



**Faculty of Arts**  
**School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures**

ITAL 405.6  
**SELECTED WORKS IN ITALIAN LITERATURE (Medieval Storytelling)**  
Winter 2018

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**INSTRUCTOR'S NAME:** Dr. Eleonora Buonocore

**OFFICE LOCATION:** CH C320

**OFFICE HOURS:** M–W 11 am to 12 pm or by appointment

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** 403 220 4424

**E-MAIL :** eleonora.buonocore@ucalgary.ca

**DESCRIPTION**

What is a short story? What characterizes good storytelling? When was storytelling born in Italian Literature? Who were the main heroes and villains in these tales? What are their main themes? The aim of this course is threefold. On the one hand the students will discover the beginning of Italian Literature in prose and become familiarized with tales mostly from Boccaccio's Decameron but also from other collections of short stories, including Il Novellino and Bandello's Novelle. Secondly, the course will explore the historical context of medieval Italian history, paying particular attention to the development of the cities, the rise of the merchant class and the politics of gender. Finally, we will learn the inner workings of the short-story genre, how to interpret, analyze and write a short story. In order to do so, the students will analyze a selection of short stories, their tropes, and their language. We will read tales about the varied humanity in a Medieval Italian city: cunning merchants and their even smarter wives, monks and nuns, priests and prostitutes, rich and poor people, noblemen and noblewomen. We will investigate the themes of love, fortune, ethics and rhetoric.

**OBJECTIVES**

This course aims to prepare the students to engage with the Italian literary tradition. The objectives of this course are manifold:

- to provide the students with the necessary analytical tools to decode a short literary text in Italian, particularly focusing on the development of cities, the rise of the merchant class and the politics of gender.
- to provide an introduction to Italian Literature which includes the historical background of Medieval and Renaissance Italy.
- to show how to recognize and trace ideas in short literary texts.
- to familiarize the students with some of the greatest figures at the beginning of Italian literature in the vernacular, such as Il Novellino, Giovanni Boccaccio and Matteo Bandello.
- to explain the main characteristics of analytical writing, and of close reading.

**OUTCOMES**

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- analyze a short story in depth.
- recognize the short story form, its origins and development in Medieval Italian Literature.
- understand how a frame narrative works, and be able to explain it.
- follow the development of an idea in a text, and in multiple texts through time.
- Know the basic history of Italy in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, especially the development of urban culture, of the merchant class, and the role that women had in this historical process.
- Reach an understanding of the complex dynamics that lie at the foundation of Italian Literature in the vernacular, and specifically of the role of Boccaccio in this process.



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- Become familiar with Giovanni Boccaccio and with the most important figures in the Decameron
- Write a creative short story in Italian.
- Produce an interpretative essay focusing on a selected medieval Italian tale or more.

**DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES**

Active class participation 15%  
Oral Presentations (2 at 5% each) 10%  
Writing Assignments (2 at 10% each) 20%  
Written exams (2 at 20% and 10% each) 30%  
Final paper 25%

**GRADING SCALE**

A+ = 100-96 A= 95-91 A- =90-86  
B+ = 85-81 B =80-76 B- =75-71  
C+ = 70-67 C= 66-62 C- =61-58  
D+ = 57-54 D= 53-50 F =49%-0%

The official grading system (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) will be applied for the calculation of the final mark

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

1) *THE DECAMERON : SELECTED TALES/DECAMERON: NOVELLE SCELTE: A DUAL-LANGUAGE BOOK*  
PUBLISHER: DOVER PUBLICATIONS, INCORPORATED (Available at the Book Store)

2) Additional material provided in PDF format on D2L

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

Any textbook of Italian grammar and syntax.  
Any good Italian-English, English-Italian dictionary for advanced students.

**COURSE NOTES**

- The course will consist in class readings, writing and communicative activities: analyses and seminar discussions will be in Italian. Regular attendance is strongly recommended.
- Active participation is warmly encouraged. Active participation is defined as coming to class prepared to discuss the reading, and to ask questions about the reading. Lack of attendance or of participation will adversely affect your overall performance and will have a negative impact on your final grade. The instructor should be informed of any reasons for prolonged absence.
- Attendance to co-curricular events is encouraged in order to have more occasions to practice your language skills, and can help make up absences for your participation grade as well as be counted as extra-credit (when you submit a write-up describing the event you participated to).
- Students are strongly encouraged to communicate consistently on the target language and to attend IL CIRCOLINO (CHC 318) to practice Italian.



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- There will be three Espresso Talks – or Coffee Hours this semesters, students are required to attend at least 1 Espresso Talk as part of their participation grade.

Oral Presentations: Students will prepare and deliver two 10-minute in-class presentations about the class material, and will lead the class discussion, including being prepared to answer other students' questions.

Writing Assignments: throughout the term students will write 2 short essays of 500/600 words each on topics of their choice among those covered in class (they could be also the same or a similar topic to those of their presentation).

Written exams: they will evaluate students' knowledge of the fundamental aspects of Italian history, language, and culture covered in class. Students will be asked to write a composition and analyze selected poems among those read in class.

There will be no final examination.

Final paper: the paper will deal extensively with a theme discussed in class. The topic will be agreed with the instructor. The paper will have a length of 5/7 pages, in Italian.

- Late assignments and missed tests policy:
  - Missed tests and missed assignments will be counted as an incomplete and will contribute to the calculation of the mark.
- Electronic submission of assignments: Assignments will be submitted in paper copy to the teacher, double spaced, printed and stapled by the due deadline. (In case this is not possible word/pdf format via email to [eleonora.buonocore@ucalgary.ca](mailto:eleonora.buonocore@ucalgary.ca) can be accepted).

The Department's drop-box, located in the foyer area of the third floor in Craigie Hall between blocks D and available for depositing assignments and course work. The material placed in the drop- box will be collected and at the beginning and at the end of the working day.

#### ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

1. **Plagiarism** is a serious offence, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. Plagiarism exists when:

- a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;
- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted."

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

2. **Cheating** at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without



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permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

3. **Other academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

#### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

#### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION ASSEMBLY POINTS**

Craigie Hall: Professional Faculties food court (alternate: Education Block food court)

Education Block and Tower: Scurfield Hall atrium (alternate: Professional Faculties food court)

Kinesiology: north courtyard, MacEwan Student Centre (alternate: University Theatres lobby)

For the complete list of assembly points please consult <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

#### **FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES**

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.

In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca)

Website: [arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate).

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca).



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#### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT**

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it.

Please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

#### **INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

#### **SAFEWALK**

To request a Safewalk escort anywhere on campus, 24 hours a day and seven days a week, please call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help Phones.

Web: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>

#### **STUDENT UNION INFORMATION**

Representatives and contact details: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/home/contact.html>

Student Ombudsman: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

#### **WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

Writing skills should cross all disciplines. Students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their courses and, where appropriate, instructors can and should use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office (<http://www.efwr.ucalgary.ca/>) can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.