

Course Last Updated 2/22/2024



University of
New Haven

Gender, Culture & Society in Italy

Section I: Course Overview

Course Code: SOC350

Subject Area(s): Sociology

Prerequisites: One 200 level course or two 100 level courses in a relevant field

Language of Instruction: English

Total Contact Hours: 45

Credits: 3

Course Description

This course explores Italian history, society and culture through the notion of gender in its enmeshment with categories such as sex, race, ethnicity, class, nation, and sexuality. Through scholarly essays, artworks, theoretical texts, films, documentaries, literary works, and newspaper articles, students are exposed to a wide array of ideas, debates, and discourses that have shaped and still shape both the construction and the perception of gender in the Italian context. Some of the issues this course addresses are: the representation of gendered identity in Renaissance artworks; imposed and perceived gender roles in the fascist era; theories and practices of Italian feminism; the uneasy emergence of LGBTQ+ issues on the public arena; and the role gender plays in the construction of postcolonial subjectivity.

Learning Objectives

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

- Describe key concepts and theories of the social and cultural construction of gender
- Explain how social, political, and cultural specificities have shaped gendered identity in contemporary Italy
- Convey the specific ways in which social and cultural forces shape gendered identity in contemporary Italy

- Discuss gender's intersection with categories such as sex, race, ethnicity, class, nation, and sexuality in the Italian context
- Compare notions of gender in the Italian, European, and the North-American context

Section II: Instructor & Course Details

Instructor Details

Name: TBC

Contact Information: TBC

Term: TBC

Course Day and Time: TBC

Office Hours: TBC

Grading & Assessment

The instructor will assess your progress towards the above-listed learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted and will count towards your final grade. The following section (Assessment Overview) will provide further details for each.

Engagement - 20%

Group Presentations - 10%

Mid-term Exam - 20%

Research Paper/Video essay - 20%

Final Exam - 20%

Journal - 10%

Assessment Overview

The instructor assesses students' mastery of course learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted toward the final grade. The Assessment Overview section provides further details for each.

Engagement (20%): Students are expected to be engaged in class, and to have read the [CEA CAPA Engagement Policy](#) and to understand the [Class Engagement Rubric](#) that outlines how engagement will be graded.

Group Presentations (10%): Students are expected to prepare and deliver six group presentations (5-10mins each) on topics assigned by the instructor and related to class materials. All students are required to contribute to their group's presentations. Presentations should address the assigned topic in a clear, structured, and organized fashion.

Mid-Term Exam (20%) Final Exam (20%): The midterm and final exams aim at evaluating students' understanding of class materials and discussions as well as the development of their own critical

thinking. The midterm exam covers the material analyzed and discussed in class up to the date of the exam; the final exam is comprehensive and covers all course contents. Both exams consist of essay-type questions and analysis of images and short passages, which require students to demonstrate their knowledge of specific terms, concepts, images, and texts and to compose their ideas addressing specific topics related to course content.

Research Paper/Video essay (20%): Students are expected to submit an original video-essay (8-10 mins) about a relevant topic within the scope of the course using at least 4 scholarly sources (journal articles, book chapters, etc.) as well as other pertinent sources such as newspapers, blog entries, or social media contributions; references to the essay bibliography with proper citations must appear throughout the essay. The topic needs to be pre-approved by the professor. Students may focus on a particular issue (e.g. Blackness & Italian-ness), on one of the abstract concepts developed in class (e.g., the revolutionary potential of homosexuality), or even on cross-cultural and comparative issues. Through a broad range of materials such as original footage, text, real/mock interviews, location tours, images/photographs, maps, music, and anything that can convey their personal take on the essay topic, students must show their knowledge/understanding of the theme as well as their personal engagement with the city of Florence, offering an in-depth exploration and a critical analysis of the topic.

As an alternative, students may opt to write an individual research paper about a relevant topic within the scope of the course, using at least 4 scholarly sources (journal articles, book chapters, video documentaries, photographs, etc.) as well as other relevant sources such as newspapers, magazines, and social media. The topic will need to be pre-approved by the professor.

