

Format revised 2025  
Syllabus revised 2025

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.

**DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN CULTURAL STUDIES / ITALIAN LANGUAGE /  
GENERAL HORTICULTURE / ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES / SOCIOLOGY  
COURSE TITLE: GROW GREEN AND LEARN ITALIAN WALKS  
COURSE CODE: ISISGG201, ISITGG201, HCGHGG201, LSESGG201, LSSOOGG201  
3 Semester Credits**

### **1. DESCRIPTION**

This course offers an innovative way to learn the Italian language and develop environmental consciousness while exploring Florence and its green urban areas. Through the study of the relationship between humans and nature, the human role in ecology, and the sustainable management and conservation of natural resources, students will learn basic Italian vocabulary and usage in the form of experiential learning. The course aims to develop four basic Italian language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), while providing experiences and on-site lessons aimed at expanding the connection between individuals and the natural world and developing sustainable lifestyles. Each topic, excursion, and experience will be supported by a structured class of Italian language, providing a great opportunity to explore Florence, its parks, its people, and its traditions from a new perspective while learning and practicing the Italian language. This course includes an Italian language component for beginning-level students.

SLC (Studies with a Language Component) represents an engaging approach to learning that embraces a multi-disciplinary application of cultural education methods. This stimulating approach broadens students' understanding of their studies and creates a link between their academic careers and the local cultural environment which surrounds them. Through SLC courses, students learn notions of Italian language and terminology as a bridge to better understand and appreciate Italy's modern, multifaceted society. By being exposed to the Italian language, Students discover different elements of Italian communication and culture and learn the linguistic fundamentals that enable them to engage in simple, everyday conversation. While doing so, they examine the sociological and pedagogical aspects of Italy such as society, politics, education, family, geography, and the environment. SLC is a learning methodology that integrates theory with practice: students learn the culture and language of Italy in class, then experience what they have learned through interaction with the local communities within the city of Florence and its neighborhoods. Diverse student populations benefit from this educational approach.

The approach of this course is based on experiencing the city of Florence as the academic space for learning and engagement. Classes are not held in a traditional, frontal-style setting; each lesson is carefully mapped for curricular content and featured locations: lectures, observations, exercises, analysis, and reflections on presented topics are held in relevant sites that are accounted for in the academic planning, syllabus, and related course material. Coursework and submissions will be regularly assessed on the course site platform through daily assignments in addition to exams, papers, and projects. Learning through the on-site classroom approach fosters a deeper understanding of the cultural environment of Florence and

how it is related to the subject of study represented by the course, and allows the overall experience to contribute to the students' academic and personal enrichment.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Display awareness of Italian culture and society.
- Identify the main “green” Florentine areas and the role they play in the urban fabric.
- Understand the Italian “green” habits and attitude.
- Gain knowledge of the environmental issues concerning the city of Florence.
- Identify the characteristics and variables of Italian culture as a framework for environmental consciousness and communication.
- Improve their skills in Italian language and engage simple conversations with Italian people.
- Read and write short and basic texts in Italian language.

## **3. REQUIREMENTS**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## **4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, discussions, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable. As described in point 1, lessons are not held in traditional classroom settings but are based on the city of Florence as the academic space for learning and engagement. Please review the course description for the structural approach and method of coursework.

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

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

Textbook and Structure Insights (as a book published by the school) will be available during the first week.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

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

### **FURTHER READINGS**

Bagnoli, Franco et al. “Urban Gardening in Florence and Prato: How a Science Shop Project Proposed by Citizens Has Grown into a Multi-Disciplinary Research Subject,” in *Journal of Sustainable Development*; Vol. 11, No. 6; 2018. Available [here](#).

Beltrame, Lorenzo et al. *Climate Change Communication in Italy*, Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science, 2017. Available [here](#).

Campbell, Katie. *Paradise of Exiles: the Anglo-Florentine Garden*, University of Bristol, 2017. Available [here](#).

Caneva, Caterina. *The Boboli Gardens*, Beccocci Editore, 1982.

Impelluso, Lucia & Sartarell, Stephen. *Nature and Its Symbols (A Guide to Imagery Series)*, Getty Trust Publications, 2004.

La Grassa, Matteo. *L’Italiano all’Università*, EDILINGUA, 2013.

