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SYLLABUS

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Florence University of the Arts (FUA) is an academic institution for study abroad in Florence, Italy. FUA collaborates with The American University of Florence (AUF), an international university offering US-style undergraduate and graduate degrees, in a cooperation to offer study abroad programs with a diverse breadth and depth of academic curriculum.

FUA study abroad programs may include AUF offerings, which are US-aligned in terms of higher education standards as per the university's institutional structure. Common courses offered by FUA and AUF have been jointly selected by both institutions as eligible for mutual recognition and delivery. As such, equal academic standards, credibility, and outcomes are vetted by the Academic Offices of the institutions for all courses and syllabi offered in the study abroad program.

SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF WINE EXPERTISE
COURSE TITLE: TUSCANY AND ITS WINES
COURSE CODE: FWWCTW262
3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

The course will introduce students to the outstanding richness of Tuscan wine heritage. As Tuscany is a benchmark of Italian winemaking culture and tradition, this course analyzes how the most important historical events, members of Florentine noble families, and pioneering winemakers have revolutionized, over the centuries, the Italian wine industry today. Course structure includes the study of the famous and representative wine production areas of Tuscany, as well as major native grape varieties. A general introduction to wine appreciation will help students understanding the selected Tuscan wines and their specific features.

2. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Interpret the sociological, cultural, and historical factors that have shaped the evolution of Tuscan wine culture and production.
- Demonstrate an understanding of Tuscany's winemaking heritage and its influence on both Italian and global wine traditions.
- Identify and describe the major grape varieties cultivated in Tuscany — native, international, and historically adapted — and explain their role in defining regional styles.
- Evaluate the key wine-producing areas of Tuscany, recognizing their distinctive terroirs, production methods, and sensory profiles.
- Apply principles of wine tasting and evaluation to develop informed sensory analysis skills and to distinguish quality indicators in Tuscan wines.
- Assess current trends and innovations in Tuscan winemaking in relation to sustainability, technology, and global market dynamics.

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and interaction with the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, integrate relevant academic sources, may include multimedia references, propose creative problem-solving, and other appropriate forms of delivery as deemed appropriate to the course's purpose.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

NICOLAS BELFRAGE MW *The Finest Wines of Tuscany and Central Italy*, by Fine Wine Editions, 2009

The textbook is mandatory for course participation and completion. Where applicable additional materials may be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

P. SAUNDERS Wine Label Language, Firefly Books 2004

J. PRIEWE Wine From Grape to Glass, Abbeville Press 2002

R.SMALL, M. COUTURIER Understanding and Appreciating Wine Beer and Spirits, Wiley J. & Sons 2011

Textbook: Nicolas Belfrage Mw The Finest Wines of Tuscany [...], pp. 198 – 201.

J.JOHNSON, J. ROBINSON The World Atlas of Wine, Fifth Edition, Mitchell Beazley 2001

B. ANDERSON Wines of Italy, Mitchell Beazley Editor, London 2004

E. GENTILI The Great Wines of Tuscany – The finest Reds, Giunti 2016

G. GRUNNER – B. Lipinsky, Italian Wine Notes, 2013

S. KOLPAN et al., Exploring Wine, John Wiley & Sons, 2010 (3 ed.)

J. VARRIANO, Wine A Cultural History, Reaktion Books, 2007

O. CLARKE, Encyclopedia of Wine, Websters, 2003

H. JOHNSON, Tuscany and its Wines, Octopus Publishing, 2000

N. BELFRAGE, Brunello to Zibibbo, Faber and Faber, 2001

T. HYLAND, Beyond Barolo and Brunello, Lightning Source, 2012

J. MCINERNEY, Bacchus & Me, Vintage Books, 2002

M. SALEMI, Chianti Classico, Nardini, 2005

H. JOHNSON, Tuscany and its wines, Beazley, 2000

LIBRARY

Course participants may access the campus library. Please consult the library site for resources such as collections, borrowing, scanning and wifi connection, and research:

<https://www.auf-florence.org/Library/the-library/>

6. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

7. 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. If this course requires a fee, the exact amount is communicated prior to enrollment.

8. GRADING AND EVALUATION & ATTENDANCE

10% Attendance

30% Class Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm Exam, Field Learning project (if applicable), Special/Research Project (if applicable)

20% Final Exam

20% Paper/Project

The above grade breakdown percentages reflect the grading scale standards in the “Grading and Evaluation System” section of the catalog.

Attendance

Class participation is mandatory. Based on the hours defined in the Academic Catalog's attendance policy, students may miss up to 2 class encounters delivered as lecture hours. A third absence constitutes a course failure.

