



Italian Sketchbook: Travel Writing and Digital

Course Number
IDSEM-UG 9205

Instruction Mode:
In-person

Brightspace course site
<https://brightspace.nyu.edu/d2l/home/155469>

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.academicssupport@nyu.edu if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site.

Syllabus last updated on: 28 January 2022

Lecturer Contact Information
TBA

Prerequisites

Units earned
2

Course Details

- Tuesdays from 12:00pm 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: Aula Giardino
- 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

Why do we travel? Where do we go and how do we get there? How do we document and remember the places we've been? “Travel dislodges thoughts” argues the photographer Sharon Harper. Indeed when gazing at the images from her series Flight/Flug, a traveler is reminded of the vertiginous view from the window of a high speed train, the landscape blurred by velocity. The train’s movement is projected onto the rolling landscape in a reproduction of the sensation of movement, like staring out a window and letting one’s mind drift. This course will reference a wide range of forms—the essay, the journal, the sketchbook, the map, the photograph, the human voice—through which an author represents the thoughts and sensations of mobility. We will also explore many different authorial subject positions such as the stranger, the pilgrim and the flâneuse. Representing our experiences of travel and mobility are crucial mechanisms by which we situate ourselves within the world and are earliest forms of human cultural production. These storytelling practices are tightly bound not only with recognizable forms of collective expression, such as nationality and class, but also with more private conceptions of individual identity and family.

Course Objectives

In our study of these forms we will focus on two primary impulses: **observation** and **creation**. We will trace how traveling subjects observed and recorded the world as expressions of artistic representation, scientific discovery and comparative sociocultural analysis AND we will focus on the strategies and techniques, in particular the interchange between word and image, employed by authors and artists as we translate these familiar approaches into new digital forms. Italy, and in particular Florence, will serve as the most immediate conceptual and physical context for investigation so that we may link the textual and visual material studied in the classroom with the world beyond the boundaries of Villa La Pietra.

Assessment Components

Class Participation (20%)

Active engagement in class discussions and participation in online platforms (such as group research and the class photo pool) are mandatory. Reading assignments should be completed for the day indicated for that particular session (i.e. if a reading assignment is scheduled for 4/10, read it before 4/10). On [Brightspace](#) there is a specific page dedicated to each class session containing all assigned content. Assigned readings form the basis for class discussion, so it is essential that you have read each week’s assigned texts and come to class prepared to discuss them. Likewise, multimedia content listed in the course schedule should be reviewed before class. All group work produced in class should be saved in the course shared folder in Google Drive. Each student is expected to contribute one original photograph each week to the group photo pool. Participation is worth 20% of the final course grade.

Storylines (30%)

A storyline is a narrative thread or plot that provides structure and meaning to an account, experience, or argument. In this course storylines will also serve as opportunities to reflect on course concepts and experience gained in the field through short narrative experiments. These creative pieces can examine the way in which the stories we read are composed or connected to one another and/or how they serve



as inspiration for your own creative storytelling process. Each storyline will focus on a different digital form: sound, word, image.

Creative Project (30%)

The creative project will consist of a **creative multimedia project** (audio/video/website/etc.) that explores one of the particular themes or subjects covered in this course. Two individual conferences with the instructor are required for this project. The first conference should be scheduled before 3/25 to identify potential areas of investigation for the project and to discuss possible formats. A second follow-up conference should be completed by 4/22. The project will be introduced to the class in a 10 minute presentation at the end of the semester.

The emphasis should be on storytelling and analysis rather than on technical excellence. In this respect, it may be more useful to develop an outline/storyboard of the project concept before selecting the digital format(s) that will be used to tell the story. Analog materials may be used for the project but particular attention should be paid to how this content will appear in a digital format as well. Don't be afraid to take risks and to try new approaches!

Reflective Essay (20%)

A reflective essay of no less than 1000 words is required. These essays should describe the process of producing the creative project and/or analyzing the concepts presented within it. Think of this assignment as an extended "[artist's statement](#)."

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.

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](#).



Required Text(s)

All readings are available online on the NYU Brightspace course site. Hard copies of some textbooks are available for consultation and semester-long loans in the [Villa Ulivi Library](#). Please email florence.library@nyu.edu to reserve a copy. To request scans from books on reserve please fill out the [Ulivi Library Book Scan Form](#).

