



# FLOR SOCY 3367 Gender, Culture & Society in Italy

## CAPA FLORENCE PROGRAM

### 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 will be 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 will address 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.

### Course Aims

This course aims at providing students with the key concepts and theories of the social construction of gendered identity as well as an understanding of how they apply to the Italian context. The specificities of Italian society and culture, both historical and contemporary, are analyzed here in order to foster a nuanced comprehension of how gender has been produced, lived, negotiated, represented, and conceptualized in Italy.

### Requirements and Prerequisites

There are no specific requirements to take this course.

### Capa Students Learning & Developmental Outcomes (SLDOs)

1. **Globalization.** Students are able to recognize, describe, and interpret examples of the impact of the globalization in the urban environment.
2. **Urban Environment.** Students are able to explore and analyse the spaces they inhabit, and reflect on differences and similarities between their home and host environments.
3. **Social Dynamics.** Students are able to understand concepts of and the implications of the realities of power, privilege, and inequality in urban environments.
4. **Diversity.** Students are able to describe, interpret, and respect the differences and similarities within their student community and between their home country and the host country.
5. **Personal and Professional Development:** CAPA students will gain insight into their personal and professional development that occurred during their CAPA learning abroad experience, with emphasis on the skills they acquired that will be of particular interest to future employers and graduate school admissions officers. The development of skills relative to personal and professional development and career preparedness include for this class the following ones:
  - 🔊 **Communications:** The ability to receive, interpret, and articulate information and ideas effectively;
  - 🔊 **Global Perspective:** The skills required to live and work in an interdependent world through forming an understanding of connections between one's own life and those of people across the globe;
  - 🔊 **Cultural Awareness:** The understanding of oneself, others and the ability to embrace and appreciate diverse and complex perspectives, values, and beliefs;
  - 🔊 **Adaptability:** The ability to adjust oneself readily to different conditions and environments

### Learning Outcomes specific to the course

- 📖 Demonstrate a comprehension of key concepts and theories of the social and cultural construction of gender.
- 📖 Construct a critical understanding of the social, political, and cultural specificities that have affected the development of gender discourses in Italy from the early modern period to today.

- 📖 Develop a comprehension of the specific ways in which social and cultural forces shape gendered identity in contemporary Italy.
- 📖 Develop awareness of gender's intersection with categories such as sex, race, ethnicity, class, nation, and sexuality in the Italian context.

## Class Methodology

This course consists of lectures, students' presentations, class discussion, group activities, and field trips. Students are expected to read the assigned material and actively participate in class discussions and group activities.

## Field Components

CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in field activities for this course is required. You will actively explore the Global City in which you are currently living. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course.

### The assigned field components are:

- 📖 Visit to IREOS, the LGBTQ+ community center for Florence and Tuscany, to understand the current state of LGBTQ+ issues in Florence and Italy at large
- 📖 Visit to NOSOTRAS, Florence's intercultural association of women from different countries, aimed at supporting immigrant women in Italy
- 📖 Visit to The Feminist Library, that has replaced the Women's Library founded in 1980, where we will know about the current situation of women in Italy

## Mid-Term & Final Exams

The mid-term exam consists of:

- A. Short questions with open answers on topics covered in class to date (45 minutes)
- B. Essay questions aimed at assessing students' ability to relate the examined texts and issues to the broader cultural and social background as well as to theoretical concepts that are specific to the area of inquiry of the (2 hours)

The final exam consists of two parts:

- A. Short questions with open answers on topics covered in class (45 minutes)
- B. Essay questions aimed at assessing students' ability to relate the examined texts and issues to the broader cultural and social background as well as to theoretical concepts that are specific to the area of inquiry of the course (2 hours)

## Assessment/Grading Policy

Descriptor	Alpha	UK	US	GPA
Excellent	A	75+	93+	4.0
	A-	70-74	90-92	3.7
Good	B+	66-69	87-89	3.3
	B	63-65	83-86	3.0
	B-	60-62	80-82	2.7
Average	C+	56-59	77-79	2.3
	C	53-55	73-76	2.0
Below Average / Poor	C-	50-52	70-72	1.7
	D+	46-49	67-69	1.3
	D	40-45	60-66	0.7
Fail	F	<40	<60	0

## Grade Breakdown and Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Assessment Task	Grade %	Learning Outcomes	Due Date
Class participation/Small group discussion	10%	a, b, c, d	Weekly
Oral Presentation 1 X 10-15 min. individual presentation	20%	a, b, d OR a, c, d	Weekly from Week 3
Mid-term exam	20%	a, b, c, d	Week 7

Research Paper	25%	all	Week 14
Final Exam	25%	all	Week 14
Short questions (10%)			
Essay (15%)			

## Assignments

An individual presentation (10-15 minutes) on the class' topic(s). Students will be evaluated according to the degree of effectiveness of communication as well as the complexity and depth of their critical analysis of the topic chosen.

