



Topics in 19th Century Literature: Italy and Italians in English Literature from the Romantics to Modernism

Course Number

COLIT-UA 9180 F01

SASEM-UG 9201 F01

Instruction Mode:

In-person

Brightspace course site

<https://brightspace.nyu.edu/d2l/home/163346>

Spring 2022

If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Study Away student for NYU Florence, please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via Brightspace so you are aware of site specific support structure, policies and procedures. Please contact florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site.

Syllabus last updated on: 13 January 2022

Lecturer Contact Information

TBA

Prerequisites

None.

Units earned

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Course Details

- Thursday from 10:30am to 1:15pm
- All times are Central European Time (CET) Please note that there is a gap in when Daylight Savings Time (DST) begins in Europe and the U.S. In the U.S., DST begins on Sunday, 13 March 2022 when clocks will be set 1 hour forward. In Europe, DST begins Sunday, 27 March 2022.
- Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class.
- Remote Participants: Your instructor will provide you with the Zoom link via NYU Brightspace.



- COVID-related details: In the interest of protecting the NYU Florence community, we are closely following CDC guidance around COVID-19 and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being is our top priority.

Course Description

Writers in both Britain and the United States have always been fascinated by Italy. Shelly and Byron were inspired by the hope of a new political dawn in the Italian Risorgimento. Henry James and Edith Wharton saw Italy as beautiful and dangerous in equal measure and used it as the setting of stories about the clash of old-world and new-world cultures. T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound were both profoundly influenced by Dante. The "Italy and Italians" of the title refers not only to images and characters in the works of the British and American authors we will be reading but also to the influences of Italian literature on literature in English. Recurring themes will be gender, sexuality, social class, and religion. There will also be theoretical components, introducing you to various critical approaches to literature: psychoanalytic criticism, gender studies, post-colonial studies, and Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence."

Course Objectives

By the end of the course you should be able to do the following:

- 1.) Recognize and describe the characteristics of Romantic, Victorian, and Modern literature.
- 2.) Discuss the influence of three great Italian authors – Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio – on literature in English.
- 3.) Analyze texts in their historical contexts with particular reference to their political, religious, psychological, philosophical, and gender implications.

Assessment Components

You are expected to attend class in person or remote synchronously. Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

- Participation: 10%
- Student focus 10%
- Timeline 10% (1-3 pages)
- Ungaretti translations 10%
- Three tests 10% each
- Author letter 10% (1-2 pages)
- Term project 20% (2500 words max for a written project; 20 minutes max for a presentation)

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: I reserve A-range grades for work that is original, complex, accurate, convincing, well organized, and written in good English. By "original" I don't mean that no one has ever come up with the idea before but simply that you thought of it yourself; it did not come from supplementary reading, the class discussion, or the internet. By "convincing" I don't mean that I agree with it but rather that the idea is supported by textual evidence that is difficult to refute. In the tests, I reserve A for students who identified all the passages correctly and whose comments on their chosen passages are accurate, complex, detailed, and analytical.

Grade B: B-range grades are for essays that have most of the attributes of A-range work but lack some important element, such as complexity or originality. In tests, I deduct one grade increment for each misidentified passage and one for poor writing or inaccuracy (e.g. you know which text this is, but you



get the title wrong), so a test with good comments but two misidentified passages and some mistakes in the identifications or the comments will receive a B.

Grade C: If you receive a C-range grade for an essay, it is probably the result of haste and carelessness: there are mistakes in the prose and/or the facts, the argument is facile or unconvincing, and overall the essay lacks complexity and analytical insight. In tests, you will receive a C-range grade if, for example, your comments are superficial and descriptive (as opposed to analytic) or if you misidentify several of the passages (say four out of twelve).

Grade D: You will receive this grade for essays that are inaccurate, sloppily written, brief, descriptive (as opposed to analytical), and/or give me the impression that I spent more time correcting it than you did writing it. In tests, the comments are weak, inaccurate, purely descriptive, and/or poorly written or there are five or more misidentifications.

Grade F: I reserve this grade for plagiarism, submitting work you have submitted for another course, and non-existence (i.e. you didn't do it).

Attendance Policy

In order to keep each other safe, if you are not feeling well, we encourage you to remain in your residence and, if possible, attend class remotely.

Please make sure to inform your professor in advance so that they can turn on Zoom. Remote attendance is counted as regular attendance. You will not be marked absent.

For a detailed explanation of the global attendance policy, see the NYU Florence [Present vs. Absent Flowchart](#).

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation.

The Global Attendance Policy is posted in the Academic Policies tab in [Brightspace](#), on the [NYU Florence Student Portal](#) website, and is posted around campus.

After you have read and reviewed the policies, if there is anything that still needs further clarification or raises a question, please reach out to florence.academicssupport@nyu.edu.

Final exams

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work

Please refer to Academic Policies in [Brightspace](#).

Teaching & Learning Philosophy

I believe that students do their best work when they are given the freedom to choose their subjects and the forms their work will take. Therefore, your term project can be in whatever genre and on whatever subject you choose, so long as it is an original analytical reaction to something we read in the course. There are many small assignments, so that a poor performance in one assignment will not affect your final course grade too much, and they are varied, so that you have opportunities to excel in various ways. I also avoid making assignments due in your busiest weeks – midterms week and finals week: I want to read your best work, and you are more likely to produce that when you are not under stress in your other courses.

**Required Text(s)**

The required books (below) are available at International bookshop - La Feltrinelli, Via de' Cerretani 30/32r - 50123 Florence. Tel: 055 2382652 Fax: 055 288482 firenze.international@lafeltrinelli.it

Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*

Henry James, *Daisy Miller*

E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View*

Robert Pinsky (trans.) *The Inferno of Dante: A New Verse Translation*

All the shorter readings are in the electronic course pack in the SYLLABUS ETC. area of our Brightspace website. You may want to take the file to a copy shop and have it printed and bound (*stampato fronte/retro e legato*). Copies of each book are available for consultation and short-term loans in the [Villa Ulivi Library](#). Extra copies of some books are also available for semester-long loans. For more information on Books and Course Materials go [here](#).

