

Italian 250: Composition & Conversation I
John Felice Rome Center

Fall 2026
Classroom:
Prof. Nives Valli
Email: nvalli@luc.edu
Office Hours:

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an Engaged Learning course, approved for the Service-Learning category, and thus satisfies the Loyola University Chicago Engaged Learning requirement.

The primary objective of Italian 250 Conversation & Composition is to further develop students' knowledge of the target language and enhance writing, reading, and speaking skills using authentic materials.

Although the emphasis of this course is on oral communication, students will also work on developing writing, listening, and reading skills by writing short compositions, watching video/short films, and reading authentic Italian texts. Students will also compare cultural differences and similarities between Italy and their own country. Other aspects of this course will be the review of grammatical concepts and the enrichment of vocabulary.

In connection to the Jesuit identity of Loyola, this language course's curriculum connects student learning with the needs of the local city through a placement-based or project-based service-learning opportunity (minimum 30 hours). **Each service-learning experience requires 3 hours a week of service.** Students will be challenged to expand their worldview and value the importance of increasing support and change behavior towards marginalized populations.

Service-learning completion is demonstrated by initial visit of the site, providing the service to the agency, writing a monthly reflection blog, and building a learning portfolio in Italian. The instructor will give you 4 questions for each blog entry to help you reflect on the experience and critically connect your experience with class materials and discussions. All students must complete the service-learning experience and related assignments to successfully pass the course.

To enrich the course and students' learning, there will be guest speaker sessions on topics relevant to the course.

This course is held entirely in Italian.

Learning Portfolio in Italian

As a part of this course, you will be using a learning portfolio to document your learning, growth, and make connections between course content and beyond-the-classroom experiences. You will be integrating your learning through reflective assignments (blog posts) to create new understanding of material and deepen your learning experiences that will be visually displayed on your learning portfolio. As you will be submitting your portfolio for assignment, you are encouraged to seek feedback from peers, your instructors, and advisors on content and structure of your work to deeper engage in learning.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Class meetings will center on developing reading/writing/speaking ability, and will be supplemented with in-class activities, service-learning opportunities, and external resources.

Upon completion of Italian 250 students should attain a level of competency sufficient to:

- Communicate ideas in extended discourse and participate in common interactive situations (*speaking skills*);
- Understand native speech and its social meaning - everyday topics in predictable/unpredictable contexts (*listening skills*);
- Identify the content and the cultural relevance of literary and non-literary texts on familiar/unfamiliar topics and discourse types (*reading skills*);
- Write coherently and appropriately on a variety of topics and discourse types (*writing skills*);
- Identify specific aspects of Italian culture, its contemporary issues, and the needs of one of its marginalized populations through service learning (*cultural competence*)
- Interact with different cultures with awareness and sensitivity and compare cultural differences and similarities between Italy and their own country (*intercultural competence*).
- Expand their thinking of the world around them and value the importance of increased support for, and change behavior towards, marginalized populations (e.g., refugees and asylum seekers)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In order to attain the learning outcomes outlined above and to ensure that the course proceeds efficiently, students are encouraged and expected to:

- Attend class. Not attending class will lower a student's grade.
- Participate actively and constructively, both in the classroom and at the service-learning site.
- Take all the quizzes and exams on their scheduled dates and at their scheduled times. In accordance with the JFRC Examination Policy, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam, at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reasons; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.
- Complete homework on their due date.
- Comport themselves in a manner conducive to learning and with respect for other students.
- Speak Italian during class meetings.
- Cell phones are not allowed in class. Feel free to use a laptop but ONLY for class related work.

As this is a service-learning course, you are also expected to fulfill the following service-learning requirements:

- Attend the orientation session about the non-profit agency that has partnered with us. This orientation will happen during the beginning of the semester.
- Decide with the instructor the service-learning tasks needed by the agency.
- Write a monthly service-learning blog post (two paragraphs, in Italian) on the experience.
- Building a learning portfolio to document your learning experience.
- Final presentation of the learning portfolio in front of the instructor.

REQUIRED TEXT/MATERIALS

Italia per Stranieri, Giulia De Savorgnani -Alma Edizioni ISBN: 8861824242

Other course material will be used, related to language learning and service learning. It will all be posted on Sakai.

The book required is to be purchased **within the first week of class**. You are free to order the book online, using the links provided below. We encourage you to physically go to **La Feltrinelli bookstore in Largo di Torre Argentina 5a** (<https://www.lafeltrinelli.it/punto-vendita/roma/ms-roma-argentina/555>) **Please bring the ISBN of the texts required.**

Suggested links for purchasing online:

<https://www.amazon.it/>
<https://www.amazon.com/>
<https://www.almaedizioni.it>

Chosen names and personal pronouns.

Everyone has the right to be addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity, including non-binary pronouns. Rosters do not list gender or pronouns so if you use a chosen name or pronoun, please let me know (you are not obliged to do so).

Chosen names and pronouns are to be always respected in the classroom. Mistakes in addressing one another may happen, so I encourage an environment of openness to correction and learning. I will not, however, tolerate repeated comments with disrespect or antagonize students who have indicated pronouns or a chosen name. Chosen names and personal pronouns may evolve over time so, if at any point during the semester you would like to be addressed differently, please let me know.

