A beginning course in Italian language and culture, devoted to developing all four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) within the three modes of communication (interpersonal, interpretive, presentational). While studying the language, students will be introduced to Italy and its people and they will gain both language and cultural competence.

This course is the first in a three-part sequence for beginning students of Italian. Classes are conducted entirely in Italian and are very lively, with lots of give-and-take among participants. Students with some experience in Italian may take the online placement test to place out of any or all of the first-year sequence.
Intermediate Italian continues and completes the two-year sequence in Italian language and culture. At the end of the full 102 sequence (102-1,2,3), students are expected to create with the language when talking and writing about familiar topics, to understand the main ideas and some supporting details from a variety of texts (newspaper articles, short stories, ...), to describe and narrate, with some consistency, in all major time frames while organizing their discourse into paragraphs. Students will significantly increase their knowledge of Italy’s history and culture and they will be guided to become independent learners. After the completion of the entire sequence of Italian 102, students will be eligible to study in Italy and will be ready to embark on the minor or major in Italian. The second-year Italian course sequence completes the two-year WCAS language requirement. The classroom is very lively, with lots of conversation, partnering, and small group exercises.
Intensive Italian is a double course that fulfills the WCAS two-year language requirement in one academic year. At the end of the entire 133/134 sequence, students will be able to create with the language when talking and writing about familiar topics; to understand the main ideas and some supporting details from a variety of texts (newspaper articles, short stories, ...); to describe and narrate, with some consistency, in all major time frames while organizing their discourse into paragraphs. While studying the language, students will be constantly exposed to the Italian culture. By the end of the intensive sequence, students are expected to achieve language, cultural, and intercultural competence enabling them to study in Italy and to embark on the minor or major in Italian.

Intensive Italian classes are small and highly interactive.
Students in this course will explore one of the most significant masterpieces of medieval narrative: the Decameron by Giovanni Boccaccio. Written soon after the black death that killed millions of people in Europe in 1347-51, this work collects hundreds of short-stories on the driving forces of life: sex, love, money, success, power, and curiosity. Responding to the drama of loss and chaos, the writer offers memorable portraits of men and women fighting to survive, with skills or might, the ups and downs of life and chance. Boccaccio’s humanity is not blameless, but its vitality appears as the best answer to the trauma of collective death caused by the plague. Such vitality will mark the work and life of Renaissance artists and writers who believing in the motto that transformed and transported the Middle Ages into modernity: ‘Humanity is the maker of its own fortune.’
This course will explore the role that mass media have played in shaping Italian political culture from the end of World War II to the present. In particular, we will focus on the 1948 general elections, which were heavily influenced by Cold War dynamics; the global upheaval of 1968; the turmoil of the 1970s (the so-called Years of Lead); and the rise to power of Silvio Berlusconi, the media tycoon and populist politician who has prompted more than one comparison with Donald Trump. While drawing from the fields of cultural and media studies, we will analyze how film, television, and social media have contributed to forming our sense of belonging to—or being excluded from—a political community. *Taught in Italian.
This course explores the continued centrality of Antonio Gramsci’s thought to contemporary discussions of politics and culture. Arguably the most influential post-Marxist political thinker not only in Europe, but also in India and Latin America, Gramsci’s ideas have been crucial when it comes to establishing the fields of Cultural Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and Subaltern Studies. In his eyes, a cultural strategy was a necessary element of the political struggle of the left (an intuition disconcertingly coopted by the right in more recent times). We may well ask, however, is culture in itself sufficient to articulate a political struggle? How did Gramsci define culture in his times and how do we? We will analyze in particular eight “traveling concepts” from the Prison Notebooks: Subaltern, Hegemony, Passive Revolution, Organic Intellectual, Education, National-Popular, The Southern Question, and Americanism/Fordism. We will examine these notions in their original historical context while also exploring the current horizon in which they have proven to be productive in very different geopolitical arenas. Taught in English
Whether you are breathing, dancing, or thinking, your activity is marked by a certain rhythm. Rhythm stands at the cusp between body and mind, movement and memory, experience of the self and interaction with others. This course will attend to diverse and at times contradictory notions of rhythm as they have emerged in modern and contemporary Western art and philosophy. After a brief and yet crucial return to ancient Greek philosophy (Plato and the Pre-Socratics), we will focus on Soviet avant-garde cinema (Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov), Italian Neorealism (Vittorio De Sica and Roberto Rossellini), Jean-Luc Godard’s recent films, and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s philosophy. We will devote particular attention to the role that rhythm has played in shaping our understanding of the relation between aesthetic experience and political life: what is the relation between rhythm and power? how do different ideas of rhythm in artistic practice relate to different ideas of society and order? In addition to the aforementioned bodies of work, we will consider contributions from the fields of psychoanalysis, critical race theory, and feminist/queer theory.