Lazzaro, Claudia. *The Italian Renaissance Garden: from the Conventions of Planting, Design, and Ornament to the Grand Gardens of Sixteenth-Century Central Italy*, Yale University Press, 1990.

Pozzana, M. Chiara. *Gardens of Florence and Tuscany. A complete guide*, Giunti edizioni, 2011.

Singh R., “Medicinal plants: a review,” in *Journal of Plant Sciences*, 1, 2015. Available [here](#).

#### ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES:

British Pathé, *Florence Floods Aftermath (1966)*, 2014. Available [here](#).

Florence TV, *Tradizioni Firenze: la Rificolona*, 2018. Available [here](#).

#### **LIBRARY**

Course participants may access the campus library. Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times. Texts may be consulted on-site, and scanning/internet services available.

#### **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

10% Participation

15% Assignments

20% Reflection Journal

20% Midterm Assessment

25% Final Exam

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.fua.it/standard\\_regulation](https://catalog.fua.it/standard_regulation)

#### **9. EXAMS / PROJECTS / ASSIGNMENTS**

The **Midterm Assessment** accounts for 20% of the final course grade. This consists of an 800-words essay discussing your perceptions of the “green” attitude in Florence. Specific sections are to be written using Italian vocabulary and phrases, as per instructor's guidelines.

The **Final Exam** accounts for 25% of the final course grade. The content of the exams will be based on the walks, visits, discussions, and textbook pages.

The exam will be uploaded on the course website MyFUA and is to be completed by the student at home under exam conditions. This means that:

- The exam must be taken completely alone. Showing it or discussing it with anybody is forbidden, including (but not limited to) the other students in the course in current or previous years.
- You may use any publicly available material you want, including books, the internet, etc. However, you are NOT allowed to submit questions to internet discussion groups.
- Use your own words. If you find a solution of a question in a book or online, cite it in your submission and do not copy it as-is. Make changes which demonstrate you understand what you are writing. Plagiarism will be severely penalized.
- You may take as much time as you need to complete the exam. You may start the exam and return to it at a later stage. Note, you will no longer have access to the exam once the deadline has passed.

The completed exam must be uploaded on MyFua before the deadline. Late submission will be penalized; technical problems will not be accepted as an excuse for late submissions. It is your responsibility to make sure that your computer and internet connection work properly and that the completed exam is uploaded on time.

The contains 10 open-ended questions, each worth 10 points, for a total of 100 points.

The Final Exam is cumulative.

The **Assignments** account for a total of 15% of the final grade. These are exploratory assignments related to the course content. Students are assessed by their accuracy, punctuality and competence.

The **Reflection Journal** accounts for the 20% of the Final Course Grade. Students will engage in a daily writing exercise, discussing topics covered in class and observations about the city of Florence developed during their journey.

## 10. COURSE OUTLINE

Lesson 1	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	<p>Introduction to Florence: History and Green spaces of the city.</p> <p>Roman Florence: The Roman aqueduct.</p> <p>Old Rivers and Green Areas of Florence.</p> <p>Language component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicative function: introduce yourself with verbs <i>essere</i>, <i>avere</i> and <i>stare</i>.</li><li>• Vocabulary: greetings, numbers and personal information.</li></ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Gain an understanding of the Italian culture and its multicultural nature.</p> <p>Gain an awareness of the environmental issues.</p> <p>Identify Roman remains in contemporary Florence.</p> <p>Gain knowledge of ancient geography features of Florence and be able to identify old rivers and green areas.</p> <p>Recognize the global goals to be achieved for sustainable development.</p>
<b>Visit</b>	Via del Campidoglio; Via del Proconsolo; Via di Capaccio; Via della Ninna;

	Cafaggio, Via degli Alfani.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: AAVV, <i>Communicating in Italian</i> , pp. 3-14. Assignment 1: Visit the Arno River and take pictures of at least 5 different animals and plants. Look up the Italian equivalent in the dictionary.

