



**COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: WL 325 - Medieval Italian Literature I - DANTE**  
**(45 contact hours, 3 credits)**

This syllabus is informational in nature and is not an express or implied contract. It is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, as a result of any circumstance outside the University's control, or as other needs arise. If, in the University's sole discretion, public health conditions or any other matter affecting the health, safety, upkeep, or well-being of our campus community or operations requires the University to move to remote teaching, alternative assignments may be provided so that the learning objectives for the course, as determined by the faculty and the University, can still be met. The University does not guarantee specific in-person, on-campus classes, activities, opportunities, or services or any other particular format, timing, or location of education, classes, activities, or services.

**Mask Policy**

Please be advised that the mask policy in this class will follow Sant'Anna Institute requirements. When/if the University enacts a mask policy, all students are expected to adhere to the policy.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Dante Alighieri is the most important Italian poet, the father of Italian language and the principle figure of Medieval Literature in Europe. This course will examine Dante's Divine Comedy. The course includes classroom reading of the most significant pages: the explanation of the text is followed by the peer comparison; the focus is to understand how much the contents of the Divine Comedy produce different interpretations, how much they recall the works of other authors, as they are able to communicate today.

Students will read excerpts from these works and engage in a historical, literary and rhetorical analysis of texts while determining techniques of poetic composition. Students are expected to actively participate and contribute to class discussion.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES / LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- Develop a solid understanding of the Italian literary canon, including key authors, works, and movements.
- Explore and apply concepts and theories related to Italian Literary Studies to deepen their comprehension of texts and contexts.
- Enhance skills in interpretation and textual analysis, focusing on Italian literature across genres, periods, and styles.
- Strengthen critical-thinking abilities, fostering the capacity for creative and informed interpretations of literary texts.
- Improve proficiency in reading and writing in Italian, with attention to vocabulary, syntax, and stylistic nuances.
- Acquire and refine bibliographical research skills, including the use of digital and traditional resources to support literary studies.
- Engage with the cultural and historical contexts of Italian literature to understand its role in shaping and reflecting society.
- Cultivate comparative and interdisciplinary approaches, connecting Italian literature to broader cultural, artistic, and philosophical movements.

- Develop collaborative skills, participating in discussions, presentations, and group projects that require teamwork and intellectual exchange.

## FORMAT

- The course will include lectures, student-led discussions and presentations.

Lessons will be based on class interaction, reflection on texts, and oral presentations done by students to facilitate the analysis of literary works. Various textual typologies will be taken into account, including poetry, short stories, and novels, as well as documentaries and films produced by the authors studied or in cooperation with them.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS:

- Textbook necessary for this course is: M. Marino, D. Palumbo, *La Divina Commedia per stranieri*, Edilingua, 2020 <https://shop.blinklearning.com/es/planescolar21-13564/38369-LaDivinaCommediaperstranieri-Inferno.html>
- Other materials will be provided by the faculty (pdf files)

In this course, students will have access to a wide range of educational materials curated by the instructor to enhance their learning experience. Among these resources, special attention will be given to scientific articles that delve into the latest research and advancements in the field. The instructor will guide students through the analysis of these articles.

## EXAMS and ASSIGNMENTS

The assessment for this course is designed to evaluate students' understanding and application of the principles of literature analysis through a variety of methods. The Assessment components include: **Weekly Assessment Questions**, **Midterm Exam** and **Final Exam**.

### 1. **Weekly Assessment Questions:**

- \* To do well on the multiple choice/multiple answer questions, you will need to read the text assigned for the course carefully and deeply, but you will not be expected to know details outside the bounds of the text;
- \* To do well on the open-ended students should respond to the detailed prompt that will indicate the length of the expected response and key points to address;

2. **Mid-term exam:** The mid-term exam will be a PPT presentation covering all material presented in the first half of the course. The student will independently choose a Canto from those studied during the first part of the semester and prepare a presentation of at least 10 minutes. Their presentation must highlight the following: the context, the analysis of the Canto and the literary innovations introduced by Dante. Additionally, the student will need to answer three questions posed in class by their peers.

