

Italian, BA

Italian is the gateway to one of the world's richest cultures. Italy has the most United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) world heritage sites—artistic treasures considered to be of universal value—of any country in the world, due to its history as the birthplace of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance. In addition to an internationally recognized cultural patrimony, the country also has one of the world's largest economies. Italy is a world leader in design, fashion, art restoration, the culinary arts, robotics, shipbuilding, electromechanical machinery, machine tool manufacturing, construction machinery, space engineering, pharmaceuticals, and genetic mapping. Music, cinema, and sports also speak Italian.

Students pursue Italian studies for cultural reasons, for travel and study plans in Italy, and because it enhances their competitiveness in today's marketplace. Because an estimated 950 Italian companies have offices in the U.S., and the U.S. is the third-ranked country of destination for Italian export, many employers are seeking people who speak both Italian and English. A major in Italian opens doors to careers in a variety of fields; see Career Advancement in this section of the catalog.

Languages, Culture, and Creativity

The major in Italian provides many opportunities for growth in the language and for increased cultural fluency through dynamic, in-class learning experiences and extracurricular activities.

Learning Outcomes

Students who graduate with a major in Italian will be able to:

- understand Italian spoken language even when delivered at fast native speed;
- communicate effectively in both oral and written discourse, considering varying registers and cultural contexts;
- read with ease all forms of the Italian written language, including complex texts such as specialized articles and literary works;
- reflect with critical insight on a range of topics in Italian literature, history, and contemporary culture;
- explain the significance of a representative selection of figures, texts, and tendencies in the literature and other forms of cultural production from the Italian-speaking world;
- recognize and reflect in an informed way on cultural differences as well as shared values between Italian culture and their native cultures; and
- develop an intellectual engagement and reflective sensibility that will contribute to their lifelong learning.