

Cultures of the Mediterranean: Music, Arts, & Food in Italy and Greece

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Center for Global Education and Engagement
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Course Description:

This course will examine the intersection of food, music, art/architecture, and culture in modern day Italy and Greece. Through guided readings, lectures, discussions, self-reflections, and international travel with guided tours/lectures, students will appraise and develop their intercultural competency, reflect on being a global citizen, and creatively synthesize their new understanding based on their experiences.

Basic Outline:

1. *Pre-trip reading and prep* (see *Activities* below)
2. *Real-time activities* (participation in seven formal lecture/discussions, maintaining a daily journal)
3. *Post-trip reflections* (see questions below)

Lecture/Discussions:

There will be seven formal lectures and several semi-formal group activities. The lectures will be based on the reading list and that are meant to expand on the scheduled excursion activities:

- Day 1: Communication: Italian Language, Music, and Gesture
- Day 3: Human Trafficking: Awareness and Safe Practices
- Day 5: Intersection of Food and Music
- Day 8: Representation: The Self, Others, and Cosmopolitanism
- Day 10: Music and Identity: Greek Hip Hop
- Day 13: Gender: Tradition and Modernity
- Day 15: Intersecting Cultures: Making Sense of Everything

Expectations:

Student should expect to spend between three and four hours a day in intense learning experiences that will include lectures/discussions and site visits. Travel arrangements permitting, students will also have several “free” hours each day during which they are expected to visit museums, art galleries, archeological sites, churches and other places of historical interest, as well as experience the local culture by, for example, sampling the local cuisine at the restaurant of your choosing for lunch, or attending a local cultural event.

Broad Study Abroad Objectives:

- To provide students with the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of the culture and customs of Italy and Greece, in both the Ancient and modern world.
- To facilitate intellectual development through research and writing.
- To Facilitate personal development (intercultural sensitivity- reduce stereotypes/increase understanding, isolation- feeling more connected to the rest of the world, better understanding of home culture, future career/higher education, better student, independence, confidence, self-knowledge, measure impact on interests/goals, increased interest in other parts of the world)
- Specific Course Objectives
- Students will have an opportunity to better understand Ancient Greece’s role in the development of politics, theater, and architecture.
- Students will have the opportunity to better understand Italy’s role in the development of western civilization and music.
- Students will have an opportunity to better understand modern Italy and Greece and their role in the world today.

Student Responsibilities

1. Complete assigned reading on time, which in this case means before we depart for the trip.
2. Listen attentively to all tour guide’s lectures and to fellow students' comments/questions.
3. Act responsibly while on the trip. This means, among other things:
 - being on time for all transportation,
 - being quiet in hotels,
 - not consuming alcohol to excess (virtually everyone will be old enough to drink alcohol in Europe and I cannot possibly police your behavior in this regard but any sign of excessive drinking on the trip will result in a failing grade for the course so do not cross this line)
 - being respectful to local citizens and merchants with whom we interact.In short, I expect that you will act like adults while on this trip.
4. Complete the final reflection assignment on time.
5. Please be aware that while I fully expect students to have a wonderful time on this trip **it is not spring break** and, as such, this trip is a serious academic experience.

Pre-Trip Prep: Prior to the trip, complete the following activities. You will use your prepared statements, summaries, and questions for group discussions during the trip, so be sure you have access to them, in print or digitally, so you can participate.

Activity #1: Getting to Know You

1. Write a brief introduction of yourself. Include your age, major, interests, and note some of your expectations, assumptions, and fears about this experience and the community you are visiting.
2. Brainstorm a list of words that come to mind when you think of Italy and Greece. Be free and creative --don't censor yourself. The idea is to have a basis of what you were thinking before your experience of another's culture. You will later use this to help you explain the complexity of your experience to friends and family whose understanding of this culture is likely limited.
3. Read Iyer's article, *Why We Travel* and McIntosh's article on privilege. Choose a passage or sentence, from each article, that particularly resonates with you—do you agree or disagree with what the Iyer is saying? Why? How do you think any aspect of these articles apply to your experience?