3. **Final exam:** The final exam will be written and will encompass the entire course content.

- in class: written exam (12 questions: 6 multiple choice+ 5 open-ended + 1 analysis).

\* The analysis question (= a short paper) is tailored to each student. Each student can freely choose one of the suggested topics:

- L'amore in Inferno, Purgatorio e Paradiso
- Il potere in Inferno, Purgatorio e Paradiso
- Il viaggio in Inferno, Purgatorio e Paradiso
- Gates, Borders, Thresholds.
- Journey to Freedom. Gli insegnamenti della Divina Commedia.
- Costruisci la mappa del viaggio dell'Oltretomba dantesco scegliendo 9 punti sulla mappa di Sorrento: usa Google Map!

In the final test they will analyze a passage studied in class that relates to their chosen topic. To do well the analysis, students should demonstrate the ability to analyze a work (literary text/poem), contextualize it, and relate it to the broader Italian literary canon.

### **These standards use as criteria the Elements of Academic Writing.**

A paper in the **A-range** (A or A-) demonstrates a mastery of the Elements of Academic Writing. It advances an interesting, arguable thesis; establishes a compelling motive to suggest why the thesis is original or worthwhile; analyzes evidence insightfully and in depth; draws from well-chosen sources, deploying them in a variety of ways; employs a logical and progressive structure; and is written in a graceful and sophisticated style.

A paper in the **B-range** (B+, B, B-) Essays are strong and succeed in many ways but present a few key "Elements" that need significant work. While these essays offer an engaging and intelligent discussion, certain aspects don't yet live up to their full potential. "B+" essays might, for instance, offer a partial thesis and some good work with evidence but need substantial development in both areas and/or present shortcomings in others.

A paper in the **C-range** (C+, C, C-) Essays possess potential but are flawed in their current form, with several areas that require substantial improvement. These essays require significant, further revision in all or most pertinent "Elements."

A paper in the **D-range** provides little evidence and analysis; draw on sources insufficiently; or display an incoherent or rambling structure. It does, however, show signs of attempting to engage with the sources and skills expected in the assignment, and it is at least half the assigned length.

A paper earning a grade of **E** does not fulfill the basic expectations of the assignment. It may be less than half the assigned length or fail to engage with the sources and skills expected in the assignment. For example, in a research paper, the essay may show no signs of research.

1. **Class participation:** Beyond the written exams, students' participation in class is crucial for the whole learning experience. Participation includes contributions to class discussions, workshops and conferences, and sincere efforts on exercises, response papers, and drafts. Participation will be evaluated based on engagement in experiential activities conducted during the course. These activities are designed to encourage active learning and facilitate the application of theoretical knowledge. Active and meaningful participation in these activities will contribute positively to the final grade.

### **GRADE BREAKDOWN:**

**Midterm grade** are determined according to the following breakdown:

- Participation in class: 30%
- Oral presentation: 40%
- 4 Weekly Writing Assignments: 30%

**Final grades** are determined according to the following breakdown:

- Participation in class: 25%
- Midterm exam (oral presentation): 25%
- Overall Weekly Writing Assignments (4+4): 20%
- Final Exam: 30%

These examination modes generate a score that is expressed in percentage values and with which a grade is associated as a letter grade. Specifically, students who earn a final score as follows.

## GRADING SCALE

A	95%-100%	C	73%-76%
A-	90%-94%	C-	70%-72%
B+	87%-89%	D+	67%-69%
B	83%-86%	D	63%-66%
B-	80%-82%	D-	60%-62%
C+	77%-79%	F	< 60

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

The course is divided into thematic units designed to comprehensively cover the key aspects of the *Divina Commedia*.

