
Summer 2022
STUDY ABROAD FICTION SEMINAR:
Literature for Creative Writers: Italian Hours-Writing Italy Inside and Out
CRWR 399/414

Instructor: Casey Walker
Language of Instruction: English
Site City and Country: Siena, Italy
UO Credits: 4

ITALIAN HOURS: WRITING ITALY, INSIDE AND OUT

“the ever-hungry artist has only to trust old Italy for her to feed him at every single step from her hand”

Henry James, “Siena Early and Late”

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Since at least the 18th century, travelers from abroad have come to Italy as part of the “Grand Tour,” searching for inspiration in the country’s evocative ruins, sumptuous palazzos, and masterpieces of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Writers return home with stories of love and tragedy set amongst lively piazzas and Roman ruins. Come to Italy, the stories say—bear witness to marvelous beauty and the melancholy passage of time.

Of course, a journey to Italy by an outsider who wishes to be inspired does not perfectly align with Italy as seen by Italian writers themselves. For a look at the life of Italy that the traveler does not see—its political and social realities, the burden of its historical inheritances, the vast chasms that exist between Italians themselves (differences of region, dialect, gender, political affiliation etc.)—we must look to Italian writers as our guides.

This course, then, will aim to do two things: As travelers ourselves, outsiders looking in, we will read the stories and accounts of other English language writers who have come to Italy before us—consummate prose stylists such as Henry James, Ernest Hemingway, Joseph Brodsky, and Jhumpa Lahiri. At the same time, we will approach Italy from the inside—the worlds created by Elena Ferrante, Natalia Ginzburg, Leonardo Sciascia and others.

With readings ranging across time from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* to Hisham Matar’s recent memoir about writing (and living) in Italy, our goal is to place ourselves in that long line of artistic seekers, creating new work out of our Italian encounters, while also submitting ourselves to the knowledge and vision of the people who call Italy home.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

A literature seminar for creative writers, comprised of short lectures, discussions, and generative writing exercises in which students will regularly share their critical and creative work.

COURSE READINGS

BOOKS TO BUY IN EBOOK OR HARD COPY

Call Me By Your Name, Andre Aciman

Watermark, Joseph Brodsky

The Lost Daughter, Elena Ferrante

The Penguin Book of Italian Short Stories, edited by Jhumpa Lahiri

In Other Words, by Jhumpa Lahiri

A Month in Siena, Hisham Matar

All other readings will be provided via pdf

Whether you choose to buy physical books and print out the readings, or have everything by ebook or pdf on a device, students must have the days' reading with them each class. We will be looking closely at this work for our discussions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Proficiency in close reading.
- Development of vocabularies for assessing literature, with an emphasis on craft.
- Application of the formal elements of craft in fiction.
- Familiarity with fundamental concepts, forms, modes, and traditions in literary fiction.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Daily critical reflections: 1 per class for 12 total. 20% of course grade.

Weekly writing prompt: 1 turned in per week for 4 total. 20% of course grade.

Daily journal writing: 1 entry per class for 12 entries (these entries are for you alone and are not shared with me). 10% of course grade.

Attendance and Discussion Participation: 50% of course grade.

Original Work

All work done for this class must be created by you and for this class alone.

Grading Scale

97-100%:	A+	87-89%:	B+	77-79%:	C+	67-69%:	D+	0-59%:	F
94-96%:	A	84-86%:	B	74-76%:	C	64-66%:	D		
90-93%:	A-	80-83%:	B-	70-73%:	C-	60-63%:	D-		

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Accessible Education Statement (see <https://aec.uoregon.edu/best-practices-faculty> for more information): The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Academic Misconduct Statement (see <https://dos.uoregon.edu/academic-misconduct> for more information): The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism.

Reporting Obligations: I am a [designated reporter/student-directed employee (select one)]. For information about my reporting obligations as an employee, please see [Employee Reporting Obligations](#) on the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance (OICRC) website. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sex or gender-based violence, may seek information and resources at safe.uoregon.edu, respect.uoregon.edu, or investigations.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential Title IX office/Office of Civil Rights Compliance (541-346-3123), or Dean of Students offices (541-346-3216), or call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE for help. I am also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).” reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#). See <https://investigations.uoregon.edu/student-directed-employee-responsibilities-and-required-action> for more information

Week 1: July 11th to July 14th

<i>Monday July 11th</i> 9:30-11:30	Reading: Hisham Matar, <i>A Month in Siena</i> <i>Half Day Excursion: SIENA</i>
<i>Tuesday July 12th</i> 12:30-14:30	Reading: Course Packet Selections from Ovid’s <i>Metamorphoses</i> “Apollo and Daphne,” “Diana and Actaeon” “Orpheus and Eurydice” “Cumaean Sibyl”
<i>Wednesday July 13th</i> 9:30-11:30	Reading: Jhumpa Lahiri, <i>In Other Words</i>
<i>Thursday, July 14th</i> <i>Excursion</i>	Excursion: <i>VIA FRANCIGENA Abbadia Isola & Monteriggioni</i>

Week 2: July 18th to July 24th

<i>Monday July 18th:</i> 12:30-14:30	Reading: Course Packet Henry James, <i>Daisy Miller</i>
<i>Tuesday July 19th</i> 9:30-11:30	Reading: Course Packet Ernest Hemingway, “A Very Short Story” Sam Anderson, “David’s Ankles”
<i>Wednesday July 20th</i> <i>Excursion</i>	Excursion: <i>FLORENCE</i>
<i>Thursday July 21st</i> 12:30-14:30	Reading: Joseph Brodsky, <i>Watermark</i>

Week 3: July 25th to July 31st

<i>Monday July 25th</i> 9:30-11:30	Reading: Elena Ferrante, <i>The Lost Daughter</i>
<i>Tuesday July 26th:</i> 12:30-14:30	Reading: Penguin Book of Italian Stories Anna Maria Ortese, “A Pair of Eyeglasses” Natalia Ginzburg, “My Husband”
<i>Wednesday July 27th</i> Excursion	Excursion: SAN GIMIGNANO & POGGIO ALLORO FARM
<i>Thursday July 28th</i> 9:30-11:30	Reading: Penguin Book of Italian Short Stories Leonardo Sciascia, “The Long Voyage” Antonio Tabucchi, “Against Time”

Week 4: August 1st to August 5th

<i>Monday August 1st</i> 9:30-11:30	Reading: Andre Aciman, <i>Call Me By Your Name</i> (pt. 1)
<i>Tuesday August 2nd</i> 12:30-14:30	Reading: Andre Aciman, <i>Call Me By Your Name</i> (pt. 2)
<i>Wednesday August 3rd</i> 9:30-11:30	Reading: Course Packet Karen Russell, ‘Vampires in the Lemon Grove’ Italo Calvino, <i>Invisible Cities</i> (excerpts)
<i>Thursday August 4th:</i> 12:30-14:30	Conclusion