

Semester in Rome

Book Discussion Syllabus (HMN 491)

Cultural Perspectives

Instructor

Kristen Snyder

Course Description

The discussion of *Cultural Perspectives* is designed to challenge students' perception and understanding of the culture that they grew up in and the culture they now find themselves while in Rome. The discussion will prepare students to consider their role in shaping and transforming the culture around them as Americans and Christians as they experience various aspects of culture including, but not limited to: culture shock, politics, religion, and the differences between American and European social behaviors and practices. The discussion will also help students to understand how they too are being shaped and transformed by their time in Rome.

Credit

1 hour of credit

Course Objectives

In order to accomplish the goals of the course and of the Semester in Rome experience, the student will...

- Define and critique the concepts of culture and what or who it is that constructs the idea of culture.
- Understand how their own life experiences shape their perception of culture and how they participate in culture as a whole.
- Gain a deeper understanding of how their relationship with Christ affects how they interact with the world.
- Appreciate the differences in the world's cultures and understand how God is the Creator of all things.

Required Course Materials

Text:

Severgnini, Beppe. *La Bella Figura: A Field Guide to the Italian Mind*. Crown Publishing Group, 2007.

Steves, Rick. *Europe Through the Back Door*: 2001. New York: Avalon Travel, 2010.

Course Schedule and Assignments

Description	Reading/Assignment	Week Due
Course Introduction		1
Preparing to travel	<i>Back Door</i> , 68-131, 164-184, <i>Mock Travel Intent due</i>	2
Preparing to travel	<i>Back Door</i> , 195-313	3
Leaving the Ugly American behind	<i>Back Door</i> , 421-447	4
Intro to the Italian mind: the North	<i>Bella Figura</i> , Friday and Saturday chapters	5
Break discussion	Break Travel Intent	6
Community in Italy: Central Italy	<i>Bella Figura</i> , Sunday and Monday, Tuesday	7
Business, etc. in Italy: South	<i>Bella Figura</i> , Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	8
Life in Italy: Way down South	<i>Bella Figura</i> , Saturday, Sunday	9
Heading home		10
Culture Making		12

Assignments

Mock Travel Intent:

One of the great privileges of studying in Rome will be your ability to travel throughout Italy and Europe. This, however, is a huge undertaking. There are many things to consider from where to go, how to get there, what to do while you're there, where to stay, and so much more. For this assignment, you and one other student will compose a mock travel intent form. This form will require you to select a location to visit, plan how you're getting to the airport/train station, where you're staying, how you'll get from the airport/train station, what at least one day of tourism will look like, where you'll eat that first evening, and when you're returning to Rome. The purpose of this exercise is to prepare you for a successful semester of travel and exploration.

Capturing culture:

As we have discussed culture and our role in making it, it's time for you to document your involvement in culture. For this assignment you will bring a photograph of yourself from break engaging/making culture in wherever your travels have taken you.

Community Service project:

Rome is a city of great need. There are many who need us to be the hands and feet of Jesus. And there are many who we would never go out of our way to meet if not given the opportunity. As such, students are required to participate in at least one community

service project while in Rome. The project is up to the discretion of the student, but must be an organized project and a “report” sheet must be completed by the leader of the project. Additionally, students will submit a 500 word essay about the outcome of their experience. This essay should include, but is not limited to detailing what the student learned about themselves, Jesus, and those that God put in their path while serving.

Creating your own La Bella Figura

Pretend you’re Beppe Severgnini; watch and observe the aspects of Italian life that fascinate you the most—eating, gathering, sports, etc. Through any medium you choose, photos, poems, cooking etc. try to put into words what those arenas mean to you and how they’ve fascinated, frustrated, and changed you.

Grading Criteria

Students will be evaluated based on their participation in class discussions and the assignments that they submit throughout the semester.

Participation: Students are expected to actively participate in classroom discussions and their grades depend on the level of their participation. Students who demonstrate active participation will actively support, engage, and listen to peers, make comments that advance the conversation, come to class prepared for the discussion, and play an active role in the discussion. Students who demonstrate these characteristics will earn a grade of ‘pass’ in the participation component. Students who do not interact with their peers, who make comments outside of the current discussion or comments that detract from the conversation, who are unprepared for class, and who do not play an interactive role in the discussion will earn a grade of ‘fail’ for the participation component.

Assignments: Assignments will be graded as either pass or fail. Students who complete and submit their assignments by the due date and complete them satisfactorily will earn a grade of ‘pass.’ Satisfactory work is deemed as work that is free from excessive grammatical/usage errors, is properly formatted, and is well written. Students who do not turn in assignments on time and whose work is unsatisfactory will earn a ‘fail.’ Unsatisfactory work is deemed as work that contains a large number of grammatical/usage errors, is not properly formatted, and is poorly written.

Policies

Academic Integrity

The instructor is committed to Geneva College's policy regarding academic integrity, as outlined in its college catalog, and expects all students to adhere to those policies. The instructor will not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance at all discussions is expected. In addition to attendance, the instructor expects students to arrive on time so that our discussions can begin on time. Students should notify the instructor prior to class in the event of an anticipated absence and provide an explanation for any absence within 24 hours of a missed class. Additionally, the instructor expects that students arrive at class prepared to actively engage in class. This means that the student will have completed all

assigned readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss the material covered so that they can engage in the discussion.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that limits your academic performance, you should make an appointment with the instructor to discuss accommodations in light of the requirements of this particular course.

Student Grievances

Any student who is dissatisfied with the grade awarded for a course component or for the course itself should first take their grievance to the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's response, they should take their concern to the program director (Dr. Jeffrey Cole). Only if a student is still not satisfied should he or she contact the academic dean. The decision of the academic dean in such matters is final. At each level, the student should expect to receive an explanation in writing. Such grievances must be initiated within 30 days of receiving the grade and should be documented in writing.