Please note that absence hours may vary according to the learning methodology, as per the academic catalog policy on credit hours:

https://catalog.auf-florence.org/standard_regulation

9. EXAMS / PROJECTS / ASSIGNMENT

Midterm Assessment (11 weeks semester ONLY): accounts for 20% of the final course grade. Topic will be assigned on Lesson 5 and is due by Lesson 6. The Midterm assessment must be uploaded on the course portal.

Special Project (Intensive sessions only): accounts for 20% of the final course grade. The project details will be assigned the first day of class. It is due by Lesson 6 and must be uploaded on the course portal.

Final Exam: accounts for 20% of the final course grade.

The Final Exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

The final exam is cumulative.

Final Project: accounts for 20% of the final course grade. The project details will be assigned the first day of class. The Final Project is due by Lesson 9.

Assignments: This course requires at least 3 assignments as per the course outline in the syllabus.

Assignment #1: Sangiovese Grape and Tuscan Tradition

Strengths and weaknesses of Sangiovese in viticulture and winemaking, its adaptability to different terroirs, and its central role in Tuscan wine tradition and identity. Due by Lesson 4.

Assignment #2: Wine Profile Review Paper

Review paper on one Tuscan wine tasted in class during Lessons 1-6. Due by Lesson 7.

Assignment #3: Case Study: The Sassicaia Phenomenon and the Birth of Bolgheri

Its history, pioneering producers, influence on Bolgheri's development, and the wine's myth, market impact, and international reputation. Due by Lesson 10.

Further details are provided in the course portal.

10. COURSE OUTLINE

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Intro to course outline and organization Syllabus Overview Definition of wine culture and tradition in Tuscan winemaking
Objectives	Gain confidence with course content, objectives, assignments and expectations Identify the geographical location, extension and characteristics of Tuscany as one of the most renowned wine regions of Italy Understand the cultural implications related to winemaking traditions in Tuscany Basics of winemaking: from grapes to glass Intro to the winemaking process: harvest, crushing, fermentation, aging, and bottling Basics of wine tasting: how to appreciate wine See, Smell, Taste, Overall Assessment
Tasting	1 Trebbiano Spumante 1 Ciliegiolo
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 6-15 History, Culture, and the Market: Renaissances in the Land of Vines Saunders Peter, "Wine Label Language", Firefly Books 2004, pp.114-115-116 JENS PRIEWE, "Wine From Grape to Glass", Abbeville Press 2002 updated and revised edition pp.148-149 Small Robert W.; Couturier Michelle, "Understanding and Appreciating Wine Beer and Spirits", Wiley J. & Sons 2011, Chapter 5 Assignment #1 The Sangiovese Grape and Tuscan Tradition assigned, due by Lesson 4

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Chianti Region: history and tradition of the most popular wine of Tuscany The flagship wine of Tuscan production and its role in the Italian wine quality revolution
Objectives	Understand the geographical location of Chianti and subregions Learn about the history, rules of winemaking, and historical events that have influenced Chianti wine production Gain knowledge of the native grape varieties of Chianti region
Tasting	1 Chianti Colli Fiorentini 1 Chianti Rufina 1 Chianti Riserva
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 16-33: Geography, Geology, and Climate: Terroir in the Sangiovese Belt.

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Chianti Classico: focus on the original and most traditional area of Chianti. Different rules and requirements to produce Chianti Classico wines. The main subregions of Chianti Classico area.
Objectives	Understand the history and evolution of Chianti Classico Understand the influence of terroir on grape growth and wine taste Learn about the different styles of Chianti Classico wines
Tasting	1 Chianti Classico 1 Chianti Classico Riserva 1 Chianti Classico Gran Selezione
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 44-54, pp. 58 -70

Lesson 4	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Montalcino area. Where to find the most prized, expensive, and awarded expression of the sangiovese grape in Tuscany: the Brunello di Montalcino.
Objectives	Learn about the wine produced in the Montalcino area with a focus on Rosso and Brunello Understand how wines can taste different according to different grape selection and wine aging Become familiar with the business of wine tourism and its implications
Tasting	1 Sant'Antimo Doc bianco 1 Rosso di Montalcino Doc 1 Brunello di Montalcino Docg
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 198 – 201. Johnson, Hugh, Robinson, Jancis, "The World Atlas of Wine", Fifth Edition, Mitchell Beazley 2001 p.179 Assignment #1 DUE Assignment #2 Wine Profile Review Paper assigned, due by Lesson 7 FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

Lesson 5	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Montepulciano area: a charming corner of the Tuscan countryside where the winemaking tradition dates back to Etruscan times. Introduction to Wine Blind Tasting

Objectives	Learn about the winemaking tradition and history of the area Explore terroir, grapes varieties, different wines from a noble land Understand the difference between Nobile di Montepulciano and the other wines produced in this region
Tasting	1 Rosso di Montepulciano Doc 1 Nobile di Montepulciano Docg 1 Vin Santo di Montepulciano Doc 1 Blind Tasting (In-Class Exercise)
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 250 – 253. Focus on the following wine producers: Podere Boscarelli, Avignonesi, Poliziano, Salcheto, Fattoria del Cerro. MIDTERM ASSESSMENT/SPECIAL PROJECT ASSIGNED, due prior to next class meet.

