Italian Studies

Inherently interdisciplinary, the Italian Studies concentration allows students to strengthen their language skills in Italian and deepen their knowledge of Italian literature, history, art, and culture. Most concentrators have some background in Italian language. However, it is possible to concentrate in Italian studies without having studied the language before coming to Brown, although doing so requires an early start. After fulfilling the language requirement by completing up to Italian 0600 (or the equivalent), students enroll in a variety of advanced courses, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the concentration. Junior concentrators often study abroad in the Brown Program in Bologna. All senior concentrators participate in the “senior conference” by delivering brief presentations on academic topics of their choice in Italian Studies. Concentrators might also pursue capstone research, writing, or multimedia projects.

The concentration requires that students demonstrate proficiency in the Italian language by completing up to ITAL 0600 (or the equivalent in Bologna). ITAL 0600 is the first language course that counts toward the eight required courses for the concentration. At least four of the eight courses should be taken in Italian.

Italian Studies Concentration and the Brown Program in Bologna

Concentrators who enroll in the Brown in Bologna program should fulfill the requirements according to the following sequence: prior to departure, the student should complete the level of Italian language study required (ITAL 0300) and enroll in one of the courses in the four distribution areas -- Italian literature; Italian History; history of Italian art and architecture; film or performance. Upon return from Bologna, the student should enroll in at least one advanced course offered by the department, preferably a course taught in Italian. Any student returning from the Bologna program must enroll in a course above the language level of ITAL 0600.

Credits toward the Italian Studies concentration may also be transferred from the Brown in Bologna Program. Concentrators may count three courses per semester toward the concentration (or six courses total for the year), although the course content must focus on Italy if the student wishes to count the course toward the concentration requirements. Concentrators should consult the concentration advisor to know which courses may or may not transfer as credits toward the concentration.

Honors in Italian Studies

Concentrators are encouraged to expand their understanding of Italian language, history, or culture through independent research that will result in a thesis, a translation, or a multimedia project, developed in consultation with the undergraduate concentration advisor and the individual faculty member who will advise the student’s project. The Honors thesis in Italian Studies is a two-semester thesis. Students who intend to complete an honors project should enroll for the first semester in ITAL 1920 (Independent Study), and have their project approved by their advisor by October 15. During the second semester, honors students enroll in ITAL 1990 and continue to work with their advisor to complete the project. ITAL 1990 does not count as one of the eight courses required for the concentration.

Capstone Experiences in Italian Studies

A Capstone experiences in Italian Studies would consist of a course or project that a student, in consultation with the undergraduate advisor, feels would integrate the various intellectual engagements of this interdisciplinary concentration, and constitute a culminating experience in Italian Studies at Brown. Such experiences are strongly encouraged, and should be arrived at through conversations with the concentration advisor or a professor in the department. This could include the Brown Program in Bologna, typically taken in the Junior year, and/or the honors thesis in the senior year. However, students may also apply early in the Fall or Spring semester of their senior year for permission to designate one of their courses (1000-level or above) a Capstone course. In consultation with the professor, students in Capstone courses complete an independent research, writing, or multimedia project that is well beyond the required