

Rutgers University
Department of Italian
Graduate Student Handbook
Programs in Italian (M.A., M.A.T., Ph.D)

INTRODUCTION

The Graduate Student Handbook provides information about the policies, requirements, and goals of the Graduate Program of the Italian Department at Rutgers University. The program is committed to the research and teaching of Italian language, literature, and culture from all periods – from the Middle Ages and Dante to modern opera, theater, and contemporary film and visual culture. Members of our graduate faculty approach Italian culture from a range of disciplinary and theoretical perspectives, such as philology, theology, political philosophy, cultural theory, film theory, postcolonial studies, and cultural studies of food, gender and sexuality.

The Program offers [Master of Arts \(MA\)](#), [Master of Teaching \(MAT\)](#) and [Doctorate in Philosophy \(PhD\)](#) degrees.

Students in our MA and MAT programs enroll either full or part-time. Full-time MAT students can apply for the Larry Paragano Fellowship for Teachers of Italian.

Students in our PhD program are awarded a financial offer consisting of a combination of Fellowships and Teaching Assistantships and typically study works of Italian literature and culture from a wide range of periods in the first three to five semesters before designating a unique field tailored to their research interests. In addition, our department offers extensive pedagogical training in all levels of Italian language, literature, and culture. Our doctoral students complete coursework in the Italian Department, as well as the programs in Comparative Literature and Cinema Studies, and the Departments of English, History, German, Spanish and Portuguese, French, Art History, and Philosophy. Students may also take advantage of graduate fellowships and seminars at the Rutgers Center for Cultural Analysis, the Center for Historical Analysis, Center for Race and Ethnicity, and the Institute for Research on Women. If courses in their field are not offered at Rutgers, PhD students are also encouraged to take courses within the university consortium comprising the following institutions: Columbia, Princeton, NYU, Fordham, CUNY Graduate Center, and UPenn.

THE MASTER OF ARTS IN ITALIAN

The Master of Arts in Italian trains students at the highest level to pursue careers teaching Italian language, literature, culture, and cinema studies. Students may also use their acquired skills to pursue careers in publishing, translation, or to work in cultural institutions in the US, in Italy, and abroad.

Requirements and Procedures for the completion of the M.A. in Italian

The M.A. program is open to candidates with academic records of distinction and other evidence of scholarly accomplishments.

The candidates must satisfactorily complete 10 term courses (30 credits) and take a comprehensive examination based on a reading list.

Coursework

The number of course credits required is 30. All graduate students who teach must also take the Methodology of Teaching course.

M.A. Examination

The examination consists of two four-hour written exams to be taken in two consecutive days in the department. It is based on a reading list available on Sakai (site name "Graduate Students Info"). This is an open-book exam, for which the students will be able to consult the texts assigned in the reading list, in PDF format, on a department computer (no WiFi connection).

EXAM DAY 1. Candidates will be given a choice of three questions and must answer two on texts from the 13th-16th centuries.

EXAM DAY 2: Candidates will be given a choice of three questions and must answer two on the texts (including cinema) from the 17th-20th centuries.

On each day, the choice of three questions will be structured as follows:

- 1) Students will perform a close reading of a particular passage.
- 2) Students will address the historical and aesthetic contexts of a text.
- 3) Students will answer a transhistorical question that addresses changes in trends, themes, and/or forms over time.

The answers should demonstrate a) a knowledge of major canonical works of Italian literature across centuries, through post-WWII period; b) the ability to analyze a given literary text by placing it within the proper historical, cultural, ideological and aesthetic contexts; and c) the ability to identify major trends and themes in terms both of content and of style, and to draw connections between texts and periods. Two questions must be answered in Italian and two in English.

The exam as a whole must address *at least four centuries* of literary production. In addition, the exam as a whole should answer one of each type of question (see the list of three types of questions above).

Candidates are expected to have completed at least 30 credits before taking the examinations and to take the exams within one year of ending their coursework.