A research paper (1800 words): students are required to write a research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor.

## Course Materials

All required readings/texts will be available on CANVAS.

## Required Readings:

- 📖 Bertelli, Daniela. *Femicide, Gender and Violence. Discourses and Counterdiscourses in Italy*, 2017
- 📖 Buscemi, Francesco. "Television as a *trattoria*: Constructing the woman in the kitchen on Italian food shows", *European Journal of Communication* 29:3, 304-318
- 📖 Cavarero, Adriana. "Towards a Theory of Sexual Difference", *The Lonely Mirror: Italian Perspectives on Feminist Theory*, 1993
- 📖 Champagne, John. *Italian Masculinity and Melodrama: Caravaggio, Puccini, Contemporary Cinema*, 2015
- 📖 Chang, Natasha V. *The Crisis-Woman: Body Politics and the Modern Woman in Fascist Italy*, 2014
- 📖 Fazel, Shirin Ramzanali. "Far away from Mogadishu", *Mediterranean Crossroads: Migration Literature in Italy*, 1999
- 📖 Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*, any edition
- 📖 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*, 2004
- 📖 Giuffrida, Angela. *Italy accused of restoring honour killing defence after lenient femicide rulings*, *The Guardian*, 18 mar 2019
- 📖 Lombardi-Diop, Cristina and Caterina Romeo. *Postcolonial Italy. Challenging National Homogeneity*, 2012
- 📖 Lonzi, Carla. "Let's spit on Hegel", *Italian Feminist Thought: A Reader*, 1993
- 📖 Malagrea, Miguel Andres. *Queer Italy: Contexts, Antecedents and Representation*, 2006
- 📖 Mihala, Lorelei and Romina Vinci. *Why Romanian migrant women suffer from 'Italy syndrome'*, *Al Jazeera*, 12 feb 2019
- 📖 Och, Marjorie. "Vittoria Colonna and the commission for a *Mary Magdalen* by Titian", *Beyond Isabella: Secular Women Patrons in Renaissance Italy*, 2002
- 📖 Patriarca, Silvana. "Mammismo/Momism: On the History and Uses of a Stereotype, c.1940s to the Present", *La mamma. Interrogating a National Stereotype*, 2018
- 📖 Paulicelli, Eugenia. *Fashion under Fascism*, 2004
- 📖 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*, 2011
- 📖 Roche, Michael. "Gender and sexual culture in Renaissance Italy", *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, 2014, *New York Times*, Oct 27, 2017
- 📖 Sarti, Raffaella. "Open houses versus closed borders: Migrant domestic workers in Italy. A gendered perspective (1950s-2010s)", *Gender and Migration in Italy: A Multilayered Perspective*, 2017
- 📖 Soncini, Guia. *The failure of Italian feminism* Patriarca, Silvana. "Mammismo/Momism: On the History and Uses of a Stereotype, c.1940s to the Present", *La Mamma: Interrogating a National Stereotype*, 2018
- 📖 Tondelli, Vittorio. "Leo's World", *Italian Tales: An Anthology of Contemporary Italian Fiction*, 2007
- 📖 Viarengo, Maria. "Shirshir N'demna?" *Mediterranean Crossroads: Migration Literature in Italy*, 1999

## Films & Documentaries:

- Cristina Comencini, *When the Night*, 2011
- Ferzan Ozpetek, *Saturn in Opposition*, 2017
- Lorella Zanardo, *Women's Body*, 2009

## Weekly Course Schedule

WEEK 1		Date
<b>Lesson Number / title</b>	<b>What is gender?</b>	
Meeting time and Venue		
In-class activity	Introduction to the course Exploration of the notion of gender in global and local contexts	

WEEK 2		Date
<b>Lesson Number / title</b>	<b>Gender and the Renaissance</b>	
In-class activity	Analysis of Renaissance artworks and their representation of gender	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Michael Roche, Gender and sexual culture in Renaissance Italy, 150-170</li> <li>✓ Marjorie Och, Vittoria Colonna and the commission for a <i>Mary Magdalen</i> by Titian, 192-206</li> </ul>	

WEEK 3		Date
<b>Lesson Number / title</b>	<b>The birth of (homo)sexuality in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Italy</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of Michel Foucault's theory of the emergence of the discourse on sexuality and its application to the lesbian subject in 19 <sup>th</sup> century Italy	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mary Gibson, Labelling Women Deviant: Heterosexual Women, Prostitutes and Lesbians in Early Criminological Discourse, 89-104</li> <li>✓ Michel Foucault, <i>The History of Sexuality</i>, excerpts</li> </ul>	