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)

Supplementary texts will be provided in the READINGS area.

COURSE CALENDAR**ZOOM CLASS: Session 1 – Thursday 27 Jan.**

Introduction. Romantic Revolutionaries: Byron, Shelley, Leopardi. **Writing in class: timeline.** Introduction to Dante Power Point. All readings for today's session will be done in class. **Your timeline is due Sat 29 Jan by midnight.**

ZOOM CLASS: Session 2 – Thursday 3 Feb.

International Influence: Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch. Student focus, seminar discussion, and Power Point (hereafter PP). Reading for class: Dante's *Inferno*, Cantos 1, 5, and 13. Boccaccio's *Decameron*: Prologue; Intro Day 1; Day 1 stories 1-4; Day 2 stories 2, 7, and 9; Day 3 stories 1 and 10. All the Petrarch sonnets in the course pack.

ZOOM CLASS: Session 3 – Thursday 10 Feb.

The Anti-Romanticism of Mary Shelley. Student focus, seminar discussion, and PP.

Reading for class: Extracts from *Frankenstein* and Mary Shelley's Introduction to the 1831 edition.

Session 4 – Thursday 17 Feb.

Love and Death 1: Boccaccio and Keats. Student focus, seminar discussion, group work, PP. Reading for class: Boccaccio's *Decameron*: Day 4 stories 1 and 5; Day 5 story 8; Day 6 story 7; and Keats, "Isabella, or the Pot of Basil." **Test 1 on Byron, P. B. Shelley, Leopardi, Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch.**

Session 5 -- Thursday 24 Feb.

Love and Death 2: Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Emily Dickinson. PP, student focus, group work, and seminar discussion. Reading for class: All the Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Emily Dickinson poems in the course pack; *Decameron*, Intro Day 6; Concl. Day 6; Intro Day 7.

**Session 6 -- Thursday 3 March.**

George Eliot and *Romola* at La Pietra. Student focus and seminar discussion. Reading for class: The extracts from George Eliot's *Felix Holt* and *Romola* in the course pack. **Test 2 on Mary Shelley, Keats, R. Browning, E. B. Browning, Dickinson, and G. Eliot.**

Session 7 -- Thursday 10 March.

Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Shakespeare's Sonnets. seminar discussion, PP, and interactive game. There's no reading for class or student focus today; all the sonnets will be read aloud in class time.

MIDTERM BREAK MARCH 14-20**Session 8 -- Thursday 24 March.****Session 9 –**

Lions, Christians, and Gladiators: Henry James and Edith Wharton. **Student focus**, seminar discussion, and PP. Reading for class: *Daisy Miller* by Henry James and "Roman Fever" by Edith Wharton. **Writing in class: author letter (send it to me as a Word document attached to an e-mail by noon on Saturday).**

Session 10 - Thursday 31 March.

Dante's dark influence: T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. **Student focus**, seminar discussion, and PPs. Reading for class: Dante *Inferno* Cantos 26, 27, and 32-34 inclusive. "The Waste Land" and "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T. S. Eliot and Canto 45 by Ezra Pound. **TEST 3 on James, Wharton, Shakespeare, T. S. Eliot, and Pound.**

Session 11 - Thursday 7 April.

Escapes from sexual repression 1: E. M. Forster. **Student focus**, seminar discussion of the novel and Boccaccio's influence on Forster, group work, and PP. Reading for class: E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View*.

Session 12 – Thursday 14 April.

Dante and Eliot Power Point. End of *Inferno* Power Point. MAKE-UP TEST 12.15-1.15 ON SHAKESPEARE, DANTE, T.S. ELIOT, POUND, AND FORSTER.

Session 13 -- Thursday 21 April.

Escapes from sexual repression 2: D. H. Lawrence. Student focus, seminar discussion, group work, and PP. Reading for class: extracts from *Etruscan Places* by D. H. Lawrence. (We will read Lawrence's poem "Snake" and the extract from *Aaron's Rod* in class time.)

Session 14 - Thursday 28 April.

Joyce, Woolf, and Dante. Reading for class: **COURSE EVALUATIONS.** "The Dead" by James Joyce. Excerpts from *Mrs Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf (in the course pack). Student focus, seminar discussion, and PP. **TEST 3 on Forster, Lawrence, Joyce, and Woolf. TERM PROJECTS ARE DUE ON WEDNESDAY 4 MAY.**

Session 15 - Thursday 5 May.

SHOWING OF TERM PROJECTS.



Your Lecturer

Dorothea Barrett (Ph.D. Cambridge University 1987) has taught at Beijing Normal University (China), Glasgow University (Scotland), and the University of Florence. She is the author of *Vocation and Desire: George Eliot's Heroines* (a feminist analysis of the works of the great nineteenth-century British woman writer). She has edited works by Eliot, Wilde, Forster, Joyce, and others. *Vocation and Desire* was reissued in 2016 as part of Routledge Historical Sources: History of Feminism.*

*(<https://www.routledgehistoricalresources.com/feminism/search?action=toggleFacet-NotableFigures-Person/person-notablefigure-601&newSearch>).

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "Academic Integrity for Students at NYU" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offences against academic integrity.

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.



Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer and Office of Academic Support in writing via email one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, NYU Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website](#).

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

Moses Accommodations Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Florence.

Bias Response

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University's existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form \(link\)](#)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- Phone: 212-998-2277



- Local Telephone: 055 5007277