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*The American  
University of Florence***SYLLABUS**

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**SQUOLA CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN STUDIES (IT)**

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**SCHOOL OF ITALIAN STUDIES AND LINGUISTICS****DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN LANGUAGE****COURSE TITLE: ITALIAN LANGUAGE BEGINNER****COURSE CODE: ISITIB101****3 semester credits****1. DESCRIPTION**

This course develops basic conversation, reading and writing skills. Equal focus will be given to grammatical structures, vocabulary and conversation skills. Students will develop a vocabulary that will enable them to engage in simple but useful everyday conversations, thus enhancing and supporting their Italian experience. Upon course conclusion, students will be able to express themselves in basic sentences, recognize gender and number in both nouns and adjectives, and begin approaching the Passato Prossimo. Emphasis will be given to the oral expression of practical vocabulary and newly acquired grammar structures. This level is for absolute beginner students who have never studied Italian before.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

During the course emphasis will be given to all four different abilities to be developed while learning a language: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students will be encouraged to try to speak both in and outside class, to have them become more familiar with the Italian language and culture environment in which they are immersed. Students will be required to complete written hand-in assignments to strengthen the structures and vocabulary they acquired.

During this course, students will learn to communicate in everyday situations, recounting past events, make future plans and ask polite requests.

**Grammar:**

Acquiring the basic structures of the language.

Simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns.

**Vocabulary:**

Understanding and using the basic vocabulary regarding the concepts of space, time, quantity and quality.

Mastering the basic vocabulary necessary for the most common and concrete communicative situations.

**Listening:**

Understanding the most commonly used expressions in daily verbal communication, such a simple information and very brief dialogues, instructions addressed carefully and slowly.

**Speaking:**

Using the most common colloquial expressions in daily social communication for self- identification, greetings, asking for and giving basic information.

**Reading:**

Understanding simple texts for practical use.

**Writing:**

Writing short texts.

**3. REQUIREMENTS**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, and projects. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

**5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES**

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

Matteo La Grassa – *L'italiano all'università* 1, Corso di lingua per studenti stranieri A1-A2,  
Edizioni Edilingua  
Webster or Oxford Italian – English Dictionary

These texts have been pre-ordered and should be purchased after the first class meeting **FELTRINELLI, Via de' Cerretani 40**.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

**LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE**

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed. Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

**BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA**

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

**BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE**

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:  
[www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it)

**THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE**

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

**6. FIELD LEARNING**

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

**7. COURSE MATERIALS**

No additional course materials are necessary.

**8. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated

by the instructor on the first day of class.

## 9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

For each 3-week session:

20% Quiz 1

20% Quiz 2

30% Final Exam

10% Oral Presentation

20% Attendance and Participation

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 73-76%, C- = 70-72%, D = 60-69%, F = 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

## 10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**Absences** are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

### LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

### TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

## 11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

Quiz 1 – Lesson 5 Quiz 2 – Lesson 10 Oral presentation – Lesson 14 Session Exam - Lesson 15	Assignments: assigned in class by your instructor
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For each 3-week session:

Two **quizzes** will account for a total of 40% of the final course grade. For time and date consult the course website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.** Format:

- Quizzes are cumulative and will be based on grammar topics presented in class from the beginning of the session.
- The number of points given for each exercise will be clearly stated at the top of the exercise itself.
- Time will be clearly stated at the top of the test.

The **Final** exam accounts for 30% of the final course grade. For exam time and date consult the course website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.** Format:

- Exams are cumulative and will be based on grammar topics presented in class from the beginning of the session and will test all four abilities (Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking).
- Exams may include multiple choice questions, fill-in the blanks, vocabulary exercises, reading with true/false replies, a listening comprehension, and an essential writing exercise.
- The number of points given for each exercise will be clearly stated at the top of the exercise itself

The **Oral Presentation** accounts for 10% of the course grade. Topic, length, guidelines, and due date will be provided on the course website.

- Vocabulary knowledge and appropriate usage, comprehensibility, pronunciation, content (not reading from notes), ability to answer instructor/classmates and questions during class and completion of all tasks assigned will be assessed.