In case of failure, the exam must be taken again within the next semester and may not be retaken more than once.

Exam Sessions

The calendar of exams will be coordinated in agreement with the Graduate Program Director

Grades

The grades assigned are High Pass, Pass, Terminal Pass, and Fail.

M.A. Learning Goals

Learning Goal 1 for Students: Achieve mastery in reading and analyzing critically and creatively literary, cultural, and cinematic texts of the Italian tradition.

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 1: • Grades in graduate courses • M.A. examination assessing the depth and breadth of knowledge • Assessment of exam by committee of graduate faculty members • Review by faculty of student progress

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 1: • Close advising to ensure that students are being prepared in a coherent and academically rigorous fashion • Effective monitoring of student progress • Evaluation of teaching effectiveness of instructors in graduate courses • Periodic review of curricular offerings, degree requirements and assessment tools by program faculty, with input from a graduate student curriculum committee, and in consultation with the office of the dean of the graduate school and/or the unit dean

Learning Goal 2 for Students: Prepare to be professionals in the field of Italian language, literature, and culture

Assessment of graduate student achievement of Goal 2: Grades in graduate coursework and comprehensive examination • Collection of placement data in professional placement and continuation of graduate studies • Survey alumni/ae

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 2: • Encourage participation in professional development programs in such areas as literature instruction, language pedagogy, library use, course management software • Host professional development and career exploration workshops • Teach students how to do assessment in their

future professional capacities • Acquaint students with nonacademic career opportunities.

The graduate faculty, with input from a graduate student curriculum committee, will regularly review the structure and content of the program and the feedback received from assessment and surveys.

These reviews will be used to provide the best possible education to students in order to meet the needs for highly trained individuals in the field of Italian language, literature, and culture.

THE MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING

The MAT program is intended primarily for those who are teaching, or intend to teach, at the K-12 level. The program emphasizes language, literature, and culture. Candidates are admitted on the basis of their prior formal background and professional experience and performance. They should have the equivalent of a Minor in Italian before applying or, as an alternative take some undergraduate courses. The MAT in Italian is considered to be a terminal degree, in that it does not lead to the Ph.D. program. Any student who seeks admission to the Ph.D. program after completing the MAT degree must apply through the normal application process.

Requirements and Procedures for the completion of the M.A.T. in Italian

Candidates for the M.A.T. must satisfactorily complete ten term courses (30 credits), including the completion of a teaching portfolio.

Coursework

MAT students are required to take a total of 30 credits. Applicants for the MAT are encouraged to take the courses offered during the summer at the World Languages Institute prior to being admitted to the MAT program. Courses with a grade of B or better will be counted toward the degree.

Of the 30 course credits, 27 credits of coursework, must be chosen among courses in Italian literature, civilization, language, cinema, and methodology taken primarily at the Rutgers Summer World Languages Institute or in the Italian Department (with the permission of the Graduate Director) and a further 3 credits are assigned to the Teaching Portfolio. The 27 credits that are earned at the World Languages Institute should be distributed in the following fashion: 12 credits in literature and culture; 9 credits in language, grammar, and language across the curriculum; 3 credits in methodology; 3 elective credits. The majority of courses taken in the Italian Department

should be in Italian. One of the courses may be a course taught in English, chosen in consultation with the Graduate Director.

Students may participate in a summer study abroad earning up to 6 credits toward the degree, with the approval of the Graduate Director.

Students may elect to take one course (3 credits) at the Graduate School of Education, with the approval of the Graduate Director.

The Graduate Director may accept up to 12 credits from another institution to be used toward the degree only after 12 credits have been completed at Rutgers. Up to 4 undergraduate courses are permitted by the Graduate School.

Teaching Portfolio

MAT candidates who have accumulated 27 credits of course work are encouraged to register for their last three credits, which is an independent study, to begin work on a teaching portfolio. Students with only 24 credits may register concurrently during the academic year or during the summer for the last WLI course needed to acquire 27 credits as well as for the independent study. Before registering for the independent study, MAT candidates should confer with the departmental graduate director to inform him/her about their number of credits acquired to date and to indicate their readiness to begin work on a teaching portfolio. At that time, candidates should discuss with the graduate director the appropriate choices for the portfolio committee.