WEEK 4		Date
<b>Lesson Number / title</b>	<b>Fascist femininity</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of gender roles in the fascist era through the analysis of fashion	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Natasha V. Chang, <i>The Crisis-Woman: Body Politics and the Modern Woman in Fascist Italy</i>, introduction, 1-17</li> <li>✓ Eugenia Paulicelli, <i>Fashion and fascism</i>, excerpts</li> </ul>	

WEEK 5		Date
<b>Lesson Number / title</b>	<b>Italian feminism</b>	
In-class activity	Analysis of the history and achievements of Italian feminism from post-WWII era to today through prominent organizations, authors, and theories	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Carla Lonzi, <i>Let's spit on Hegel</i>, 40-59</li> <li>✓ Adriana Cavarero, <i>Toward a theory of sexual difference</i>, 189-221</li> <li>✓ Guia Soncini, <i>The failure of Italian feminism</i>, New York Times, Oct 27, 2017</li> </ul>	

WEEK 6		Date
<b>Lesson Number / title</b>	<b>Women in postcolonial Italy</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of Italy's colonial past and postcolonial present through literary texts from women writers	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Shirin Ramzanali Fazel, <i>Far away from Mogadishu</i>, 146-158</li> <li>✓ Maria Viarengo, "Shirshir N'demna?", 67-79</li> <li>✓ Cristina Lombardi-Diop and Caterina Romeo, Paradigms of Postcoloniality in Contemporary Italy, 1-13</li> </ul>	

WEEK 7		Date
<b>Lesson Number / title</b>	<b>Midterm exam</b>	

WEEK 8		Date
Lesson Number / title	<b>LGBTQ+ activism and experience</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of the development of LGBTQ+ movements in Italy and the representation of the gay subject in Vittorio Tondelli's literary work	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Miguel Andres Malagreca, From fragmentation to unification, 118-147</li> <li>✓ Vittorio Tondelli, <i>Leo's World</i></li> </ul>	

WEEK 9		Date
Lesson Number / title	<b>Gender and migration</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of Italy's recent status as a destination country and of the roles that women immigrants play in the national life and imaginary	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Raffaella Sarti, Open houses versus closed borders: Migrant domestic workers in Italy. A gendered perspective (1950s-2010s), 39-59</li> <li>✓ Wendy Pojmann, Mother across Boundaries. Immigrant domestic workers and gender roles in Italy, 127-139</li> <li>✓ Lorelei Mihala &amp; Romina Vinci, Why Romanian migrant women suffer from 'Italy syndrome', <i>Al Jazeera</i>, 12 feb 2019</li> </ul>	

WEEK 10		Date
Lesson Number / title	<b>Italian queer masculinity?</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of the notion of Italian masculinity as queer melodrama	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ John Champagne, <i>Italian Masculinity and Melodrama</i>, Introduction, 1-26</li> <li>✓ FILM: Ferzan Ozpetek, <i>Saturn in Opposition</i>, 2007</li> </ul>	

WEEK 11		Date
Lesson Number / title	<b>Women and the media</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of the presence and status of women in Italian media (in particular television)	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ DOCUMENTARY: Lorella Zanardo, <i>Women's body</i></li> <li>✓ Francesco Buscemi, Television as a <i>trattoria</i>: Constructing the woman in the kitchen on Italian food shows, 304-318</li> </ul>	

WEEK 12		Date
Lesson Number / title	<b>Femicide</b>	
In-class activity	Discussion of the issue of violence on women and of the notion of 'femicide' as it has developed in 2010s Italy	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Daniela Bertelli, Gender: Hegemonic Lens for Making Sense of Violence Against Women and Partner Violence, 35-59</li> <li>✓ Angela Giuffrida, <i>Italy accused of restoring honour killing defence after lenient femicide rulings</i>, <i>The Guardian</i>, 18 mar 2019</li> </ul>	

WEEK 13		Date
Lesson Number / title	<b>Mammismo &amp; motherhood</b>	
In-class activity	Analysis of contemporary Italian idea of motherhood between the stereotypical image of traditional <i>mamma</i> and a more up-to-date version of maternal roles	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Silvana Patriarca, "Mammismo/Momism: On the History and Uses of a Stereotype, c.1940s to the Present", 29-50</li> <li>✓ FILM: Cristina Comencini, <i>When the Night</i></li> </ul>	

WEEK 14		Date
Lesson Number / title	<b>Final exam</b>	