The paper must be at least 4000 words long and include an introduction, main body, and conclusion. Essays must be typed, double-spaced in Times New Roman (12pt), and 2.5cm/1-inch margins on all four sides.

Journal (10%): Students are expected to keep a journal in which they reflect on their experience in Florence through the perspective of gender. Are your expectations about gender issues in Italy fulfilled? Does your experience in Florence compel you to rethink your assumptions about gender roles? Do you discover new parts of yourself through the immersion in a foreign culture? At least six entries from week 3 to week 12 – each entry at least 500 words.

Active Learning

Experiential learning is an essential component of education abroad, and participation in field studies is a required part of coursework. In this course, students explore the city in which they are studying using a variety of methods. This provides the opportunity to gain nuance and perspective on the host context and course content, as well as to collect information and resources for assigned papers, projects, and presentations.

- Visit to Anthropology and Ethnology Museum
- Visit to the exhibit Verso la modernità
- Visit to Manifattura Tabacchi
- Visit to an exhibition (if appropriate) - TBD
- Meeting with Mistura Allison, researcher, art historian, curator at Villa Romana, Florence
- Meeting with Giulia Garofalo Geymonat, researcher and activist

Readings and Resources

The below readings and resources are representative of what will be assigned as required in this course, but may vary slightly in the term syllabus.

All students are given access to the online library of the University of New Haven (UNH), accessible [here](#), and are expected to comply with [UNH Policies](#) regarding library usage.

Wherever possible, required readings are made accessible through the online library or Canvas. Students are responsible for obtaining all required readings.

Each course utilizes Canvas as its LMS. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates and deadlines. Canvas is also the primary platform for contacting your instructor in case of questions or concerns about the course.

Required

Bandelli, Daniela. *Femicide, Gender and Violence. Discourses and Counterdiscourses in Italy*. Springer-Verlag GmbH, 2017

Bracke, Maud Anne. *Women and the Reinvention of the Political: Feminism in Italy, 1968-1983*. Routledge, 2019

Cavarero, Adriana. "Towards a Theory of Sexual Difference", *The Lonely Mirror: Italian Perspectives on Feminist Theory* edited by Sandra Kemp and Paola Bono. London: Routledge, 1993, pp. 189-221

Cohen, Elizabeth S. "The Trials of Artemisia Gentileschi: A Rape as History." *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2000, pp. 47-75

Formato, Federica. *Gender, Discourse and Ideology in Italian*. Palgrave, 2018

Garrard, Mary. *Artemisia Gentileschi. The image of the female hero in Italian Baroque art*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991

Gibson, Mary. "Labelling Women Deviant: Heterosexual Women, Prostitutes and Lesbians in Early Criminological Discourse", *Gender, Family and Sexuality: The Private Sphere in Italy 1860-1945*, edited by Perry Wilson. Palgrave, 2004, pp. 89-104

Lombardi-Diop, Cristina and Caterina Romeo (eds.), *Postcolonial Italy: Challenging National Homogeneity*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Lombroso, Cesare. *Criminal woman, the prostitute, and the normal woman*. Duke University Press, 2004

Lonzi, Carla. "Let's spit on Hegel", *Italian Feminist Thought: A Reader*, edited by Paola Bono and Sandra Kemp. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1993, pp. 40-59

Pickering-lazzi, Robin. *Unspeakable Women*. The Feminist Press, 1993

Pojmann, Wendy. "Mother across boundaries. Immigrant domestic workers and gender roles in Italy", *Intimacy and Italian Migration: Gender and Domestic Lives in a Mobile World*, edited by Loretta Baldassar and Donna Gabaccia. Fordham University Press, 2011, pp. 127-139

Rocke, Michael. *Forbidden friendships. Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence*. Oxford University Press, 1998,

--. "Gender and sexual culture in Renaissance Italy", *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, edited by Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis, 2014, pp. 140-170

Zambelli, Elena. *Sexscapes of Pleasure: Women, Sexuality and the Whore Stigma in Italy*. Berghahn Books, 2022