For detailed information consult the site of the World Languages Institute
<https://tlc.rutgers.edu/wlmain/mat-teaching-portfolio-project>

M.A.T. Learning Goals

Learning Goal 1 for Students: Achieve mastery in reading and analyzing critically and creatively literary, cultural, and cinematic texts of the Italian tradition.

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 1: • Grades in graduate courses • Seminar presentations • Assessment of Teaching Portfolio by committee of graduate faculty members • Review by faculty of student progress.

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 1: • Close advising to ensure that students are being prepared in a coherent and academically rigorous fashion • Effective monitoring of student progress • Evaluation of teaching effectiveness of instructors in graduate courses • If effectiveness is below expectation, work with instructor to improve effectiveness • Periodic review of curricular offerings, degree requirements and assessment tools by program faculty and in consultation with the office of the dean of the graduate school and/or the unit dean.

Learning Goal 2 for Students: Ability to teach Italian language, literature, and culture.

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 2: • Performance in Methodology course • Assessment of Teaching Portfolio by committee of graduate faculty members • Seminar presentations • Review by faculty and close mentoring.

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 2: • Supervision of student teaching and Mentoring • Participation in second-language acquisition workshops organized by the department and attendance of workshops organized by the World Language Institute • Videotaping of classes with review of videotapes • Review of student evaluations • Evaluations of teaching effectiveness of instructors in graduate courses • Periodic review of curricular offerings, degree requirements and assessment tools by program faculty and in consultation with the office of the dean of the graduate school and/or the unit dean.

The Italian graduate faculty, with input from students of the MAT program, will regularly review the structure and content of the program and the feedback received from assessment and surveys. These reviews will be used to provide the best possible education to students in order to meet the needs for highly trained individuals in the field of Italian language, literature, and culture.

DOCTORATE IN PHILOSOPHY IN ITALIAN

Requirements and Procedures for the completion of the Ph.D. in Italian

Coursework

The maximum number of course credits required is 48, of which at least 27 must be taken at Rutgers. There is also a minimum requirement of 24 research credits. All graduate students who teach must take the Methodology of Teaching course (940:501, offered yearly through the Spanish Department). Other required courses are: one course in Theory of Literature (195:501: *Intro to Literary Theory*; or 195:617: *Advanced topics in Literary Theory*, offered through the Comparative Literature Department), and one Graduate Writing course (16:355, no credits, offered through the English Department), to be chosen in consultation with the Graduate Program Director.

Students who come to Rutgers with an MA degree in Italian from another university or an equivalent are admitted on a conditional basis. After completing 12 credits with grades of B or better, the Italian Graduate Faculty will determine, on a case-by-case basis, how many courses taken at other institutions will be accepted toward the Doctorate at Rutgers. However, in no case will doctoral candidates take less than 11 graduate courses at Rutgers.

Language Requirements

The candidate must demonstrate advanced reading ability in two languages, other than English and Italian, that are relevant to the candidate's research. In order to satisfy this requirement, the student may:

- (1) take the graduate language proficiency exam administered by the World Languages Institute: (<https://tlc.rutgers.edu/graduate/graduate-language-proficiency-exam>);
- (2) pass summer courses of "Language for Reading" with grades of B or better; or
- (3) count four semesters of a language in college, with grades of B or better.

Comprehensive Examination

The Comprehensive Examination consists of a written and an oral part. It tests a) the knowledge of major canonical works of Italian literature and culture across centuries, through the 21st century; b) the ability to analyze a given literary text by placing it within the proper historical, cultural, ideological and aesthetic contexts; and c) the ability to identify major trends and themes in terms both of content and of style, and to draw connections between texts and periods. It is based on a reading list available on BOX (site name "Graduate Students Info").

