



## SYLLABUS

### **Spring Session**

#### **WINE IN ITALY & THE WESTERN WORLD**

**Instructors: Piergiacomo Petrioli and Greti Lucaroni**

**Contact Hrs: 40**

**Language of Instruction: English**

### **SIENA, ITALY**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In the context of the history and culture of Italy, wine is not only a loved drink but forms an essential part of Italian civilization. From the study of wine students will learn about the practices of earlier cultures, about their values and our own. This course will explore various aspects of Wine civilization in Italy: mythology, religion, economy, society, history, art, literature, in order to provide students with a unique perspective on wine and Italy today. This course investigates the civilization of Italian wine, placing it in the context of the extraordinary history, philosophy, culture and lifestyle of this region. Tuscany will be taken as a special case-study, in order to investigate the connection between wine and economy, health, food-culture, history and society.

Various materials will provide relevant information on tasting techniques, and on many different wines as well as on their history and culture. Each wine will be studied in terms of its characteristics and in relationship with particular food that it should accompany. Specific pieces of information will help the students to understand "How to read an Italian label" and the different steps of the Italian wine classification. The major grape varieties and their historical roots will also be presented. We will visit the "Enoteca" of Siena (the most important Italian institution about wine in Italy), a winery in the Chianti region, and we will have a talk with an Italian oenologist, too.

The course deals with wine as an original and important element of Mediterranean and European economy, focusing on Italy as a case study. The analysis of the dynamics involved in the production and marketing of wine, actually helps to understand the cultural and historical value of wine in Italian identity. Since ancient times wine has been an important economic, social and cultural element. The production and marketing of wine had been a main economic source already in Greek and Roman societies. Even after the fall of the Roman Emperor, wine growing had an important role in the economy of the nation-states that were developing in Europe between Middle Ages and Modern times. During Renaissance, in particular, wine growing helped Italian economy to develop, and survived even after the sixteenth century decline as one of the few structural elements of our economy. Wine as an economic factor was actually of great importance also during Risorgimento and after the unification of Italy: Baron Bettino Ricasoli's entrepreneurial and political experience attested to this. Finally, after the fall of fascism and the

end of self-sufficient economy, and since Italian economic boom, wine growing has been an important element of the economic agreements within CEE first, and UE afterwards.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of this course, students will gain knowledge of the most important Italian Wines and the historical, social and cultural background of Wine in Italy. The students will be able to recognize different Italian wine, to combine them with different food, to read a label. Also, they will know various aspects of Italian society, culture and economy connected with wine. At the end of the course students will be able to understand how wine production has influenced the different economic phases of Italian and European history.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY**

Acquisition of knowledge and understanding is promoted through a combination of lectures, excursions, in-class discussions and active involvement. Students participate in group discussions on assigned readings, with further information and data provided by the instructor through lectures and electronic slides presentations. The teacher will distribute handouts, articles from newspapers and magazines, and other material in order to stimulate discussion on the most relevant topics covered during the course. Lectures do not simply explain the readings, but complement them and present different material. Taking notes during classes, as well as actively participating in the in-class discussions and during excursions and visits to museums and churches, is highly recommended, as the topics raised there will constitute integral part of the exams. Student participation is encouraged, appreciated and rewarded.

### **METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)**

20% Attendance and Participation  
10% Writing Assignment 1  
10% Oral presentation  
30% Midterm  
30% Final Exam

-----  
100% Course Grade

### **WRITING ASSIGNMENT AND ORAL PRESENTATION:**

#### Writing Assignment and Oral presentation:

The students will be asked to write a research (6-8 pages, bibliography included) and short oral presentation (10-15 minutes).

### **MIDTERM:**

30 questions (multiple choice) about topics covered in class. (2 points each question; 3 answers each question)

### **FINAL:**

30 questions (multiple choice) about topics covered in class. (2 points each question; 3 answers each question) and two essay questions (2 pages each). Each essay is 20% of the final grade.