Course Calendar

Session 1	
Topics	<p>What is gender?</p> <p>Introduction to the course – Review Syllabus</p> <p>Exploration of the notion of gender in global and local contexts; Analysis of concepts to be used throughout the course</p>
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formato, pp. 1-37

Session 2	
Topics	<p>Gender and sexual culture in Renaissance Italy;</p> <p>Analysis of Renaissance artworks and their representation of gender</p>
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rocke, Forbidden Friendship, pp. 150-170 • Rocke, Gender and sexual culture, pp. 140-170

Session 3	
Topics	The woman question and the emergence of proto-feminism
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bracke, pp. 30-45

Session 4	
Topics	<p>Sodomy, sexual violence and the law</p> <p>The notion of sodomy in early modern Florence</p> <p>The case of Artemisia and gender-based violence</p>
Activity	Lecture & Discussion

Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rocke, <i>Forbidden friendships</i>, pp. 30-43; 50-64 • Cohen, pp. 47–75 • Garrand, pp. 53-65
Session 5	
Topics	<p>Gender and science in unified Italy</p> <p>Cesare Lombroso's theories on the criminal woman; Women in 19th century paintings by Italian artists</p> <p>Gender and anthropology</p>
Activity	<p>Lecture & Discussion</p> <p>Visit to Museum on Ethnology and Anthropology</p>
Readings & Assignments	<p>Gibson, pp. 89-104</p> <p>Group presentations on excerpts from Cesare Lombroso, <i>Criminal woman, the prostitute, and the normal woman</i></p>

Session 6	
Topics	<p>Women in post-Unification art</p> <p>Fascist Florence - Women under fascism</p>
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<p>Pickering-lazzi, pp. 1-14</p> <p>Group presentations on short stories from Robin Pickering-lazzi, <i>Unspeakable Women</i></p>

Session 7	
Topics	<p>From WWII to the 1970s</p> <p>Women during WWII/the Resistance; History and achievements of Italian feminism from post-WWII era to today; 2nd-wave Italian feminism - Italian feminist organizations, authors, and theories</p>
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<p>Lonzi, pp. 40-59</p> <p>Cavarero, pp. 189-221</p>

Session 8	
Mid-term	

Session 9	
Topics	Colonial Italy: Italian colonial past; Propaganda on race in fascist Italy & the manifesto of race; Sexual policies in the Italian colonies Post-colonial Italy: Race in contemporary Italy; Postcolonial literature
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lombardi-Diop & Romeo, pp. 1-29

Session 10	
Topics	Gender & migration: History of Italy as a destination country; Immigration to Italy today; Migrants and Italian feminism
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pojmann, pp. 127-139

Session 11	
Topics	The LGBTQ+ community in today's Italy Civil unions; The Zan bill; Surrogacy; Same-sex parents; Gender reassignment procedures
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gibson, pp. 89-104

Session 12	
Topics	Global sex work Prostitution in unified Italy; Sex work today
Activity	
Readings & Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zambelli, pp. 102-126

Session 13	
Topics	Violence on women in Italy: past and present; Italian legislation on sexual violence Femicide: The emergence of the notion of femicide in Italy; Femicide today; Honor killing
Activity	Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	Bertelli, pp. 133-143

Session 14	
Group presentations on short stories from Robin Pickering-lazzi, <i>Unspeakable Women</i>	

Session 15	
Final exam	

Section III: Academic Policies and Standards

Academic Policies

Students are expected to review and understand all CEA CAPA student policies, including our [Academic Policies](#) and [Engagement Policy](#). CEA CAPA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. Additional requirements that may be associated with a specific course or program are addressed in the term syllabus.

Student Learning & Development Objectives

CEA CAPA has identified [Student Learning and Development Objectives \(SLDOs\)](#) for all programs in all locations: content in context, navigating differences, power and equity, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, career and professional development, and sustainability and migration.

These are meta-level learning objectives that transcend coursework and are infused across all elements of program delivery, beyond specifics of course offerings, addressing student learning holistically and framing it a larger learning context.