Part I : Written Exam

This four-hour written exam must be taken in the department on DAY 1 of the comprehensive exams. It is an open-book exam, for which the students will be able to consult the texts assigned in the reading list, in PDF format, on a department computer (no WiFi connection).

Candidates will be given a choice of three questions and must answer two on the texts from either the 13th-17th centuries or the 18th-21th centuries (**they will work on the text grouping that they have NOT chosen for their oral exam**). The three questions will be structured as follows.

1. A close reading of a particular passage.
2. The analysis of a text to be placed within its historical and aesthetic contexts.
3. The presentation of a transhistorical issue that addresses changes in trends, themes, and/or forms over time.

Part 2 : Oral Exam.

This part of the exam will be taken within 5 business days from DAY 1 of the exams and will focus on the group of texts that the students has chosen for this part of the exam, as they will be related to the main focus of their future work in the Ph.D. program (**either the 13th-17th centuries grouping or the 18th- 21th centuries grouping**). This part of the exam tests the student's knowledge of the texts, oral communication, and their aptitude for making connections and critical thinking. It will begin with the student's

presentation on a topic of their choice (15 minutes) and continue with a discussion on the texts from this grouping (45). The exam is 60 minutes in length. Each student can choose between the distant (zoom) and in-person mode.

Candidates are expected to have completed at least 30 credits before taking the examinations and to take the exams within one year of ending their coursework. In case of failure, the exam must be taken again within the next semester and may not be retaken more than once.

Exam Sessions

The calendar of exams will be coordinated in agreement with the Graduate Program Director. The dates of the examination must be announced 60 days in advance.

Grades

The grades assigned are Pass or Fail.

Ph. D. Qualifying Examination

The Ph.D. qualifying examination is a take-home essay based on a bibliography of 40-60 titles geared to the dissertation. An examining committee of four faculty members, formed in consultation with the PhD student and the Graduate Director, will assist the candidates in the preparation of the bibliography, which must be approved by the committee at least three weeks before the exam. After approving this bibliography, the members of the examining committee will devise two essay questions, and candidates will write an essay of approximately 15 pages on one of the two. Candidates will have a weekend (Friday 10am to Monday 10am) to complete the exam. They will receive written feedback from the committee members after two weeks and will discuss their essays with the committee after three weeks.

The language of the examination is the same as the language chosen by the candidate for her/his dissertation.

The Ph.D. qualifying examination should be taken no later than the end of the fourth year.

Grades

The grades assigned are Pass and Fail.

Dissertation Prospectus

After successful completion of the Qualifying Examination, the Dissertation Committee will assist the candidate in preparing the prospectus.

No later than three months after the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination, the candidate must submit an advanced draft of the prospectus to the members of the Committee. The prospectus should be 10-12 pages and should describe the dissertation project, including primary materials, the methodological approach, the relation of the proposed project to existing scholarly-critical work in the field, and a comprehensive bibliography of relevant scholarship and primary materials. The language of the prospectus is the same as the language chosen by the candidate for her/his dissertation.

The committee will either approve the prospectus and allow the student to continue on toward the dissertation prospectus defense or inform the student of areas that need further preparation and set the conditions necessary to assure that the student completes the additional required preparation.

The Prospectus Defense

The approved prospectus will be presented formally to the faculty and the graduate students of the Department in a public defense.

Dissertation

The candidate must submit a completed version of the dissertation (approved by her/his advisor) **one month before** the official university deadline of the semester in which s/he intends to receive the degree. This will allow time for final comments and revisions, and for the production of the revised manuscript. For norms concerning the format of the dissertation, please consult the Graduate School site at:

<https://grad.rutgers.edu/academics/graduation>

All international students who are applying for academic positions in the US should take the Optional Practical Training (OPT) workshop with the Rutgers Global–International Student and Scholar Services (for regulations, dates, application materials, see:

<https://global.rutgers.edu/opt>

The Italian graduate faculty reserves the right to recommend withdrawal from the program for poor or insufficient performance at any stage of the student's graduate school training.