<b>Lesson 2</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	The Arno River: Benefits and Intercultural Communication. The Florentine Flood and the American “Angels of Mud” Experience. Language component: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar: negative form, formal use of <i>Lei</i>.</li> <li>• Vocabulary: animals and plants of the river.</li> <li>• Communicative function: ask to repeat, to spell.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify how the Arno River benefits the city of Florence. Gain an understanding of how a river fosters a sense of community. Gain knowledge of the 1966 Florentine Flood and the “Angels of Mud”. Gain knowledge of the Renaioli and the role they play in the Florentine community.
<b>Visit</b>	Piazza dei Cavalleggeri, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze; Lungarno Diaz, I Renaioli; Lungarno Anna Maria Luisa de’ Medici, Società Canottieri Firenze; Ponte Santa Trinita; Lungarno Soderini, Pescaia di Santa Rosa.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Watch: British Pathé, <i>Florence Floods Aftermath (1966)</i> .

<b>Lesson 3</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	Farmer’s Markets: Typical Products from the Florentine Area. Language component: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar: <i>vorrei</i> structure, regular verbs from the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> classes, irregular verb <i>fare</i> and nouns.</li> <li>• Vocabulary: shops, measures, food and beverage, days of the week, months and seasons.</li> <li>• Communicative function: make a shopping list, grocery shopping, ask and tell prices.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	Become familiar with concepts such as “slow food” and “ <i>chilometro zero</i> ”; understand how “Green” behavior fosters them. Get to know typical products from the Florentine area and their use in local restaurants. Gain an understanding of the interaction between local industry and local market activity.
<b>Visit</b>	Mercato di Sant’Ambrogio, Piazza Ghiberti; Mercato di San Lorenzo, Piazza del Mercato Centrale; Ganzo, Via dei Macci.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: AAVV., <i>Communicating in Italian</i> , pp. 54-55 and 57-65. Assignment 2: Take 15 photos of products at a local market and create Italian labels for them, with specifics on their origin.

<b>Lesson 4</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	Community Gardens: Mission and Social Use of Green Urban Areas.

	<p>Language component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar: irregular verb <i>fare</i>, <i>mi piace/mi piacciono</i> structure, modal verbs.</li> <li>Vocabulary: expressions with verb <i>fare</i>, expressions related to the weather.</li> <li>Communicative function: give and follow instructions, describe and give information about weather.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Gain knowledge about community gardens in the urban landscape.</p> <p>Recognize the paramount role of green areas in an urban context and understand new policies to increase them.</p> <p>Become familiar with the agricultural world.</p> <p>Get to know the irrigation process, different types of pesticides and the concept of composting.</p>
<b>Visit</b>	Giardino Caduti e Dispersi in Russia, Viale Giuseppe Mazzini; Giardino delle Vittime Civili di Guerra, Piazza Giorgio Vasari; Le cure dell'orto, Via Faentina.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<p>Read: AAVV. <i>Communicating in Italian</i>, pp. 51, pp. 74-76 and 89-90.</p> <p>Read: Bagnoli, Franco et al. <i>Urban Gardening in Florence and Prato: How a Science Shop Project Proposed by Citizens Has Grown into a Multi-Disciplinary Research Subject</i>.</p> <p>FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW.</p>

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	<p>Urban Villas: Private Spaces Available for the Local Community.</p> <p>Language component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar: common adjectives ending in -O/-A and -E.</li> <li>Vocabulary: nationality adjectives, park vocabulary, art and architectural elements, colors.</li> <li>Communicative function: introduce other people, describe artworks and natural elements.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Gain knowledge of important foreign people that settled in Florence.</p> <p>Be able to identify the main characteristics featuring 19<sup>th</sup> century gardens.</p> <p>Gain knowledge of Frederick Stibbert and its museum.</p>
<b>Visit</b>	Cimitero degli Inglesi, Piazzale Donatello; Giardino del Museo Stibbert, Via Stibbert.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<p>Read: Pozzana, <i>Gardens of Florence and Tuscany</i>, pp. 98-99.</p> <p>Read: Campbell, Katie. <i>Paradise of Exiles: the Anglo-Florentine Garden</i>, pp. 147-149.</p> <p>MIDTERM ASSESSMENT ASSIGNED, due prior to next class meet.</p>

