their literary, historical, artistic, or cultural importance. Readings, lectures, and discussions are in English.

**Course Content:**

This course analyzes the outstanding works of Italian literature from the first works written in Italian in the 13th century to the Renaissance texts of the 16th century. The course includes representative authors within and across multiple genres and literary movements focusing on San Francesco d’Assisi (1182-1226), Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), Baldassarre Castiglione (1478-1529), and Giovanni della casa (1503-1556). This course provides students with a strong foundation in understanding the artistic production of Italian writers and the recurring themes and characteristics unique to Italian literature.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes

*After completing this course, students will be able to:*

1. Discover and demonstrate understanding of the textual literary works such as poetry and prose.
2. Critically analyze and discuss the ways in which these works portray and/or question cultural identities, values, and behaviors.
3. Understand and debate the cultural, social, psychological, and intellectual implications of the literary texts.
4. Compare and contrast Italian history, culture, and values with those of various regions and countries (within and outside of Italy) through the analysis of literary texts.
5. Perform close readings of specific passages and write essays containing a clear and well-developed argument that demonstrates a strong command of the material.
6. Identify and discuss the characters and plots of the works.
7. Identify and discuss the significance of the writers.

University Studies Learning Outcomes (Cluster 3A):

*After completing this course, students will be able to:*

1. Articulate how literature (fiction, poetry, drama and literary nonfiction) both reflects and helps shape culture, society and history.
2. Explain how a text’s literary form, style and content express its meanings using appropriate disciplinary terminology.
3. Evaluate the rhetorical and contextual elements of ideas presented by literary texts and respond to them critically and analytically.
4. Explain the ways in which literature expresses the values that humans attach to their experiences.

**ITA 204 Rationale Statement:**

This course offers an introductory critical overview of major works in Italian literature in English translation, consisting of a representative sample of literary readings from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century of Italy’s history. These texts will be examined critically in the relevant social and cultural contexts [Outcome 3A: 1]. For example, students reading Boccaccio’s *Decameron* will examine the author’s representation of the bubonic plague and the societal, cultural, and religious influence on the Italian population; through this contextual foundation established in the introduction, students will then reflect on the short stories contained within the work and how they are representative of the changing mindset of 14th century Italian society. Students will engage in critical and in-depth textual analysis with the use of appropriate disciplinary terminology to understand how the texts convey their meaning [Outcome 3A: 2]. Students reading Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* will analyze the form of the epic poem and provide examples of how the style and content both contribute to expressing possible meanings that the author wishes to transmit; for example, the use of frantic repetition and repeated stanzas to convey Orlando’s madness in losing the love of Angelica. Through such contextual and formal analysis, students will then reflect on the values of the human experience in literature and critically respond to the text’s “rhetorical elements of ideas” [Outcome 3A: 3 and 4]. For example, students reading Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier* will explain how the manner in which the courtier’s rhetoric and behavior is received by the audience and how it reflects the societal values of contemporary Italian society.

**Examples of Texts and/or Assigned Readings:**

Not all books listed will be “required” for purchase; the instructor will provide the relevant excerpts when necessary. Additionally, the following specific editions listed in this syllabus will be available in the Claire T. Carney Library for students to borrow.

Alighieri, Dante. *The Inferno*. Translated by Robert Hollander and Jean Hollander. New York: Anchor Books, 2002.

---. *Paradiso*. Translated by Robert Hollander and Jean Hollander. New York: Anchor Books, 2004.

---. *Purgatorio*. Translated by Robert Hollander and Jean Hollander. New York: Anchor Books, 2008.

Ariosto, Ludovico. *Orlando Furioso*. Translated by Guido Waldman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Boccaccio, Giovanni. *The Decameron*. Translated by Guido Waldma. Edited by Jonathan Usher. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Castiglione, Baldassarre. *The Book of the Courtier*. Translated by George Bull. New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 1976.

Della Casa, Giovanni. *Galateo: Or, The Rules of Polite Behavior*. Translated by M. F. Rusnak. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Francis of Assisi [Selected Texts]

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince*. Translated and Edited by Peter Bondanella. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Petrarch. *Selections from the Canzoniere and Other Works*. Translated by Mark Musa. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

**General Pedagogical Techniques and Assignments:**

The course will be conducted in English with readings in English translation.

* Lecture
* Discussions
  + In-class discussion
  + Small group discussion
  + MyCourses discussion board
  + Short oral presentations
* Critical essays
* Reading comprehension quizzes
* Writing project
  + Possible: written comparison of text and film versions
  + Oral presentation
* Exams
  + Midterm
  + Final

**Example Assignments:**

Attendance, Participation, and Discussions:

Students will be required to participate in classroom discussions, and will be assessed by their preparedness and thoughtful contribution. Discussions may also take the form of brief written responses, in-class speaking exercises and/or posts on a myCourses Discussion Board.

[Fulfills Learning Outcomes 3A: 1-4]

Critical Essays:

Students will be required to write several short formal papers (the specific number of which will be determined by the instructor), in which students will analyze the texts. The students will discuss one or more literary texts studied in the course from a focused perspective. Assessment will be based on the quality of textual analysis as well as the student’s ability to understand rhetorical devices and contextual elements of ideas presented by the pieces of literature. A sample rubric is attached to this master syllabus. The MLA style of formatting will be followed.

