

ITT 3541

GANGSTERS & GODFATHERS: ITALIAN MAFIA MOVIES

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor	Deborah Amberson
Section Number	139D
Meetings	T 7 (1:55-2:45); R 7-8 (1:55-2:45; 3:00-3:50)
Room	AND 013
Office	Dauer 355
Office Hours	T 3:00-3:45; R 11:20-12:40
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COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course will explore Italian cinematic representations of organized crime. Starting with a brief consideration of the history and activities of the Sicilian Cosa Nostra and the Neapolitan Camorra, we will also address the conventions of gangster film and crime film more generally as developed, for the most part, in Hollywood. From here we will move to a sampling of Italian cinema's engagement with organized criminality. Our selected films vary significantly in terms of genre, tone, and directorial style and they span a period of time from the 1960s to the end of the first decade of the 21st century. Issues addressed over the course of the semester include but are not limited to: genre, *omertà*, social order, gender, representations of violence, state collusion, the relationship between fact and fiction, and environmentalism. By the end of the semester, students should expect to have a familiarity with Mafia history and practices, as well as a knowledge of cinematic crime genres, and of Italy's filmic engagement both with its own problem of organized criminality and with a cinematic tradition apparently fascinated with violence. **THIS COURSE WILL BE TAUGHT IN ENGLISH.**

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS: reading materials available on e-learning site

FILMOGRAPHY (in order of year of release)

1. Francesco Rosi, *Salvatore Giuliano* (1962)
2. Damiano Damiani, *Day of the Owl* (1968) (US: *MAFIA*)
3. Wertmuller, *Mimì metallurgico ferito nell'onore* (1972) [*The Seduction of Mimi*]
4. Sergio Leone, *C'era una volta in America* (1984)
5. Roberto Benigni, *Johnny Stecchino* (1991)
6. Ricky Tognazzi, *La scorta* (1993)
7. Michele Placido, *Romanzo Criminale* (2005)
8. Matteo Garrone, *Gomorra* (2008)
9. Paolo Sorrentino, *Il divo* (2008)
10. Marco Amenta, *La siciliana ribelle* (2009) [*The Sicilian Girl*]

All Films are on reserve at Library West for "2 hours/overnight loan"

ATTENDANCE, CLASS PARTICIPATION & HOMEWORK PREPARATION (15%):

ATTENDANCE & MAKEUP POLICY: Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by roll call at the beginning of each class. Students will lose 1% from their final grade for each unexcused absence. Absences will be excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable excuses include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, & the 12-day rule:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class. Except in the case of a certified illness or other UF accepted excuse, there will be no make-up option for missed exams or late assignments. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged

prior to the expected absence. In case of illness, students should contact me on their return to classes. **CLASS PARTICIPATION & HOMEWORK PREPARATION:** the homework assignments involve, for the most part, the viewing of a film and the reading of a relatively short article. You should carry out these tasks in a concentrated manner, taking notes as you watch and read. When you come to class, you should be ready to speak, argue, ask questions, and engage with the opinions of your classmates. To ensure that student preparation is as it should be each Thursday class will begin with basic questions on the films and readings. If you are unable to answer these questions, I will assume that you have not prepared the homework and will dock you 1% of the homework preparation grade. You will lose 1% on each occasion that you prove unable to answer these basic questions.

EXAMS (20%): There will be 2 exams during the semester. These exams will consist of multiple-choice and/or essay questions and are scheduled for September 19 & October 24. Detailed preparation suggestions will be provided closer to the scheduled dates.

SCENE ANALYSIS (20%): You will be expected to write a scene analysis of 2 typed pages in length (double-spaced; 1 inch margins; 12 pt font). This analysis will explore a specific scene in light of the considerations and concepts raised in our reading and discussion. Assigned scenes will be discussed closer to the due date as will the format and content of the assignment. **Scene analysis assignment is due on October 10.**

DISCUSSION: JOHNNY STECCHINO (10%): Our analysis of Benigni's *Johnny Stecchino* will revolve around an extended class discussion of the film, its ideas and strategies. Students will be responsible for the content of this discussion—in effect, you will structure and teach the class. The class will be divided into groups and each group will select a specific aspect of the film and present its findings to the class as a whole. Each group presentation should include visual aids such as power point or similar. It is expected that everyone will participate in this discussion and your grade for this assignment will be based on the level and quality of your participation. Further details will be provided. **Discussion is scheduled for November 2.**

FINAL PRESENTATION (10%): As part of a group of 3-4 students, you will be expected to deliver a presentation of about 15 minutes in length. Together with your group, you will explore the representation of the Mafia in a film not addressed over the course of the semester. This film does not need to be Italian though it must address organized criminality. Your presentation should introduce your classmates to the work and it should also consider the work in light of the films studied over the course of the semester. **The presentations are scheduled for November 30 and December 5.**

FINAL PAPER (25%): You will be expected to write a final paper of approximately 6 pages in length (double-spaced; 1 inch margins; 12 pt font). This paper should reflect your thinking and research on one of the films studied during the semester as they relate to one of the questions raised in our class discussion. For example, you might choose to work on subversion of genre in Sorrentino or gender in Wertmüller. You will also be expected to include in your paper at least one critical source not included in our assigned readings.