Lesson 6	
Meet	In Class
Lecture	The Tuscan Coast and Bolgheri area: discovering a trendy wine region of Tuscany. A special terroir combination for international grape varieties and historically “unconventional” Tuscan wines.
Objectives	Gain knowledge of the geographical features, climate conditions and soil composition of the Tuscan coast and how these factors influence the wine production of the area Recognize characteristics through tasting different grape varieties Gain confidence with the term “Supertuscans” and its meaning
Tasting	1 Bolgheri Doc bianco 1 Bolgheri Doc rosato 1 Bolgheri Doc rosso (or IGT Supertuscan)
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 54-57 Tuscan Coast, Northern Maremma, p. 164. Focus on the following wine producers: Sassicaia, Le Macchiole, Michele Satta, Tua Rita. MIDTERM ASSESSMENT/SPECIAL PROJECT DUE. Assignment #3 Case Study: The Sassicaia Phenomenon and the Birth of Bolgheri assigned, due by Lesson 10

Lesson 7	
Meet	In Class
Lecture	Tuscany and its gems: discovering San Gimignano and the Vernaccia, the only Tuscan white Docg wine; discovering the tiny area of Colli di Luni DOC located on Tuscany’s regional border.
Objectives	Critically assess the role of small scale wine production areas in maintaining traditions of the past and/or in promoting and stimulating new wine trends Gain knowledge of one of the most ancient grapes of Tuscany, Vernaccia

Tasting	1 Vernaccia Docg 1 Colli di Luni Doc bianco 1 Vermentino Nero
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - p. 135, pp. 274-275 Focus on producers: Falchini, Montenidoli, Panizzi, Guicciardini Strozzi. Assignment #2 DUE

Lesson 8	
Meet	In Class
Lecture	Carmignano: Cabernet Sauvignon as a native grape of the area thanks to the historical figure, Caterina de Medici - International wines in Italy during Renaissance
Objectives	Critically assess the characteristics and requirements of the wines from Carmignano. Gain knowledge of a smaller production area with a longstanding tradition of quality. Learn about the influence of the Medici family on the local economy, in the past and today
Tasting	1 Vin Ruspo Rosato di Carmignano Doc 1 Barco Reale di Carmignano Doc 1 Carmignano Docg 1 Blind Tasting (In-Class Exercise)
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 135-163

Lesson 9	
Meet	In Class
Lecture	Maremma and Suvereto: exploring terroir, grape varieties, and different wines from a new wine area in Tuscany. Morellino di Scansano as popular, highly drinkable wine.
Objectives	Demonstrate understanding of the evolution of Tuscan wine production areas Critically assess differences and similarities among different wine regions Gain knowledge of one of the most appreciated light red wine of Tuscany, the Morellino
Tasting	1 Morellino di Scansano Docg 1 Maremma Toscana IGT (blend) 1 Suvereto Docg
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 164-167 Burton Anderson, "Wines of Italy" – Mitchell Beazley Editor, London 2004 pp. 122 FINAL PROJECT DUE.

Lesson 10	
Meet	In Class
Lecture	Emerging Production Areas: the area of Cortona, renowned for Syrah and Voigner - Mugello and its recent success in producing Pinot Noir wines - Lucca, increasingly recognized for its biodynamic and natural wine production, focusing on sustainability Conclusions and Review
Objectives	Understand how a new wine production area becomes renowned in the wine market Demonstrate understanding of the role played by climate and other terroir factors for the cultivation of native or international grape varieties Review the topics discussed throughout the course in preparation for the final exam
Tasting	1 Voigner di Cortona/ a wine from Lucca 1 Cortona Doc Syrah 1 Pinot Nero del Mugello
Readings/ Assignments	Textbook - pp. 164-167 Review and study all the material covered in class, lectures, handouts, online references, research, book extracts, etc. distributed throughout the course. Assignment #3 DUE

Lesson 11 Final Exam	
Meet	
Lecture	FINAL EXAM