

# THE MASTER OF ARTS IN ITALIAN STUDIES

## Goals

The purpose of the M.A. program is to provide students with a fundamental knowledge of Italian literary culture over the course of its history, and with a thorough introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Italian Studies, preparatory to admission to the Ph.D. Program. While admittance to the M.A. does not guarantee subsequent permission to enter the Ph.D. program, the Department does not admit students who apply for a terminal M.A. degree program. The requirements below correspond to the University's Plan II M.A. degree program. The Department does not offer Plan I.

## Degree Requirements

### 1. Residence

The Graduate division defines academic residence as payment of registration fees and enrollment in at least 4 units in 100 or 200 series courses for a minimum of two semesters. However, the time needed for completion of the M.A. degree in Italian Studies is normally 1.5 to 2 years of full time registration as defined below.

### 2. Registration

The minimum enrollment requirement for all graduate students who are not yet advanced to doctoral candidacy is 12 units per semester. Usually, units are in regular graduate seminars (4-credit, 200 series courses) though in some cases, students may require some undergraduate work to meet pre-requisites.

Students with academic appointments (as Graduate Student Instructors, Readers, and Tutors) must also be registered in 12 units per semester, though 4 of these units will usually be in the 300 series.

### 3. Coursework

The Department of Italian Studies requires a minimum of 24 units of coursework in 100 and 200 series courses for the Master's degree. At least half of these units, and usually more, are earned in graduate seminars. Some work may be done in upper division undergraduate courses to supplement an incoming student's undergraduate preparation.

Students are required to take a minimum of 12 units per semester, which must include at least 8 units of graduate seminars or advanced undergraduate classes. Up to 8 units from approved non-Department courses may be applied toward Department requirements. An additional 4 units of coursework in literary theory may also be taken outside the Department. In no case may the student do more than 50% of her or his work outside the Department.

#### **Specific course requirements include:**

Italian Studies 290A-B: *Graduate Colloquium* (2 units each, may be taken S/U)

Italian Studies 205: *Proseminar in Italian Literary Studies* (currently offered in alternate years, must be taken for 4 letter graded units)

Three 4-unit letter graded seminars (with final research papers) covering 3 of 4 historical periods:

- 13th-14th centuries: (may include courses 210, 212, and approved topics of 244 & 248)
- 15th-16th centuries: (may include courses 215 and approved topics of 244 & 248)
- 17th-18th centuries: (may include approved topics of 244 & 248)
- 19th-21st centuries: (may include courses 230, 235, and approved topics of 244 & 248)

In addition, a student who is serving as a GSI for the first time is required to enroll in Italian Studies 355 (Seminar in Language Pedagogy) for 4 units. In later semesters the student who is also teaching typically enrolls in Italian Studies 302 (Colloquium in Language Pedagogy) for either 2 or 4 units. Students teaching Reading & Composition courses for the first time are required to enroll in a separate, campus-mandated pedagogy seminar.

Students preparing for the M.A. Examination may, on the recommendation of the Graduate Adviser, enroll in up to 8 units of Italian Studies 601 (Independent Study for master's Candidates).

#### **4. Language Requirement**

Prior to receiving the master's, the student is required to demonstrate advanced reading skills in one language other than Italian and English which has specific relevance to the field of Italian Studies. Students are encouraged to take advantage of Berkeley's summer language workshop programs, for which some financial support may be available. U.S. citizens or permanent residents may be eligible for support by the FLAS grant program for foreign language study.

Proficiency may be demonstrated in one of two ways (at least one language must be passed by examination):

*Examination:* A translation exam on a passage of ~300 words. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese administers exams in Spanish, French, Catalan, German, Portuguese and Latin, usually during the fifth week of each semester. A schedule and sign-up sheet are posted outside room 5309 after the third week of the semester. Students are allowed 60 minutes (75 minutes for Latin & German) and the use of a dictionary; translations must be made in ink and students must provide their own blue book. Past exams are kept in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. For other languages special arrangements must be made.

*Coursework:* Latin proficiency is established by passing Latin 10 and Latin 100 (or another upper-division course) with minimum grades of "B." Proficiency in modern languages is established by passing two upper division courses (100 series) or one graduate course (200 series) with minimum grades of "B." Language courses below the 100 series do not count toward the departmental coursework requirement; no more than 4 units total of upper-division and graduate courses may be so counted.

#### **5. The M.A. Portfolio and Examination**

The M.A. Examination is taken at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester or beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup>, and in any case no later than April 15<sup>th</sup> during the fourth semester of academic residence. The Examining Committee is composed of three members, at least two of whom are regular faculty in the Department of Italian Studies. The Committee is chosen by the Graduate Adviser in consultation with the student and the prospective members. Students planning on taking their M.A. exam must file a *Request for Advancement to Master's Candidacy* with the Graduate Assistant by September 15<sup>th</sup> for a Fall exam/December degree and February 10<sup>th</sup> for a Spring exam/degree. The form must be signed by the Graduate Adviser and Chair of the exam committee, and the approved reading list must be sent with the signed form.

The examination is based on an individually tailored list of a minimum of 30 representative items drawn from the entire length of the Italian cultural tradition (including, but not necessarily limited to, literature). The list is to be devised by the student, in consultation with the Graduate Adviser (and other faculty as necessary), and may include material studied in coursework. An “item” need not be a text: verbal documents of all kinds, paintings, buildings, sculptures, musical compositions, movies, and other cultural phenomena may also be considered “items.” Items should be considered in historical and socio-cultural context; the reading of at least one comprehensive history of Italian literary culture — e.g. Ferroni or *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature* — is required. The list as a whole must meet minimum standards of substance and coverage in terms of chronology and genre; it should be finalized and approved before the semester in which the exam is taken.

The written exam is not the exclusive basis for determining whether a student’s performance has merited the M.A. degree. It is part of a portfolio developed by the candidate over the whole course of his or her enrollment in the master’s program, performance in each part of which must be deemed satisfactory before the degree can be awarded.

*The Portfolio consists of:*

- 1) two seminar papers, chosen and revised at the student’s discretion, demonstrating achievement in research and scholarship. These must be presented to the committee *four weeks before the written examination.*
- 2) the written examination
- 3) achievement in coursework
- 4) achievement in teaching, if relevant

*The Format of the Examination:* The candidate is given a period of twelve hours in which to write answers to three questions from a list of five devised by the Examination Committee and based upon the student’s list. (There is no oral component to the exam.) The Graduate Assistant (or other designated person) will email the questions to the student, who must return the finished exam within 12 hours. A successful exam will be between 6000 and 7500 words; ideally, it will also include the student’s name and page numbers.

The results of the M.A. exam and portfolio review, as determined by the Committee, will be given to students within two weeks of the exam. After successfully passing the review, the student can request “permission to proceed” to the Ph.D. program. Otherwise the exam may be retaken one time only, no later than two weeks before the end of the term following the one in which it was first taken. On a similar timetable, other elements of the portfolio may be resubmitted, as determined by the M.A. Examination Committee. The exam may not be taken a third time; failure on the retake will lead to dismissal from the program.

## **6. Permission to Proceed in the Ph.D. Program**

If the student wishes to continue to the Ph.D., she or he must submit a request for “permission to proceed” to the Graduate Committee within 2 week of being notified of passing the M.A. (In Italian Studies, the Graduate Committee comprises the entire faculty.) The request should be 500 to 1000 words long, and describe the student’s goals and expectations for the Ph.D. program, specifying primary and secondary fields. The request should include the comments the student received on the M.A., and one representative research paper. Permission will not be granted if the student has more than one Incomplete grade.