[Fulfills Learning Outcomes 3A: 1, 3, 4]

Exams and Quizzes:

There will be several short reading comprehension quizzes throughout the semester that will include multiple choice, short-answer and short essay questions. There will be a non-cumulative midterm and non-cumulative final exam with multiple-choice, short-answer and essay assessment based on the literary material covered. Quizzes and exams will assess students on their reading comprehension, their ability to interpret literary texts, their ability to describe form and style, and their ability to analyze their content using appropriate disciplinary terminology.

[Fulfills Learning Outcomes 3A: 1-4]

Research Project:

Towards the end of the semester, students will be required to write a paper six to eight pages in length based on a topic selected by the student with the instructor’s approval. Example topics could include the following:

* a textual analysis of one chosen piece of literature based upon genre, style, or theme;
* a textual comparison of several chosen pieces of literature based upon genre, style, or theme;
* a literary analysis of events or characters within the piece(s) of literature;
* an analysis of historical context of the piece(s) of literature;
* a comparison between a chosen text and cinematic adaptation.

Students will research scholarly articles on their topic, to compare and contrast various perspectives of literary analysis, and the MLA style of formatting will be followed. The instructor will determine the number of external sources necessary for the project.

[Fulfills Learning Outcomes 3A: 1, 4]

Course Artifacts for Assessment:

1. Discussion
2. Critical Essays
3. Reading Comprehension Quizzes
4. Exams
5. Research Project

This course and its artifacts may be adapted to a blended or fully online format, in which the classroom discussion will take place on the myCourses discussion board (if asynchronous) or live chat (if synchronous), and exams will be timed.

**Sample Course Outline:**

The following outline includes the basic skeletal structure of content according to week. This outline is subject to change depending on class needs. Detailed reading schedules, including due dates for homework assignments and essays as well as quiz dates will be made available on myCourses.

1. Introduction; *Cantico di Frate Sole*, San Francesco d’Assisi
2. *The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri
3. *The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri
4. *The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri
5. *Decameron*, Giovanni Boccaccio
6. *Decameron*, Giovanni Boccaccio
7. *Decameron*, Giovanni Boccaccio
   1. Mid-Term Exam
8. *Canzoniere*, Francesco Petrarca
9. *Canzoniere*, Francesco Petrarca
10. *The Prince*, Niccolò Machiavelli
11. *The Prince*, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527)
12. *Orlando furioso*, Ludovico Ariosto
13. *Orlando furioso*, Ludovico Ariosto
    1. Final Draft of the Research Project due
14. *The Book of the Courtier*, Baldassarre Castiglione
    1. Presentations
15. *Galateo: Or, The Rules of Polite Behavior*, Giovanni della casa
    1. Final Exam

**ITA 204 Working Rubric for Written Assignments:**

**Content (40 points maximum)**

36-40: Well-developed analysis of the text. Excellent support from literary sources that is very thoroughly examined, explained, and clearly relevant to the thesis. Exhibits independent thought. Demonstrates a clear command of the text.

32-35: Analysis of the text exceeds expectations. Sufficient support from literary sources that is examined well and relevant to the thesis. Demonstrates a clear command of the text.

28-31: Adequate analysis of the text but with a tendency to summarize. Some support from literary sources. Demonstrates some command of the text.

24-27: Analysis of the text fails to meet expectations; mostly a summary. Little or weak support from literary sources. Demonstrates a weak command of the text.

0-23: Analysis of the text is inadequate, inaccurate, or incoherent. No support from literary sources. Demonstrates little to no command of the text. Insufficient length.

**Organization and Clarity (20 points maximum)**

18-20: Introduction, body, and conclusion are complete and satisfying. Content is organized logically, making the points very clear and concise. Paragraph structure is honored and paragraphs are coherent.

16-17: Introduction, body, and conclusion are mostly complete. Content is organized effectively, but with some minor issues in clarity. Paragraph structure is honored and paragraphs are coherent.

14-15: Introduction, body, and conclusion are lacking. Content is at times disorganized, with some issues in clarity. Paragraph structure is honored and paragraphs are largely coherent.

12-13: Introduction, body, and conclusion are incomplete or somewhat confusing. Content is at times disorganized, with some issues in clarity. Paragraph structure is honored and paragraphs are largely coherent.

0-11: Content does not follow any logical structure. Paragraphs are incoherent and disorganized.

**Style and Terminology (20 points maximum)**

18-20: Excellent and interesting word choice and sentence variety. Does not use informal English (colloquialisms; slang) or contractions. Appropriate terminology is used.

16-17: Word choice and sentence variety exceed expectations. Does not use informal English

(colloquialisms; slang) or contractions. Appropriate terminology is used.

14-15: Adequate word choice with some errors. Some awkward sentence structure. Some informal (colloquialisms; slang) and contractions. Some appropriate terminology is used.

12-13: Vocabulary and sentence structure fail to meet expectations. Appropriate terminology is lacking.

0-11: Frequent errors and mistakes. Several areas of the writing are incomprehensible. No appropriate terminology is used.

**Grammar and Mechanics (20 points maximum)**

18-20: Excellent grammar; zero or few spelling or mechanical (e.g., punctuation, capitalization) errors. Sources are cited correctly.

16-17: Grammar, spelling, and mechanics exceed expectations. Sources are cited correctly.

14-15: Adequate grammar; several spelling and mechanical errors. Sources are cited correctly.

12-13: Grammar, spelling, and mechanics fail to meet expectations. Sloppy citation of sources.

0-11: Ubiquitous grammar, spelling, and mechanical errors, often making the writing incomprehensible. Outside sources are not cited properly or at all (plagiarism).