Activity #2: Being a Global Citizen

1. Summarize Appiah's perspective on globalization. Appiah suggests that it's possible to balance universal global ethics with people's freedom to make choices. Where would you draw the line in what we should tolerate as a global community? Why?
2. What does it mean, to you, to be a global citizen? How would a global citizen behave? Describe their actions both daily and over a lifetime. Some areas to explore: career, environment, consumerism, activism, morality, travel, dialogue, education. Are people in Italy and Greece global citizens – why or why not? Are you a global citizen – why or why not? What would make you a better global citizen? Cite the readings as appropriate.

Activity#3: Food for Thought

1. Read the Fabbri and the Fox articles and summarize their articles. What is their thesis statement, how do they support it, and what is their conclusion? Prepare the following for group discussion:
 - What do you *notice*? Prepare 2 statements about each article that piqued your interest in some way.
 - What do you *wonder*? Prepare 3 questions that you're left with after reading these articles.
2. Do your own research into the traditional food of Italy and Greece (be sure to cite your sources). Prepare the following for group discussion:
 - What do you *notice*? Prepare 2 statements about traditional food from these countries, about something that interests you.
 - What do you *wonder*? Prepare 3 questions that you have about their food, food processing, preparation, consumption, and/or waste.

Activity #4: Representing the Other, Understanding Yourself

1. Read the three short articles by David Byrne, Horace Miner, and Kwame Anthony Appiah.
 - Summarize each author's thesis statement, supporting material and concluding thoughts.
 - Connect the dots between these authors. How are their ideas related to each other's?

Activity #5: Music and Identity

1. Read Dawe's article, *Between East and West* and listen to examples of Italian and Greek hip hop. Prepare the following for group discussion:
 - What do you *notice*? Prepare 2 statements about Dawe's article, and the songs you listened to, that piqued your interest in some way.
 - What do you *wonder*? Prepare 3 questions that you're left with after reading Dawe's article and listening to the music.

Activity #6: Gender in the Mediterranean

1. Read Holst-Warhaft's article on Rebetika. Summarize her thesis and how it is supported. Be sure to listen to examples of Rebetika music.
2. Research gender in Italy and Greece and prepare 5-7 questions about gender in the Mediterranean for group discussion

Real-Time Activities: These are outlined for you in the itinerary and in the Lecture/Discussions schedule, above. Be sure to have ready access to your Pre-Trip Activity statements, summaries, and questions, as you will use them for discussions. Additionally, you're to keep a **daily journal** in which you include your activities and a detail or two (or more) about an experience you had and/or lesson you learned.

Post-Trip Reflection: Translating your experience. *Complete 2 of the following 5 assignments:*

1. Revisit your stereotype list in the **Pre-Trip Activity, Activity #1** and write down what you have learned that challenges or deepens your understanding of this culture and community. How will you explain what you've learned to people whose knowledge about Italy and/or Greece may be limited.
2. Write a letter to family/friends or to your future self describing how this experience impacted you. What do you resolve to do with what you learned here?
3. Take one photo from your collection and describe how it captures some aspect of your experience in this country.
4. Write a 5-10 minute speech and a 30 second to 1-minute "elevator speech" that describes this experience beyond the standard "It was great/awesome/horrible." Put words to the biggest lesson you learned here (about yourself and/or the culture). Share this speech with a friend or family member and reflect on their reaction.
5. Develop and submit a reflective writing about your values to "This I Believe", a program on NPR. Have they changed since the beginning of this course? Why or why not?

References:

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- Fox, Robin. *Food and Eating: An Anthropological Perspective*. SIRC: Social Issues Research Centre, 2014, http://www.sirc.org/publik/food_and_eating_0.html.
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- McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." *Peace and Freedom*, Aug. 1989.
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Recommendations:

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- Woodhouse, C. M. *Modern Greece: A Short History*. Faber & Faber, 1991, <https://books.google.com/books?id=oF6dQgAACAAJ>.