

Course Last Updated 01/30/2024



University of  
New Haven

## Modern Italian Cinema

### Section I: Course Overview

**Course Code:** FLM210FCO

**Subject Area(s):** Film Studies

**Prerequisites:** None

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Total Contact Hours:** 45

**Credits:** 3

**Course Fees:** None

### Course Description

This course aims to provide an overview of the landmarks of Italian cinema from the early 20th century to present. The course explores how Italian cinema reflects the evolution of modern Italy in terms of the changing social, political, economic and cultural developments shaping the 20th and 21st century Italian life.

Beginning with the hugely influential early masterpiece *Cabiria*, the course traces Neo-realism in Italian cinema from its origins to its peak in the anti-Fascist period during and immediately after World War II. The course explores how Italian cinema sought to break away from the Neo-realist traditions to capture the changing realities brought about by the economic miracle of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The course then turns to examine the rediscovery and re-evaluation of the Fascist past by filmmakers in the 1970s and 1980s and the post-modern cinematic production of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Finally, students are presented with the radical transformation of the cultural hegemony of modern Italy through the phenomena of immigration and the crisis of identity as portrayed in current cinema of Nanni Moretti, Gianni Amelio, and the new emerging directors of recent years.

### Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to:

- Analyze the cinematographic and aesthetic elements of films
- Describe the main features of different cinematic movements
- Discuss Italian history and culture through featured cinematic representations
- Summarize interpretations of films both orally and in writing

## Section II: Instructor & Course Details

### Instructor Details

**Name:** TBC

**Contact Information:** TBC

**Term:** TBC

**Course Day and Time:** TBC

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

### Grading & Assessment

The instructor assesses students' mastery of course learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted toward the final grade. The Assessment Overview section provides further details for each.

**Engagement - 20%**

**Quizzes (5) - 15%**

**Movie Reviews (5) - 10%**

**Oral Presentation - 15%**

**Reflection Paper - 15%**

**Final Exam - 25%**

### Assessment Overview

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Forms of assessment may be slightly modified in the term syllabus.

**Engagement (20%):** Students are expected to be engaged in class, to have read the CEA CAPA Engagement Policy, and to understand the [Class Engagement Rubric](#) that outlines how engagement is graded.

**Movie Reviews (10%):** For each screening students will write a review of 500 words highlighting the main themes and events of the film in question.

**Quizzes (15%):** For each film, there will be a quiz which includes True/False questions, multiple choice questions, and questions relating to stills from the films. These quizzes test both the understanding of the films students have seen and their personal interpretation of these films.

**Oral Presentation (15%):** Students will be asked to prepare one oral presentation with a partner. Students will focus on one of the films viewed in class, discuss themes and features and relate the films to the historical background and the readings done during the semester. In order to avoid excessive repetition, each group will be given clear directions on which theme, feature and reading they should focus their own presentation on, and, to this end, a list will be provided after mid-term.

**Reflection Paper (15%):** Students will be asked to write one reflection paper of 800-1000 words. This reflection paper will deal with topics based on films, readings, and themes touched upon in class. The film selected for the reflection paper must be different from the one analyzed in the oral presentation. The reflection paper should also contain a personal reading/analysis of the film. The instructor will provide further information and guidelines in class.

**Final Exam (25%):** The final exam will be composed of three parts: 1.) A vocabulary section where you will be asked to define important terminology acquired during the semester, 2.) A short answer section, and 3.) An open-ended section where the students will answer questions about films, themes and historical facts covered in class, during the semester.

## Active Learning

Experiential learning is an essential component of education abroad, and participation in field studies is a required part of coursework. In this course, students explore the city in which they are studying using a variety of methods. This provides the opportunity to gain nuance and perspective on the host context and course content, as well as to collect information and resources for assigned papers, projects, and presentations.

- Cinema Night

## Readings and Resources

The below readings and resources are representative of what will be assigned as required in this course, but may vary slightly in the term syllabus.

All students are given access to the online library of the University of New Haven (UNH), accessible [here](#), and are expected to comply with [UNH Policies](#) regarding library usage.

Wherever possible, required readings are made accessible through the online library or Canvas. Students are responsible for obtaining all required readings.

Each course utilizes Canvas as its LMS. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates and deadlines. Canvas is also the primary platform for contacting your instructor in case of questions or concerns about the course.

### Required

Bondanella, Peter and Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema*, Bloomsbury, New York, 2017

### Films

All required films will be screened in class.

Amelio, Gianni. *Lamerica*. New Yorker Films. 1994

Fellini, Federico. *La Dolce Vita*. Astor Pictures Corporation, 1960.

Forgacs, David. *Roma Città Aperta*. 1945.

Moretti, Nanni. *Caro diario*. Film Movement Classics. 1993

Visconti, Luchino. *Rocco e i suoi fratelli*. 1960.

