



Study abroad.

## **SYLLABUS**

### **NATIONAL IDENTITY IN 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ITALY AND THE UNITED STATES**

**Instructor: Professor Randall C. Jimerson**

**Contact Hrs: 45**

**Language of Instruction: English**

### **SIENA, ITALY**

#### **Course Description**

Italy was not always Italy. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the Italian peninsula was divided into many separate city-states, duchies, republics, and kingdoms. This course explores how these competing and sometimes hostile states—which seemed to have nothing in common but geography—formed a united nation. “Italy” did not have a common cultural, linguistic, or political identity. These had to be created as unification proceeded. We gain a deeper appreciation of modern Italy by understanding its past.

The United States and Italy represent two separate paths to nationalism, which was one of the strongest political, social, and economic movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This course compares the simultaneous events of the Italian Risorgimento and the American Civil War, focusing on the social and intellectual aspects of these events. During the 1860s Italy became a unified nation for the first time, and the United States changed from a loose confederation of states into a unified and centralized nation.

This course is designed to appeal to students of history, political science, sociology, culture, and literature, as well as anyone seeking a deeper and broader appreciation for modern Italian society.

#### **Course Objectives**

- To learn about modern Italian politics, life, and culture by studying the past;
- To understand the meaning of nationalism and the formation of national identity;
- To gain an understanding of major issues and events in the era of the Italian Risorgimento, including political, economic, social, and cultural conditions in Italy from 1815 to 1870;
- To analyze the causes of the American Civil War, the conflict between state, sectional, and national loyalties, the experience of emancipation, and the consequences of the war;
- To learn about the diversity and richness of personal experience; and
- To understand how societies create and share a sense of common identity.

## **Method of Evaluation (Grading)**

**1) Participation: Readings and Discussion:** Class sessions include both informal lectures and discussions of assigned readings. Class attendance is mandatory, except for illness or pre-approved absences. Notify the instructor as soon as possible if you will miss class, or if you have missed class due to illness. Class attendance and participation will count for part of your final grade, so contributing to class discussions is in your own best interest. Note: **assigned readings** must be completed prior to class meetings.

**2) Panel Presentation:** Each of you will take part in a panel on one of the topics covered in weeks 3 through 8. Each panel will present a critique of the assigned readings, and will then lead a class discussion on the topic. The panel group must submit to the instructor a list of discussion questions and an outline for the discussion session. You are encouraged to meet together as a group to prepare strategy and outline questions, and you may meet with the instructor if you wish to discuss your plans.

**3) Analytical Essays:** Each student will write two 3-4 page (800-1000 words) analytical essays based on assigned readings. The first analytical essay is **due** on the first class meeting of week 5 and the second essay is due on the first class meeting of week 9. Comparisons between Italy and the US are preferred; otherwise, at least one essay should focus on Italy and the other on the US. Start by asking why or how something happened (e.g., Why did independent states join forces to create Italy? or Why did the national identity triumph over local and sectional loyalties in the US?). Then use evidence to support your interpretation. Don't simply describe or repeat what happened.

**4) Student journal:** Each student will keep a weekly journal, including comments, questions, and opinions regarding films, readings, class discussions, and excursions. You should write at least a full, substantial paragraph each week. Journal comments on class excursions to Rome, Florence, and/or other nearby sites (to be arranged as circumstances permit) should focus on how visiting these sites adds to understanding the history of Italy, particularly during the Risorgimento era. Journals must be submitted for review at the last class meetings of weeks 3, 7, and 10.

**5) Final exam:** There will be a final exam on the last class meeting. Exam questions will include both short-answer identification questions and longer analytical essay questions, based on the assigned readings, lectures, and discussions.

## **GRADING**

Your grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

- class attendance, 10 %;
- discussion participation, 10 %;
- panel presentation, 10 %;
- first analytical essay, 15 %;
- second analytical essay, 20 %;
- student journal, 10 %;
- final exam, 25 %.

## Course Readings

- Derek Beales and Eugenio Biagini, *The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy* (2nd Edition)
- G. Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard (Il Gattopardo)* – a novel
- Bruce Levine, *Half Slave and Half Free: The Roots of Civil War*
- Randall C. Jimerson, *The Private Civil War: Popular Thought During the Sectional Conflict*

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 Course introduction and objectives

#### Concepts of nationalism and national identity

Read: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (excerpt)  
Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (excerpt)  
David M. Potter, “The Historian’s Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa,” in *The South and the Sectional Conflict*, chapter 3

### Week 2 The American Revolution and sectional distinctions

Read: Levine, Introduction

#### Italian states during the French Revolution & Napoleonic wars

Read: Beales & Biagini, Introduction and chapter 1 & documents 1-5  
Frank J. Coppa, “From Geographical Expression to Political Consciousness - Italy in the Age of Metternich,” in *The Origins of the Italian Wars of Independence* (1992), ch. 2

### Week 3 Restoration and repression in Italy: Charles Albert and Mazzini

Read: Beales & Biagini, chapters 2-3 & documents 6-11

#### Slavery and free labor: seeds of sectional conflict

Read: Levine, chapters 1-2

### Week 4 Artistic and literary elements of the Risorgimento

Read: Beales & Biagini, chapter 4 & documents 12-14  
Lucy Riall, “Which Italy? Italian Culture and the Problem of Politics,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 39 (2004), 437-446

#### Northern and Southern intellectual life

Read: Levine, chapters 3-4

### Week 5 The Italian revolution of 1848-49

Read: Beales & Biagini, chapter 5 & documents 15-17

#### Liberty, abolitionism, and the defense of slavery

Read: Levine, chapters 5-7

**Week 6**      **Piedmont, France, and the Kingdom of Sardinia, 1849-56**

Read: Beales & Biagini, chapter 6

**The Mexican War and political compromises, 1846-54**

Read: Levine, chapters 8-9

**Week 7**      **Cavour and Garibaldi, 1855-61**

Read: Beales & Biagini, chapter 7-8 & documents 18-20

Denis Mack Smith, "Cavour and the Tuscan Revolution of 1859,"  
in *Victor Emanuel, Cavour, and the Risorgimento* (1971), ch. 7  
Giuseppe Garibaldi, *Memoirs* (excerpt)

**Outbreak of the Civil War**

Read: Levine, chapter 10

Jimerson, chapters 1-2

**Week 8**      **Race and emancipation in the Civil War era**

Read: Jimerson, chapters 3-4

**Fiction and the Risorgimento**

Read: G. Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard* (begin)

**Week 9**      **Italy unites**

Read: G. Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard* (finish)

Marco Cupolo, "Tomasi di Lampedusa's Il Gattopardo and  
Postwar Italian Political Culture," in *Risorgimento in Modern  
Italian Culture*, edited by Norma Bouchard (2005), 33-48.

**National identity and sectional differences**

Read: Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism:  
Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (excerpt)

Abraham Lincoln (two speeches)

Jimerson, chapter 5

**Week 10**      **Building Italian national identity**

Read: Beales & Biagini, chapter 9 & documents 21-22

**Limits of sectional identity and the end of the Civil War**

Read: Jimerson, chapter 6

**Week 11**      **Aftermath of the Risorgimento and Civil War: myth and reality**

Read: Beales & Biagini, chapter 10, Epilogue

Jimerson, Epilogue

Abraham Lincoln (two speeches)

**Final exam**