## 12. LESSONS

LESSON 1	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p>Presentation of the course and introduction to the class syllabus. Information on method, objectives, exams, assignments and oral presentation.</p> <p><b>Unit 1: Ciao, io sono Anna. E tu?</b>  <b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing yourself, asking/giving personal details</li> <li>• Greeting people upon arriving</li> <li>• Asking about pronunciation and spelling, asking about meaning and translation of a word, asking someone to repeat something</li> <li>• Asking question in formal and informal register</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Italian alphabet, Italian spelling with examples and question words</li> <li>• Adjectives of nationality</li> <li>• Negation form <i>non</i></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greetings</li> <li>• Country names and adjectives of nationalities</li> </ul>

LESSON 2	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p><b>Unit 1 – Ciao, io sono Anna. E tu?</b>  <b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking for address and telephone number</li> <li>• Using numbers from 0 to 100</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning the names of the classroom objects</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal pronouns</li> <li>• Present tense: conjugation of <i>essere</i> and <i>avere</i></li> <li>• Present tense: singular forms of <i>chiamarsi</i></li> <li>• Singular and plural forms of nouns ending with <i>-o</i> and <i>-a</i></li> <li>• Singular and plural forms of adjectives ending with <i>-o</i>, <i>-a</i> and <i>-e</i></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom objects</li> <li>• Cardinal numbers from 0 to 100</li> </ul> <p><b>CULTURE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading:</b> <i>Conosciamo gli italiani</i></li> <li>• Students of Italian in the world</li> <li>• Motivations for studying Italian</li> </ul>
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<b>LESSON 3</b>	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p><b>Unit 2 – Lavori o studi?</b></p> <p><b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing someone</li> <li>• Asking someone how he/she is and saying how one is doing</li> <li>• Greeting people upon leaving</li> <li>• Asking for someone's profession and mentioning one's occupation</li> <li>• Talking about different kind of jobs</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nouns of the second group (ending in "e ")</li> <li>• Present tense: regular verbs in the three conjugations <i>-are</i>, <i>-ere</i>, <i>-ire</i></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Come stai? / Come va?</i></li> <li>• <i>What do you study?</i></li> <li>• Profession names</li> <li>• Workplaces</li> </ul>

<b>LESSON 4</b>	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p><b>Unit 2 – Lavori o studi?</b></p> <p><b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using verbs in conversation</li> <li>• Using the most common adjectives and find their opposite</li> <li>• Using prepositions in relation to places</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definite articles, use of definite articles in front of <i>consonant</i>, <i>s + consonant</i> and <i>z, vowel</i></li> <li>• Articles – nouns - adjectives agreement</li> <li>• Present tense: conjugation of irregular verbs <i>stare, fare, andare, dare, bere, venire</i></li> <li>• Simple prepositions <i>in, a, da, di</i></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opposite pairs of common adjectives</li> <li>• Useful expressions for asking something</li> </ul> <p><b>CULTURE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading:</b> <i>Il mondo del lavoro</i></li> <li>• Work in Italy</li> </ul>
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<b>LESSON 5</b>	
<b>Lecture + Exam</b>	<p><b>Unit 3 – Una bottiglia d'acqua, per favore</b></p> <p><b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ordering in a café</li> <li>• Reading a menù</li> <li>• Getting someone's attention</li> <li>• Asking for things in a polite way</li> <li>• Thanking someone</li> <li>• Asking for, saying prices and paying</li> <li>• Expressing one's likes and dislikes</li> <li>• Expressing opinions and preferences about food and beverages</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Piacere: mi piace / non mi piace, mi piacciono / non mi piacciono</i></li> <li>• Present tense: third conjugation of <i>-isc</i> verbs</li> <li>• Use of <i>vorrei</i></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food, beverages and objects in a café</li> <li>• Menù</li> <li>• <i>Vorrei</i></li> <li>• <i>Scusi!, Per favore, per cortesia, per piacere, grazie, prego</i></li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>QUIZ 1</b></p>

<b>LESSON 6</b>	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p><b>Unit 3 – Una bottiglia d'acqua, per favore</b></p> <p><b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking for permission</li> <li>• Asking someone to do something</li> <li>• Talking about one's eating habits</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing grocery shopping: writing a shopping list</li> <li>• Indicating quantities</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of <i>ci locativo</i></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurement units: <i>grammo, etto, chilo, litro</i></li> <li>• Food packaging</li> <li>• Shops and stores</li> </ul> <p><b>CULTURE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading:</b> <i>Gli italiani e il cappuccino</i></li> <li>• <i>Gli italiani e il bar</i>: understanding and analyzing habits and social behaviours</li> <li>• Italian breakfast</li> </ul>
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LESSON 7	
Film	Screening of an Italian movie