Ph.D. Learning Goals

The doctoral program in Italian trains students at the highest level to pursue academic careers in Italian language, literature, culture, and cinema studies. Students may also use their acquired skills to pursue careers in publishing, translation, or to work in cultural institutions in the US, in Italy, and abroad.

Learning Goal 1 for Students: Attain the ability to analyze critically and creatively literary, cultural, and cinematic texts of the Italian tradition, and, when appropriate, in relation to other national contexts.

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 1: • Grades in graduate courses • M.A. examinations assessing the depth and breadth of knowledge • Review by faculty of student progress with close advising and mentoring • Placement in positions and careers that require ability and scholarship in Italian language, literature, culture, and cinema.

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 1: • Close advising to ensure that students are being prepared in a coherent and academically rigorous fashion • Effective monitoring of student progress • Evaluations of teaching effectiveness of instructors in graduate courses • Periodic review of curricular offerings, degree requirements and assessment tools by program faculty, with input from a graduate student curriculum committee, and in consultation with the office of the dean of the graduate school and/or the unit dean.

Learning Goal 2 for Students: Engage in and conduct original research.

Assessment of graduate student achievement of Goal 2: • Oral presentations • Seminar papers • M.A. examinations • Qualifying examinations o Preparation of bibliography in consultation with faculty members o Presentation of bibliography and its rationale o Delivery of written exams • Preparation and defense of Ph.D. dissertation proposal • Assessment of quality of Ph.D. dissertation: o Public defense of dissertation o Critical reading of dissertation by committee of graduate faculty members and a committee member from outside of the Italian graduate program o Submission and acceptance of peer-reviewed articles and conference papers based on the dissertation • Achievement of students as evidenced by professional placements, selection for conference presentations, peer-reviewed publications and individual grant attainment.

Role of the graduate program in helping students achieve Goal 2: • Provide early introduction to research methods and opportunities for research • Provide opportunities to present research and receive feedback • Maintain adequate funding levels through the research phase • Provide comprehensive advising and assist in the identification of mentors.

Learning Goal 3 for Students: Ability to teach Italian language, literature, and culture

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 3: • Attendance in training workshop for new instructors • Participation in monthly meetings with coordinator • Performance in Methodologies course • Review by faculty of class observation and advising and mentoring • Peer class observation.

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 3: • Supervision of student teaching with bi-annual class observation; mentoring; participation in lectures and workshops organized by the department; attendance of workshops organized by the World Language Institute; videotaping of classes and review of videotapes; review of student evaluations • Close advising to ensure that students are being prepared in a coherent and academically rigorous fashion • Effective monitoring of student progress • Evaluations of teaching effectiveness of instructors in graduate courses • Periodic review of curricular offerings, degree requirements and assessment tools by program faculty and in consultation with the office of the dean of the graduate school and/or the unit dean.

Learning Goal 4 for Students: Prepare to be professionals in careers that require training at the highest levels in the field of Italian studies as well as problem-solving skills and the ability to collaborate on collective projects.

Assessment of graduate student achievement of Goal 4: • Review evidence of papers presented, publications and professional networking • Evaluation of work in service committees (Advisory committee, Rutgers Day committee, Newsletter committee) and in the Italian Graduate Society • Evaluations of teaching effectiveness of graduate student instructors • Collection of placement data • Review by external advisory committees composed of leading scholars in the field • Survey alumni/ae

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 4: • Develop discipline-specific programs in concert with the American Association of Teachers of Italian, the American Association of Italian Studies, the Modern Language Association of America, the North Eastern Modern Language Association of America, the American Comparative Literature Association, as well as with academic journals and presses • Encourage participation in professional development programs in such areas as literature instruction, language pedagogy, library use, course management software, interview skills, presentation skills, development of CV's, use of research tools, training in the responsible conduct of research, and proposal writing • Mock interviews in preparation for the job market • Colloquia that offer presentation of dissertation work with feedback from faculty and fellow graduate students • Host discipline-specific training when appropriate • Teach students how to do assessment in their future professional capacities • Provide flexible options for students with interdisciplinary interests related to Italian language, literature, and culture • Develop or enhance programs related to job and networking skills, including activity in professional societies • Acquaint students with non-academic career opportunities.