Please refer to the Brightspace course site for more detailed information on assignments for each class session.

Session 1: Tuesday, February 1 (Remote)

Defining Travel: Canvas, Map, Journal, Archive

Assigned Content: Emily Dickinson “There is no frigate like a book” Teju Cole “Far Away From Here” Elisabeth Bishop “Questions of Travel” Sam Cooke “Far Away Places”

Assignment: Create account on Italian Sketchbook companion site. Follow this [link](#) to register.

Session 2: Tuesday, February 8 (Remote)

Observation & Documentation

Assigned Content: Joan Didion “On Keeping A Notebook” Georges Perec “The Street, The Town, Space” BBC “How Stories Shape Our Minds” Frank Ocean “White Ferrari” Courtney Barnett “Rae Street”

SOUND

Session 3: Friday, February 11 (Remote)

The Stranger

Assigned Content: Homer *The Odyssey* “Book XVII” Georg Simmel “The Stranger” “The Stranger Comes to Town” (*High Plains Drifter* 1973) “Eleven” (*Stranger Things* 2016) Elmore James “Stranger Blues”

Session 4: Tuesday, February 15

Digital Storytelling: Sound

Assigned Content: Michel De Certeau “Spatial Stories” Daneila Zyman & Janet Cardiff “Excerpt from The Walk Book” Janet Cardiff [The Missing Voice](#) (1999) [Her Long Black Hair](#) (2004)

Session 5: Tuesday, February 22

Field Recording on VLP grounds

Assignment: Storyline 1: Story of a Stranger (Due 2/27)

WORD

Session 6: Tuesday, March 1

The Flâneuse

Assigned Content: Virginia Woolf “Street Haunting” (optional) Lauren Elkin “Flâneuse-ing” Garnette Cadogan “Black and Blue” Valeria Luiselli “Manifesto à Velo” Ruth Orkin “Jinx Allen in Florence” The Beatles [She’s Leaving Home](#)



Session 7: Friday, March 4

Site visit to Archivio di diari

<http://archiviodiari.org/>

Session 8: Tuesday, March 8

Workshop: Using Twine

Assigned Content: Robertson “Text Adventures: How Twine Remade Gaming” Hammond [Twine Guide](#)

Assignment: Storyline 2: Diary of a Flaneuse (**Due 3/20**)

SPRING BREAK (March 14-20)

IMAGE

Session 9: Friday, March 25

Workshop/Lecture with Photojournalist Rocco Rorandelli

Assigned Content: Website: Lensculture [Visual Storytelling Award Winners 2019](#) Independent Photography [Visual Storytelling Awards 2021](#) [Rocco Rorandelli @ TerraProject](#)

[Augie’s Project](#) (*Smoke* 1995)

Assignment: Creative Project: complete introductory project conference with instructor by 3/25

Session 10: Tuesday, March 29

Workshop: Storytelling with Images

Session 11: Tuesday, April 5

The Pilgrim

Assigned Content: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe “The Pilgrim Strides Out Busily” Zygmunt Bauman “From Pilgrim to Tourist” NYTimes [Mecca Goes Mega \(VR360\)](#) Neko Case [Wayfaring Stranger](#)

Assignment: Creative Project Outline (**Due 4/10**)

Session 12: Friday, April 15

Site visit to Orsigna

Please save this date for our off-site class activity. Further details will be forthcoming.

Assigned Content: Terzani “Orsigna, Last Love” Pelizzari “Terzani: the Man, the Journalist, the Philosophical Writer” Petrarch “Ascent of Mount Ventoux”

Assignment: Storyline 3: A Pilgrimage (**Due 4/20**)

Session 13: April 18-22

Individual Meetings with Instructor

Session: 14 Tuesday May 3

Sketchbook Final Presentations

Session: 15 Friday May 13

Sketchbook Final Presentations



Assignment: Reflective Essay Due 5/13

Your Lecturer

Scott Palmer has been teaching courses on writing and cultural studies at New York University Florence since 2005. He also manages the Florence Digital Studio, the campus hub for multimedia production and digital communications. His research interests focus on nineteenth-century literature and visual culture, especially the intersection between mobility, race and image-making. Dr. Palmer has both a BA and an MA in English from the University of Oregon as well as an MA in Anglo-American Literary Relations from University College London. He received his PhD in American Literature from Tufts University.

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