### Recommended

Ginsborg, P. *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics 1943-1988*, Penguin, London, 1990

*Italy and Its Discontents 1980-2001*, Penguin, London, 2003

### Course Calendar

Session 1	
Topics	<b>Course Introduction:</b> Review Syllabus, Classroom Policies  <b>Presentation</b> Key concepts of Cinema Studies  <b>General overview</b> Italian Cinema from its beginnings to the present day
Activity	Introduction  Syllabus review
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 1, p. 1-22 Bondanella Ch 2, p. 23-62

Session 2	
Topics	<b>The origins of Italian Neo-Realism</b>  <b>The Rossellini War Trilogy.</b> Classic Neo-realism: Close analysis of Roberto Rossellini's <i>Roma, città aperta</i> (1945), <i>Paisa'</i> (1946), and <i>Germania anno zero</i> (1948).
Activity	<b>Screening 1</b>  Roma, città aperta,  Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 3, pp. 63-100

Session 3	
Topics	<b>The origins of Italian Neo-Realism</b>  <b>The Rossellini War Trilogy.</b> Classic Neo-realism: <i>Paisa'</i> (1946), and <i>Germania anno zero</i> (1948).
Activity	Lecture & Discussion  Selected scenes from Rossellini's films
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 4, pp. 101-132 <b>*Quiz 1: Roma, città aperta</b>

Session 4	
Topics	<b>'Post-War' Neo-Realism.</b> <b>Vittorio De Sica's social conscience.</b> <i>Sciuscia'</i> (1946), <i>Ladri di biciclette</i> (1948) and <i>Umberto d.</i> (1952)
Activity	Lecture & Discussion  Selected scenes from De Sica's films
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 5, pp. 133-185  <b>*Film Review 1: Roma, città aperta</b>

Session 5	
Topics	<b>Modernism: the second vital crisis. 1960, annus mirabilis (1).</b> Urban angst, debauchery and personal and social disintegration in Fellini's explosive Roman epic <i>La dolce vita</i> (1960).
Activity	<b>Screening 2</b>  (La dolce vita)  Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 5, pp. 133-185

Session 6	
Topics	<b>Modernism. 1960, annus mirabilis (2).</b> Interior Neo-realism'; the importance of framing and composition, social commentary in Antonioni's <i>L'avventura</i> (1960):
Activity	Lecture & Discussion  Selected scenes from <i>L'avventura</i>
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 8, pp. 223-270  <b>*Quiz 2 - La dolce vita</b>

Session 7	
Topics	<b>Modernism. 1960, annus mirabilis (3): The economic miracle.</b>

	Migration and Murder: Social realism and operatic melodrama: Visconti's <i>Rocco e i suoi fratelli</i> (1960).
Activity	<b>Screening 3</b> Rocco e i suoi fratelli Lecture & discussion
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 9, pp. 271-324  <b>*Film Review 2: La dolce vita</b>

Session 8	
Topics	<b>Revisiting the Past 1: Rediscovering and reinventing Fascism.</b> Its impact on public and private lives in Bernardo Bertolucci's <i>Il conformista</i> (1970)
Activity	Lecture & Discussion  Selected scenes from <i>Il Conformista</i>
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 9, pp. 271-324  <b>*Quiz 3 - Rocco e i suoi fratelli</b>

Session 9	
Topics	<b>Revisiting the Past 2: Rediscovering and reinventing Fascism.</b> Revealing the brutal truth through storytelling and imagination in the Taviani brothers' <i>La notte di san lorenzo</i> (1982)
Activity	Lecture & Discussion  Selected scenes from <i>La notte di San Lorenzo</i>
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 9, pp. 271-324  <b>*Film Review 3: Rocco e i suoi fratelli</b>

Session 10	
Topics	<b>Nostalgia and transition. Post-modernism.</b> Giuseppe Tornatore's sentimental retrospection in <i>Nuovo Cinema Paradiso</i> (1988) and Nanni Moretti's video diary of modern Italian life <i>Caro diario</i> (1993): the age of transitions
Activity	<b>Screening 4</b>  Caro diario  Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 15, pp. 271-324  <b>*Reflection paper</b>

Session 11	
Topics	<b>The Post-modern take: Immigration/Emigration. Traumatic realism (1).</b> Post-modern retrospection in Emanuele Crialesse's <i>Nuovomondo</i> (2006)
Activity	Lecture & Discussion  Selected scenes from <i>Nuovomondo</i>
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 15, pp. 271-324  <b>*Quiz 4 - Caro diario</b>

Session 12	
Topics	<b>The Post-modern take: Immigration/Emigration. Traumatic realism (2)</b> Gianni Amelio's dissection of memory and identity in <i>Lamerica</i> (1994) and its issues of immigration.
Activity	<b>Screening 5</b>  Lamerica  Lecture & Discussion
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 15, pp. 271-324 <b>*Film Review 4: Caro diario</b>

Session 13	
Topics	<b>New directions and the way forward</b> Critiquing New and Old Social Realities in Paolo Sorrentino's <b>La grande bellezza</b> (2013).
Activity	Lecture & Discussion  Selected scenes from <i>La grande bellezza</i>
Readings & Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Bondanella Ch 17, pp. 591-630 <b>*Quiz 5 - Lamerica</b>

Session 14	
Topics	<b>Semester Wrap Up</b>
Activity	<b>*Oral Presentations</b>
Readings & Assignments	<b>*Move review 5: Lamerica</b>

Session 15	
<b>Final Exam</b>	

## Section III: Academic Policies and Standards

### Academic Policies

Students are expected to review and understand all CEA CAPA student policies, including our [Academic Policies](#) and [Engagement Policy](#). CEA CAPA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. Additional requirements that may be associated with a specific course or program are addressed in the term syllabus.

## **Student Learning & Development Objectives**

CEA CAPA has identified [Student Learning and Development Objectives \(SLDOs\)](#) for all programs in all locations: content in context, navigating differences, power and equity, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, career and professional development, and sustainability and migration. These are meta-level learning objectives that transcend coursework and are infused across all elements of program delivery, beyond specifics of course offerings, addressing student learning holistically and framing it a larger learning context.