LESSON 8	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p><b>Unit 4 – Vado a piedi o prendo l'autobus?</b></p> <p><b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing a city, a neighborhood, a street</li> <li>• Giving and following street directions</li> <li>• Asking and telling time</li> <li>• Reading timetables</li> <li>• Asking for and giving information about shops and stores opening hours</li> <li>• Expressing indecision and ability</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indefinite articles, use of indefinite articles in front of <i>consonant</i>, <i>s + consonant</i> and <i>z, vowel</i></li> <li>• Present tense: conjugation and use of modal verbs <i>potere, dovere, volere</i></li> <li>• <i>Present tense: conjugation of sapere and use in different situations</i></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities and buildings, signposts, urban landscape vocabulary (street, boulevard, square, bridge, traffic lights, junctions etc.)</li> <li>• Street directions</li> <li>• Expressions denoting position: <i>davanti a / prima di, dietro a / dopo, a destra, a sinistra, dritto, di fronte, in mezzo a / tra, accanto a</i></li> <li>• Means of transport</li> <li>• <i>Che ore sono? Che ora è? Sono.../ E'...</i></li> <li>• Timetable and opening hours</li> <li>• Days of the week</li> </ul>

	<b>CULTURE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading:</b> <i>Autobus? No, grazie, prendo il motorino!</i></li> <li>• Understanding times and working days</li> <li>• City buses</li> </ul>
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<b>LESSON 9</b>	
<b>Lecture + Exam</b>	<b>Unit 5 – Dove abiti?</b> <b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing a house: talking about rooms, objects and furniture found inside a typical Italian house.</li> <li>• Describe one's own home</li> <li>• Submitting a questionnaire in order to find the “ideal” roommate</li> <li>• Talking about pros and cons of living with peers</li> <li>• Booking a hotel room: asking for information on accommodation and services</li> </ul> <b>GRAMMAR:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>E' / C'è, Sono / Ci sono</i></li> <li>• Compound prepositions</li> </ul> <b>VOCABULARY:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houses, apartments and rooms</li> <li>• Home furniture and features</li> <li>• Adjectives referring to houses or apartments</li> <li>• Home cleaning routine</li> <li>• Description of different types of hotels</li> <li>• Hotel room type and features</li> </ul> <b>CULTURE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading:</b> <i>Gli italiani in albergo? Spendono poco e vogliono molto</i></li> <li>• Italian tourists</li> </ul>

<b>LESSON 10</b>	
<b>Experiential Learning + Exam</b>	Florence Walking Tour: visit to interesting sites of the Florence historical center, in connection to the cultural aspects discussed in class  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>QUIZ 2</b></div>

<b>LESSON 11</b>	
<b>Lecture</b>	<b>Unit 6 – La mia giornata a Firenze</b> <b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing habits</li> <li>• Describing a typical day</li> <li>• Talking about how often one does something</li> </ul> <b>GRAMMAR:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present tense: reflexive verbs in the three conjugations <i>-are, -ere, -ire</i></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adverbs of frequency</li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyday actions</li> <li><i>Mai, quasi mai, qualche volta, spesso, quasi sempre, sempre</i></li> <li>Words referring to university: main university programs</li> </ul> <p><b>CULTURE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Reading:</b> <i>La giornata degli italiani: tra lavoro e tempo libero</i></li> <li>A typical day in Italians' life</li> </ul>
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LESSON 12	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p><b>Unit 7 - Che tempo fa?</b></p> <p><b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Searching out Italian cities on a map</li> <li>Talking about weather conditions</li> <li>Asking and saying how the weather is in a place</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct pronouns: forms and position</li> <li>Use of direct pronouns with modal verbs + infinitive</li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Italian geography: regions and most important cities</li> <li>Months and seasons</li> <li>Weather conditions</li> </ul>

LESSON 13	
<b>Lecture</b>	<p><b>Unit 7 – Che tempo fa?</b></p> <p><b>COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking a partner what is someone doing</li> <li>Using <i>molto</i> as an adjective and as an adverb</li> <li>Describing actions which are going on right now</li> <li>Watching weather forecast videos.</li> </ul> <p><b>GRAMMAR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressive form with <i>stare + gerundio</i></li> <li>Present gerund forms of regular and irregular verbs <i>dire, fare, bere</i></li> <li>Adverbs of quantity <i>molto, abbastanza, poco, per niente</i></li> <li><i>Molto</i> as an adjective and as an adverb</li> <li></li> </ul> <p><b>VOCABULARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Useful expressions for asking and giving information about the weather</li> <li>Climate and temperature</li> </ul>

	<b>CULTURE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading:</b> <i>Espressioni metaforiche e luoghi comuni sul tempo</i></li> <li>• Weather in Italy</li> <li>• Idiomatic expressions related to the weather</li> </ul>
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<b>LESSON 14</b>	
<b>Lecture + Exam</b>	COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION, GRAMMAR, VOCABULARY: general review  ORAL PRESENTATION

<b>LESSON 15</b>	
<b>Exam</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>