

ITALIAN STUDIES MAJOR

MAJOR DESCRIPTION

The Italian Studies major provides students with solid training in the spoken and written Italian language, enabling in-depth study of Italian history, culture, and society from the Middle Ages to the present. Students study a variety of texts (literary, film, and cultural), which enhance their acquisition of the language. This flexible, interdisciplinary program allows students to explore their own intellectual interests across other fields and in such departments as History, the College of Letters, Art History, and Classical Studies. Recent graduates have also double majored in Neuroscience, Chemistry, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Film. Small and highly interactive classes are typically conducted in Italian, and students work closely with their professors. Study abroad in an Italian-speaking country is encouraged with a warm invitation to study on Wesleyan's program in Bologna.

Students interested in the Italian Studies major develop an open-minded, inquisitive mindset as well as a global perspective. They may be passionate about Italian history, art, cinema, literary, or culinary traditions. Adaptability, strong communication and critical skills, creativity, and commitment are key traits that students gain from the study of Italian, its culture, history, and language.

The Italian Studies major develops capabilities including writing, speaking, interpretation, intercultural literacy, and effective citizenship—skills that prepare students for advanced study and are useful in a variety of professions including international relations, politics, business, academia, translation, the arts, travel, and cultural exchange.

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

Students qualify for this major with a grade of B or better in ITAL111 or the equivalent.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

- Nine courses above the level of ITAL102 (i.e., ITAL111 and higher) are required. Sophomores who are satisfactorily completing ITAL102 and intend to pursue Italian will be admitted to the major even though that course does not itself count for the major;
- All courses that count toward the major must be taken for a grade. Normally, only courses passed with a B or better will count for the major. Students are expected to request permission from the Italian section to count courses with a lower grade toward the major;
- Essay, thesis, and other (e.g., CA/TA) tutorials and language courses do not count toward the major, although they are encouraged;
- One of the nine required courses may be taken in English;
- For students placing into ITAL221 or higher, three of the nine required courses may be taken in English;
- One course in Italian at Wesleyan following study abroad is required;
- All students are required to take at least one course for the major in their senior year.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The Italian major is designed to allow students to start Italian at Wesleyan in their first or second year and complete the major. Completion is further helped by spending one semester abroad in Italy through the ECCO program or another program.
- Students are highly encouraged to satisfy the post study-abroad course requirement in the semester they return to campus.
- Four credits from the ECCO program in Bologna are accepted: Only one of these may be on a topic that is not Italian in nature (i.e., economy of Russia taken at the UniBo).
- Lecce credit is accepted only for students who have completed ITAL102 only before study abroad.
- If a student attends a study-abroad program other than ECCO, a review of the number of credits that will be accepted into the major is required.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

The Italian studies major combines the study of Italian language, literature, film, and culture, bringing humanistic tradition together with current global concerns. The major is designed to provide students with a comparative, international, and interdisciplinary education. Language training at Wesleyan serves as the base from which to explore Italian history, culture, and society from the Middle Ages to the present. Likewise, the in-depth study of a variety of texts (literary, filmic, and cultural) enhances the study of the language. The study of a foreign language and culture complements students' understanding of their own native cultures, enriching their critical understanding of it. Small classes taught through the medium of Italian, along with the extracurricular activities and study-abroad opportunities, allow students to study in detail and collaborate on a variety of critical topics and foster abilities considered essential in an ever-globalizing world, such as critical thinking, intercultural interpretation and literacy, and effective citizenship. These skills, in turn, prepare students for a variety of professions and lifelong inquiries.

STUDY ABROAD

ECCO program in Bologna, Italy. Wesleyan University cosponsors with Vassar College and Wellesley College a program in Italy for up to 15 students from each of the three colleges without regard to their choice of major. ITAL102 or the equivalent of one year of college-level Italian is the prerequisite for participation. Students may choose to participate in either the fall or spring semesters, or (optimally) both. For fall or full-year participants, the program begins with a seven-week (two-credit) intensive language and culture course that consists of three weeks in Lecce in the month of August, followed by a short break, and then four more weeks in Bologna before the beginning of the academic year. Spring-only participants will have a similar three-week (one-credit) course in Bologna in January. A full complement of courses taught in Italian dealing with Italian literature, history, government, art history, and other areas is offered at the program's center, taught by faculty from the Università di Bologna and by the program director.

Qualified students are strongly encouraged to enroll in courses at the Università di Bologna, and, thus, students with good language skills will have a wide range of fields from which to choose, including economics, government, and the natural sciences. All courses carry one Wesleyan credit. Since the Italian studies major emphasizes linguistic and cultural competency, most courses taken at the Università di Bologna in Italian will normally count for the major. Only one course

that is not Italian in nature, yet taught in Italian (i.e., The Economy of Russia) taken at the Università di Bologna will be accepted.

The cost of the program is approximately equivalent to that of staying on the home campus for the same period, and it includes round-trip air transportation between New York and Italy. Applications for the fall semester are due by March 1, for the spring semester, by October 1, and must be submitted to the Office of Study Abroad (<http://wesleyan.edu/ois/>).

Students participating in Wesleyan's Program in Bologna for any duration may receive credit for four courses. Students attending study-abroad programs other than ECCO are required to have those credits reviewed by their advisor before they will be accepted for the major. Learn more at: wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/studyabroad.html (<http://wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/studyabroad.html>).

ADVANCED PLACEMENT

See wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/aptransferofcredit (<http://wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/aptransferofcredit.html>) for more information.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

See wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/aptransferofcredit (<http://wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/aptransferofcredit.html>) for more information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course assistantships in Italian. Majors and other accomplished students returning from overseas may apply to serve as a course assistant for elementary Italian. Students may not receive academic credit for this exercise; rather, they will receive a stipend for their work. Students should express their interest to the faculty advisor in the spring for the following fall semester and in the early fall for consideration for the spring semester. Please note that students may serve as course assistant for only one course at the University per semester.

HONORS

See wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/honors (<http://wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/honors.html>) for more information about honors.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

See wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/honors (<http://wesleyan.edu/romance/italian/honors.html>) for more information about capstone experience options.