

# GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: ENGL 202: Studies in Fiction  
Credits: 3 Credits  
Instructor: Dr. Ann Ciasullo



Study Abroad, 502 E. Boone Ave, Spokane, WA 99258-0085 • (800) 440-5391 • [www.gonzagainflorence.org](http://www.gonzagainflorence.org) • [studyabroad@gonzaga.edu](mailto:studyabroad@gonzaga.edu)

## *L'ambiente Italiano: Italy as Setting in Literature*

English 202, Studies in Fiction, is a course designed to help you continue practicing the skills of critical reading, analysis, and writing to which you were introduced in English 101 and 102—skills that are essential for all college students. Like English 102, this class will require you to read and write on a regular basis, to participate in class discussion, and to engage in group activities with your classmates. Unlike English 102, this course focuses exclusively on the genre of fiction, with emphasis on the major elements of narrative form, such as plot, character, and point of view. In this section of ENGL 202, we will examine fictional works whose plots unfold in and whose characters move through Italy. Whether they live in Florence in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, tour Rome in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, or wander through Venice in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the characters we will encounter all have one thing in common: Italy plays an integral role in their journeys toward selfhood.

### Required Texts

- Giorgio Bassani, *The Garden of the Fitzzi-Continis*
- Sarah Dunant, *Birth of Venus*
- E. M. Forester, *A Room with a View*
- Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*
- Henry James, *Daisy Miller*
- Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice*
- Several short stories, copies of which will be distributed or available on Blackboard

### Course Requirements

**Reading Responses:** In order to push you to think more deeply about the assigned texts and to prepare you for class discussion, you will complete a formal reading response for virtually every reading assignment in this class. These assignments will take one of two forms: a response to a particular question that I pose about the reading, or a set of discussion questions to share with the class. These responses will be graded on a scale of 0-10. In order to receive *any* credit at all, your response must actually reflect the assignment. If your response is thorough (i.e., quotes from and/or refers to the story/novel, is well developed, etc.), demonstrates critical thought (i.e., illustrates that you are grappling with the ideas in the literature, not just referring to them on a superficial level), and is carefully written (i.e., is not rushed, is grammatically sound, conveys your ideas clearly, etc.), you will receive 9-10 points. If your response is thoughtful but not thorough, or thorough but not so well written, you will earn 6-8 points. If your response is incomplete, does not follow directions, and/or is riddled with surface errors, you will earn 0-5 points. Responses must be typed, may be single or double-spaced, and, when quoting, must use MLA citation. They are always due at the start of class; late work will not be accepted.

**Participation:** Because the success of this class depends primarily on the active, enthusiastic participation of all members, your contributions to class discussion will count toward your final grade. Each class meeting, you will have the opportunity to earn a range of 0-4 participation points. If you are absent, or if you show up to class but are checked out in some manner (e.g., sleeping, doing other work, chatting with or text messaging a friend, etc.), contribute nothing to the class discussion, or are very late or leave very early, you will earn a zero for the day. If you come to class and contribute a minimal number of comments,

or if you arrive late or leave early, you will earn 1-2 points for the day. If you come to class and demonstrate that you have read the assigned text and are active in our discussion, you will earn 3-4 points for the day. Participation points cannot be made up, so your regular attendance is crucial to your success in this class.

**Travel Journals:** Because most of the assigned stories and novels are set in locations that can be explored on a day trip, we will visit at least two of the featured settings, touring the areas in which the stories take place and thereby allowing ourselves to imagine the characters' movements, actions, motivations, and experiences. After each of these excursions, you will complete a detailed journal entry in which you reflect upon your own experience of the locale and compare/contrast it to that of the characters we have met. So, for example, we may journey down to Rome and visit the Colosseum, taking the time to picture young American Daisy Miller in this milieu and to consider whether our physical presence in this place changes our understanding of Daisy herself. These journal entries will be worth 20 points each and will be due within three days of each excursion.

**Final Exam/Essay:** As a class, we will determine how best to assess what you've learned in the course: with a final exam or a final essay. Whatever we decide, this assignment will be worth 50 points and will require some sort of synthesis of the materials covered in our six weeks together.

Participation	80 points (4 pts. x 20 days—approximate)
Travel Journal	40 points
Reading Responses	200 points (10 points x 20 responses—approximate)
<u>Final Exam/Paper</u>	<u>50 points</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>370 points</b>

Below is a tentative schedule for the next six weeks. I reserve the right to modify the schedule as needed. Please note that you are responsible for all changes that may occur, even if you are absent from class.

#### WEEK ONE

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<b>Monday</b>	Introduction
<b>Tuesday</b>	“Roman Fever,” Edith Wharton
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>Daisy Miller</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>Daisy Miller</i>

#### WEEK TWO

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<b>Monday</b>	<i>Birth of Venus</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>Birth of Venus</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>Birth of Venus</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>Birth of Venus</i>

#### WEEK THREE

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<b>Monday</b>	“Rappacini’s Daughter,” Nathaniel Hawthorne
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>A Room with a View</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>A Room with a View</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>A Room with a View</i>

#### WEEK FOUR

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<b>Monday</b>	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>

#### WEEK FIVE

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<b>Monday</b>	<i>The Garden of the Fitzi-Continis</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>The Garden of the Fitzi-Continis</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>The Garden of the Fitzi-Continis</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	Short stories from <i>Little Novels of Sicily</i> , Giovanni Verga

#### WEEK SIX

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<b>Monday</b>	<i>Death in Venice</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>Death in Venice</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>Death in Venice</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	Final Exam