	Topic
- Unit 1	<b>Objectives:</b> Vivere nel Medioevo. Idee, parole, visioni. <b>Main topics:</b> Gli Stilnovisti: Guinizzelli e Cavalcanti.
- Unit 2	<b>Objectives:</b> L'uomo, il poeta, l'esule. <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Vita Nova</i> : brani scelti. (Chapters 1-19) La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 1. The Dark Wood
- Unit 3	<b>Objectives:</b> Il viaggio. The Journey. <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 2
- Unit 4	<b>Objectives:</b> L'Inferno. The Hell Gate and the Neutrals <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canti 3-4
- Unit 5	<b>Objectives:</b> L'amore. <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 5
- Unit 6	<b>Objectives:</b> Firenze, la peccatrice. <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 6
- Unit 7	<b>Objectives:</b> La città infernale. <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 9
- Unit 8	<b>Objectives:</b> Leggere il futuro <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 10
- Unit 9	<b>Objectives:</b> Vendersi <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 19
- Unit 10	<b>Objectives:</b> Ulisse e l'arte dell'inganno. <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 26
- Unit 11	<b>Objectives:</b> Lucifero and the turning point. <b>Main topics:</b> La <i>Divina Commedia</i> . Inferno, Canto 34

- Unit 12	<b>Objectives:</b> Il cielo azzurro <b>Main topics:</b> La Divina Commedia. Purgatorio, Canti 1-2-6-7
- Unit 13	<b>Objectives:</b> Beatrice <b>Main topics:</b> La Divina Commedia. Purgatorio, Canti 30-33
- Unit 14	<b>Objectives:</b> La luce divina <b>Main topics:</b> La Divina Commedia. Paradiso, Canti 1-6-17
- Unit 15	<b>Objectives:</b> Maria, madre. <b>Main topics:</b> La Divina Commedia. Paradiso, Canti 23-30-33
- Unit 16	<b>Objectives:</b> Maria, madre. <b>Main topics:</b> La Divina Commedia. Paradiso, Canti 23-30-33 <i>Re-reading</i> Inferno, Canto 1.

## CLASS POLICY

### Attendance

You are allowed **ONE** unexcused absence. Documentation for any other absence **MUST** be produced and **APPROVED** by your faculty. For absences due to illness, please provide the faculty with a doctor's note upon returning to class as well as inform them and/or the Office the first day of illness.

Participation grants the student one point for each lesson they attend. Unjustified absences result in 0 points. Participation in **field-trips**, if any, awards 2 points, while non-participation results in a loss of 2 points.

### Late submissions:

Assignments not submitted by the due date will receive a penalty of 10% for the first 24 hours, 20% for a 48-hour delay. No submissions will be accepted more than 3 days after the deadline, unless arrangements have been made with the instructor (for extensions under exceptional circumstances, apply to the course instructor).

### Personal Technology:

Please turn cell phones off during class. You can use laptops to take notes, however social networking, e-mailing, surfing the Internet, playing games, etc. are forbidden during class. Any student caught using their laptop/cell phones inappropriately during class will be asked to turn them off. Repeated violations of this rule after the first warning will result in the student being marked absent for the day and permanently losing their laptop privileges. Please be respectful and limit your use of personal electronic devices during class to academic purposes.

### Contesting a grade:

If students wish to contest a grade, they must make an appointment to do so in person. The student should contact the instructor with any concerns within **ONE** week of receiving the grade. The student must also demonstrate that they have read the comments accompanying the grade by presenting a brief written statement specifying why the grade does not reflect the quality of the work. It is at the discretion of the instructor to decide whether the work and the student's request warrant any increase or decrease in the grade. Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments and feedback (in case of loss) and should also retain all of their marked assignments.

### Recommended behavior:

- Class begins promptly at the beginning of the class period. It is advisable that you be in your seat and ready to start participating in class at that time.