The Italian graduate faculty, with input from a graduate student curriculum committee, will regularly review the structure and content of the program and the feedback received from assessment and surveys. These reviews will be used to provide the best possible education to students in order to prepare them as highly trained individuals in the field of Italian language, literature, and culture.

Italian Ph.D. Timeline (this document has two pages)

Year	REQUIREMENTS	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
1	Coursework (Fellowship or Teaching) **16:355:502 Graduate Writing (non-credit course) to be taken in Fall or Spring	4 courses If you are a TA, only 3 courses, including Teaching Methodology Course	4 or 3 courses	Language for Reading course
2	Coursework *** Comprehensive Exams (CE) (Fellowship or Teaching) *First Language Requirement	4 or 3 courses	4 or 3 courses CE (students who have transferred credits)	Preparation of Comprehensive Exams to be taken in September (or no later than the following January)
3	**** Qualifying Exams (QE) (Fellowship or Teaching) Students are encouraged to take **16:355:504 Writing for Grants and Fellowships	Preparation of Reading List and Study for QE	Study for QE to be taken in May (submit definitive list at least three weeks before the exams)	Preparation of ***** Dissertation Proposal to be defended in September (or no later than December) . Completion of Language Requirements
4	Research and writing Dissertation Proposal (Fellowship or Teaching) Students are encouraged to take **16:355:508 Writing the Dissertation (non-credit course)	Defense of Dissertation Proposal	End of Spring: Submission of first chapter All students are strongly encouraged to take **16:355:506 Writing for Publication (noncredit course)	End of Summer: Submission of second chapter Prepare materials for job applications

5	<p>Research and writing Preparation for the job market (Fellowship or Teaching)</p>	<p>End of Fall: Submission of third chapter Job applications and mock interviews</p>	<p>End of Spring: Submission of fourth chapter (or entire dissertation within mid March for***** Defense in April and May Degree)</p>	<p>April-May All international students on the job market must take the *****OPT workshop) Summer: Submission of Dissertation for ***** Defense for October degree</p>
(6)	<p>No Guarantee of Financial Support Some students have secured a Fellowship from the Writing Program, in the English Dept. Preparation for the job market</p>	<p>Job applications and mock interviews Submission of Dissertation ***** Defense for January degree</p>	<p>Submission of Dissertation beginning of March ***** Defense for May degree</p>	

*In order to complete your 2 **Language Requirements**, you must: either 1. have 4 semesters, college-level lang.; 2. take the Graduate Proficiency Exam at the Language Institute; or 3. take a Language for Reading course over the Summer.

For more information on **writing courses please consult the link: <http://wp.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate/graduate-writing-program>. "These courses carry **zero credits and are graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, where satisfactory performance is largely determined by attendance and engagement. Courses typically consist of eight class meetings and two one-on-one conferences. Students of all writing levels are welcome.**"

*****Comprehensive Exams**: 6 essay questions on topics from the *Duecento* to the *Novecento*, including cinema (6 hours, in two consecutive days).

******Qualifying Exams**: 1 take-home essay (F-Su), based on the bibliography for the prospective dissertation to be submitted on Monday by 10 am. Oral part after three weeks.

*******Proposal**: A 10/12 pages proposal (plus bibliography), which elaborates on the dissertation topic, the proposed argument, and the organization of the dissertation, must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the defense.

*****For the exact deadlines, see: <http://gsnb.rutgers.edu/academics/checklist-phd-degree>. The dissertation must be submitted to the reading committee at least one month prior to the defense.

*****For regulations, dates, application materials, see <https://global.rutgers.edu/opt>