**N.B.** Excursions are fundamental part of this course and they have to be considered classes in every respect. Students are required to take notes and to take an active participation.

The students are required to be punctual and not to bring food in the classroom.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Week 1**

Wine: its origin and history; Classical Mythology (Dionysus and Bacchus), Wine in Egypt, Ancient Greece and Rome. (Varriano, pp. 7-72). Wine and the Bible (Handout)

Wine as an element of the economic system in ancient times: from ancient Greek to the Roman Empire.

### **Week 2**

Wine from Middle Ages and Renaissance to Contemporary Times in Europe: Wine and Christian Religion (Varriano, pp. 73-236).

Wine production and marketing from Middle Ages to Renaissance: from Mediterranean Sea to Northern Europe.

### **Week 3**

Wine in Italian Literature and Poetry from Dante to Contemporary Times. Passages from Dante, Boccaccio, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Redi, Montale, Pavese. (Handout).

Wine in Italian economy from Risorgimento to liberal Italy.

### **Week 4**

Wine tasting issues. Red and White Wines in Italy. Different production. Sweet wines. Italian best Wines. The Vqprd, Doc, Docg, Igt Classification. How to read an Italian label. (Schuster; McCarthy-Mulligan). Matching food and wine: traditional and modern combinations (handout)

Wines of Italy: Visit to the Italian Enoteca (Schuster)

### **Week 5**

Baron Bettino Ricasoli's case.

Midterm

### **Week 6**

Wine production in Italy from fascism to the economic boom.

How to create a good Wine: Talking with an oenologist.

### **Week 7**

Italian wine and European integration.

Visit to a winery in the Chianti region (Brolio).

### **Week 8**

Wine and Italian Society: Rituals and culture, family and socialization. *Canzoni all'osteria*: Wine in the Italian opera and Folkmusic: pieces from Mascagni, Verdi, Guccini, Ciampi and traditional folk songs (handout)

Towards a global market.

## **Week 9**

Review for the Final

Final

### **COURSE READINGS:**

McCarthy, Jed & Ewing-Mulligan, Mary (2009). *Italian Wine for Dummies*, Hoboken, Wiley.

Schuster, M. (2000). *Essential Winetasting*, London, Beazley.

Smith, D.Mack (1997). *Modern Italy*, Yale University Press.

Varriano, John (2010). *Wine. A Cultural History*, London, Reaktion.

Zamagni, Vera (1993). *The Economic history of Italy*, Clarendon University Press Oxford.

An additional reading packet with current articles will also be distributed, particularly related to Economics.

### **WEBSITES ABOUT ITALIAN WINE:**

The following Internet addresses represent a useful instrument to research and further investigate all arguments and Wines we will analyze in the course. (always search for the English version)

[www.lifeinitaly.com/wines/](http://www.lifeinitaly.com/wines/)

[www.biondisanti.it](http://www.biondisanti.it)

[www.chianticlassico.com](http://www.chianticlassico.com)

[www.frescobaldi.it](http://www.frescobaldi.it)

[www.antinori.it](http://www.antinori.it)

[www.winetoday.com](http://www.winetoday.com)

[www.1855.com](http://www.1855.com)

[www.vinitop.it](http://www.vinitop.it)

[www.italystore.com/italianwines](http://www.italystore.com/italianwines)

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Baird, Joseph A. (1979). *Wine and the Artist*, New York, Dover.

Bode, Charles (1974). *Wines of Italy*, New York, Dover.

Burton, Anderson (1999). *The Wine Atlas of Italy*, London: Mitchell Beazley.

Hugh, Johnson, (1998). *Hugh Johnson's Story of Wine*, London, Beazley.

Robinson, Jancis (2006). *The Oxford Companion to Wine*, Oxford, University Press.

Wilson, Hanneke (2003). *Wine & Words in Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, London, Duckworth.