- Always bring the required supplies and be ready to be actively engaged in the learning process. This communicates preparedness and interest.
- Turn your cell phone off or to vibrate mode before the start of class;
- It is fine to bring a drink or a snack to class, as long as it is not distracting. In conjunction with this, please pick up your trash when you leave the room.
- Your professor expects your full attention for the entire class period. If you know that you'll need to leave before the class is over, try to sit as close to the door as possible so as not to disrupt others. Similarly, if you arrive in class late, just slip in as quietly as possible and take the first available seat you come to.
- Do not sleep in class! Laying your head on the desk or sleeping in class is rude, and it is distracting to others. Turn in assignments on time.
- When you have a question or comment, please raise your hand first as a courtesy to your classmates and the professor. Remember, your questions are NOT an imposition – they are welcome. So, ask questions! You'll learn more, it makes the class more interesting, and you are helping others learn as well.
- If an emergency arises that requires an absence from a session, it is your responsibility to get the notes and all other information that was covered in class from a colleague you trust.

### **Secular and religious holidays:**

Sant'Anna Institute recognizes that there are several secular and religious holidays - not included in the Italian calendar - that affect large numbers of its community members. In consideration of their significance for many students, no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days. Students who observe these holidays will be given an opportunity to make up missed work in both laboratories and lecture courses. If an examination is given on the first class day after one of these holidays, it must not cover material introduced in class on that holiday. Students who wish to observe such holidays must inform their instructors within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe the holiday even when the exact date of the holiday will not be known until later so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity.

Students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. For this reason it is desirable that faculty inform students of all examination dates at the start of each semester.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

“Members of the Jacksonville University community are expected to foster and uphold the highest standards of honesty and integrity, which are foundations for the intellectual endeavors we engage in.

To underscore the importance of truth, honesty, and accountability, students and instructors should adhere to the following standard:

“On my honor as a student of Jacksonville University, I promise to uphold the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all my dealings with faculty, staff, and students.”

Academic misconduct occurs when a student engages in an action that is deceitful, fraudulent, or dishonest regarding any type of academic assignment that is intended to or results in an unfair academic advantage. In this context, the term “assignment” refers to any type of graded or ungraded work that is submitted for evaluation for any course. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, collusion, falsification, misrepresentation, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, copying another student’s work, using or providing unauthorized notes or materials, turning in work not produced by the individual, attempting to get credit for a single instance of work submitted for more than one course, and plagiarism. Furthermore, providing deceitful, fraudulent, or dishonest information during discussions of an academic matter with faculty are also examples of academic misconduct.” (Jacksonville University Academic Integrity [Policy](#)).

Throughout this course we will be reading and reporting about the work of others. All information that is not original to the student must be appropriately attributed in both presentations and written work. All students are expected to do their own work and give appropriate credit for all sources used in the process of preparing papers, presentations, and homework assignments. Group assignments will be graded based on the product of the work, although some adjustment

may be made for participation. [If you have a question about whether or not collaboration is allowed, or how to cite a reference, please ask. It is always better to check than to be accused of an unintended violation of the academic honesty policy]. Violations of the academic honesty policy will be dealt with in accordance to university policies [Refer to current Academic Catalog "Academic Integrity and Misconduct"].

Course Level Penalties: A first offense may result in a failing grade for the assignment. Second offenses may result in failure in the course. Significantly egregious violations may result in expulsion from the university. When in doubt give credit for all information that did not come directly out of your head!

#### **DISABILITY STATEMENT**

Students with a documented disability requesting classroom accommodations or modifications, either permanent or temporary, resulting from the disability are encouraged to inform the faculty in the first week of the program.

## EXTENDED SYLLABUS FOR HONORS STUDENTS:

- *La Politica:*

Inferno, Canto 6 + Purgatorio, Canto 6 + Paradiso, Canto 6

### Research Topic

- L'Inferno nel testo 'La visione di Alberigo'
- Le visioni del Purgatorio: Canto 30-33: Analyzing the possible symbols of Apocalyptic Vision
- Gli esami di Fede: Paradiso, Canto 24-25-26

Students who major in Italian Studies are required to submit a final 5000 word-dissertation in Italian language. Students from different Majors are allowed to submit the final dissertation in English language.

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- Midterm exam (oral presentation): 25%
- Overall Weekly Writing Assignments (4+4): 20%
- Research Paper: minimum 8-page paper: 30% (Times New Roman 12, double spaced) + bibliography.