Title IX

As an instructor, I am a Responsible Campus Partner ("RCP") under Loyola's Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation (available at www.luc.edu/equity). While my goal is for you to be able to engage fully and authentically with our course material through class discussions and written work, I also want to be transparent that as a RCP, I am instructed to notify the Office for Equity & Compliance ("OEC")/Title IX Coordinator when I have any information about conduct that reasonably may constitute Title IX Sex-Based Discrimination.

Title IX Sex-Based Discrimination (Discrimination or discriminatory harassment based on sex, Sexual harassment, Sexual assault, Dating and/or domestic violence, Stalking) applies when the conduct was within the University's education program or activity.

As the University's Title IX office, the OEC coordinates the University's response to reports and complaints of sexual misconduct (as well as discrimination of any kind) to ensure students' rights are protected.



Attendance Policy

In accordance with the Rome Center mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, and in compliance with full-time student visa status, all courses adhere to the following attendance policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student and synonymous with academic success. Attendance is mandatory at every class meeting for each course. Lateness or leaving class early will impact the course grade at the professor’s discretion. All absences, including medical absences, will be treated the same, unless they are documented in long-term conditions or emergencies. Such situations will be evaluated case-by-case by the Academic Affairs office.

Once-a-week classes: After 1 absence, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class. • Missing 3 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

Twice-a-week classes: After 2 absences, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class. • Missing 6 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

Three-times-a week classes: After 2 absences, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class. • Missing 6 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

This course meets 2 times a week, thus a total of 2 absences will be permitted. The final course grade will drop by 2% for each additional absence.

It is the student's responsibility to check homework assignments, class notes, etc. and come to class prepared in case of absence.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

- Classroom participation **10 %**
- Compositions (2) **10 %**
- Homework **5 %**
- Quizzes (2) **10%**
- Midterm Exam **15 %**
- Final Exam **20 %**
- Service Learning **30%**

(Service-Learning score is calculated as follows: Monthly Blog Post =10 %; Providing the service at the agency = 10%; Learning Portfolio = 10%)

* Detailed information concerning these assignments (expectations, deadlines, etc.) will be discussed during the Semester.

FINAL EXAM

DATE: Thursday, December 11 | TIME: 11:30 am 1:30 pm | PLACE Sala 5

Grading

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 94-100: A | 67-69: D+ |
| 90-93: A- | 60-66: D |
| 87-89: B+ | 59 or lower: |
| 84-86: B | |
| 80-83: B- | |
| 77-79: C+ | |
| 74-76: C | |
| 70-73: C- | |

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are unacceptable at the Rome Center and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: <https://catalog.luc.edu/academic-standards-regulations/undergraduate/>. You are responsible for complying with the LUC University Catalog.

Late or Missed Assignments and Examination Policy

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reasons; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

SAKAI

This course requires that each student activate and maintain access to the Sakai on-line learning tool. Through this medium such tasks can be accomplished as communicating homework assignments, submitting homework, and communicating important course-related information. In addition, specific files can be accessed through Sakai (e.g., course syllabus, lessons, language-learning files).

CLASS SCHEDULE (the following schedule is approximate and subject to modification)

<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Textbook</u>	<u>Topics/Grammar/linguistic domains</u>	<u>Means of Assessment</u>
Week 1		“Prodotti d’Italia”	introduzione al corso e al service-learning Prodotti alimentari italiani, l’importanza del cibo nella cultura italiana, modi di dire sul cibo	
Week 2		“Le superstizioni italiane” “Tutti al mare”	Le superstizioni italiane, ripasso passato remoto, gli italiani e le vacanze ieri e oggi	
Week 3		“l’Italia delle regioni”	Le regioni italiane-/stereotipi su nord e sud Italia	Comp 1
Week 4		“Made in Italy”	Esprimere opinioni e punti di vista, ripasso congiuntivo, i prodotti di marchi italiani e i prodotti artigianali	Quiz 1
Week 5		“La salute è un diritto”	Il sistema sanitario in Italia	Blog Post 1
Week 6			Ripasso Midterm Exam	Midterm Exam
FALL BREAK				
Week 7		“I mesi e le stagioni”	Le feste italiane, si passivante e si impersonale	
Week 8		“le famiglie ieri e oggi”	La famiglia italiana	
Week 9		“Gli italiani e lo sport”	Lo sport in italia, il periodo ipotetico in italiano	Blog post 2 Comp. 2
Week 10		“Un patrimonio dell’umanità” “La parola alle immagini”	Località italiane inserite nella lista del Patrimonio dell’Umanità (World Heritage list) -lati positivi e negativi Il cinema italiano	Quiz 2
Week 11		“Canzoni italiane” “Così ti vedo io”	le canzoni italiane Gestualità e stereotipi sugli italiani	Blog post 3
Week 12		“L’emigrazione italiana”	Emigrazione italiana	Blog post 4 (Final Reflection)
Week 13		“Nuovi Italiani “ “Città e campanili”	Immigrazione in Italia Il campanilismo in Italia	Presenting the Learning Portfolio

****Friday Class Day (mandatory)**