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	<p>Urban Involvement of Hills Surrounding Florence.</p> <p>Giardino del Bobolino.</p> <p>Language component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar: <i>c'è/ci sono</i> structure, definite and indefinite articles, simple prepositions, verbs <i>sapere</i> and <i>conoscere</i>.</li> <li>Vocabulary: urban locations, means of transport.</li> <li>Communicative function: give and ask for directions, describe a city.</li> </ul>

<b>Objectives</b>	Learn about the Bobolino Garden and its unique location in the city of Florence. Gain knowledge of urban project called Viale dei Colli and the involvement in the urban fabric of the surrounding hill. Gain knowledge of Medicean and significant historical locations featuring the hill.
<b>Visit</b>	Costa di San Giorgio; Via di San Leonardo; Giardino del Bobolino, Viale Machiavelli.

<b>Lesson 7</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	Botanical Herbs and Gardens. Local habitats. Language component: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary: herbs and diseases.</li> <li>• Communicative function: express sickness.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	Gain knowledge about Florentine Flora and the Ecosystem. Understand different roles of plants and herbs in the history of Florence. Be able to identify properties and benefits deriving from plants.
<b>Visit</b>	Via degli Speziali; Via Pier Antonio Micheli; Giardino della Fortezza, Viale Filippo Strozzi. The visit will also include a local pharmacy.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Pozzana, <i>Gardens of Florence and Tuscany</i> , pp. 38-39. Read: Singh R., "Medicinal plants: a review," in <i>Journal of Plant Sciences</i> , 1, 2015, pp. 50-55. Assignment 3: Visit a botanical garden and describe its history and its mission.

<b>Lesson 8</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	Farms: Typical Farming and Cultivations in the Florentine Countryside. The Cascine Park. Language component: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar: possessive adjectives and pronouns.</li> <li>• Vocabulary: family ties, pets, physical adjectives.</li> <li>• Communicative function: talk about your family and describe people.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	Gain knowledge of the Cascine Park and its history. Identify typical cultivations and products coming from the Florentine countryside. Gain an understanding of quality certifications applied to typical products. Gain knowledge of organic and biodynamic cultivation practices.
<b>Visit</b>	Parco delle Cascine, Piazzale delle Cascine.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: AAVV, <i>Communicating in Italian</i> , 41-48.

<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	Churches and Peasant Activity: Harvest Holidays and Traditions Rificolona Feast. Impact of Climate Change on Local Cultivation. Language component: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary: furniture, objects of the table, weather.</li> <li>• Communicative function: talk about habits and traditions, talk about the weather.</li> </ul>

<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Gain knowledge about several peasant traditions and holidays in Florence and how they still today foster a sense of community.</p> <p>Gain knowledge about market life in ancient Florence.</p> <p>Gain an understanding of the climate change issue and its impact on local cultivation.</p> <p>Become familiar with the concepts of global warming and climate change.</p>
<b>Visit</b>	Giardino di Borgo Allegri, Borgo Allegri; Giardino Antonino Caponnetto, Lungarno del Tempio; Parco dell'Albereta, Parco dell'Anconella, Via di Villamagna.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<p>Watch: Florence TV, <i>Tradizioni Firenze: la Rificolona</i>.</p> <p>Read: AAVV, <i>Communicating in Italian</i>, pp. 27-31.</p> <p>Read: Beltrame, <i>Climate Change Communication in Italy</i>.</p> <p>REFLECTION JOURNAL DUE.</p>

<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	Piazza dei Ciompi
<b>Lecture</b>	<p>Urban Parks.</p> <p>Parco di Villa “Il Ventaglio”: the Romantic Garden.</p> <p>Language component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar: reflexive verbs, frequency adverbs.</li> <li>• Vocabulary: gardening, hobbies and habits.</li> <li>• Communicative function: ask and tell time, talk about hobbies and free time.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Gain knowledge of the Orticoltura Garden and its history.</p> <p>Become aware of activities taking place in the Orticoltura Garden.</p> <p>Be able to talk about free time and hobbies.</p>
<b>Visit</b>	Piazza Fra' Girolamo Savonarola; Piazza delle Cure; Parco di Villa “Il Ventaglio”, Via Giovanni Aldini.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: AAVV, <i>Communicating in Italian</i> , pp. 115-123.

<b>Lesson 11 Final Exam</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	MyFUA
<b>Lecture</b>	FINAL EXAM