Work on the final project will be divided into 3 parts: **1. proposal (Nov. 14, 2%), 2. outline & bibliography (Nov. 21, 3%), 3. paper (emailed by 5pm on Dec. 10, 20%).**

Papers must be submitted by the due date unless you have asked for and received permission to extend the deadline or unless you have a valid excuse. **Papers submitted late with no excuse are penalized.** *Papers will be graded with regard not only to content and organization, but also to presentation, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Your research should be **documented accurately.** Secondary sources, whether textual or internet based, must be acknowledged.*

UNATTRIBUTED USE OF SOURCES WILL EARN YOU AN E FOR THE ENTIRE COURSE.

FINAL GRADE AT A GLANCE:

- ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION & HOMEWORK PREPARATION, 15%
- EXAMS, 20%
- SCENE ANALYSIS, 20%
- DISCUSSION *JOHNNY STECCHINO*, 10%
- FINAL PRESENTATION, 10%
- FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL, 2%
- FINAL PAPER OUTLINE & BIBLIOGRAPHY, 3%
- FINAL PAPER, 20%

Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100-93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-77	76-73	72-70	69-67	63-66	62-60	59-
(4.0)	(3.67)	(3.33)	(3.0)	(2.67)	(2.33)	(2.0)	(1.67)	(1.33)	(1.0)	(0.67)	(0)

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>;
<http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

Academic Honesty: Students are required to be honest in their coursework, may not use notes during quizzes or exams, and must properly cite all sources that they have consulted for their projects. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students, and may result in failure of the assignment and/or the course. For University of Florida's honor code, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) for information about available resources.

Counseling & Mental Health Resources: Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352-392-1575; <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>).

Online Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

COURSE CALENDAR:
ITT 3541 GANGSTERS & GODFATHERS: ITALIAN MAFIA MOVIES
(schedule subject to change over the course of the semester)

READING & VIEWING	Tuesday (7)	Thursday (7-8)
MODULE 1: MAFIA HISTORIES & GENRE		
Reading: (R) "Cosa Nostra: History, Codes, Activities"	8/22 Course Intro.	8/24 MAFIAS
Reading: (T) Camorra: History & Activities	8/29 MAFIAS	8/31 GENRE
Reading: (T) Fordham, "A Study in Ambiguity: <i>Godfather</i> & American Gangster Movie Tradition"	9/5 GENRE	9/7 GENRE
MODULE 2: GENRE & VIOLENCE		
Viewing: (T) Damiani, <i>Day of the Owl</i> ; Reading: Garofalo, " <i>Day of Owl: Western Flirtation</i> ," 252-60	9/12	9/14
Viewing: Leone, <i>C'era una volta in America</i> ; Reading: (R) Martin, <i>Once Upon a Time in America</i> , 9-43	9/19 EXAM 1	9/21
Viewing: Garrone, <i>Gomorra</i> ; Reading: (T) Antonello, "Dispatches from Hell: Garrone's <i>Gomorra</i> ," 377-85	9/26	9/28
MODULE 3: STATE COLLUSION, FACT & FICTION		
Viewing: Rosi, <i>Salvatore Giuliano</i> ; Reading: (T) Wittman, "The Visible, Unexposed," 211-18	10/3	10/5
Viewing: Placido, <i>Romanzo Criminale</i> ; Reading: (T) O'Rawe, "More More Moro"	10/10 SCENE ANALYSIS	10/12
Viewing: Sorrentino, <i>Il Divo</i> ; Reading: (T) Marcus, Antonello, & Marlow-Mann, " <i>Il Divo</i> : a Discussion"	10/17	10/19
MODULE 4: OMERTÀ, HONOR, & GENDER		
Viewing: Wertmuller, <i>Mimi metallurgico</i> ; Reading: (T) Harrison, "Smaller & Larger Families," 261-269	10/24 EXAM 2	10/26
Viewing: (R) <i>Johnny Stecchino</i> ; Optional Reading: (R) Interview w/ Benigni, 127-55	10/31	11/2 BENIGNI DISCUSSION
MODULE 5: ANTI-MAFIA MARTYRS		
Viewing: (R) Tognazzi, <i>La scorta</i> ; Reading: Swennen Ruthenberg, "Sacrifice, Sacrament, & Body," 304-11	11/7	11/9
Viewing: Amenta, <i>Siciliana ribelle</i> ; Reading: (T) "Fighting Mafia w/ Cinema: Interview w/ Amenta"	11/14 PROPOSAL	11/16
NO VIEWING; NO READING	11/21 OUTLINE/ BIBLIO	11/23 <i>Thanksgiving</i>
NO VIEWING; NO READING	11/28 Discussion	11/30 Presentations
NO VIEWING; NO READING	12/5 Presentations	

FINAL PAPER TO BE SENT TO DAMBERS@UFL.EDU BY 5PM DECEMBER 10