

## ITC 349 Italian television advertising: Fashion, food, cars

Unique # 36345

Spring 2016

T & TH 11:00–12:30 MEZ 1.118

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Italy is a country associated with “style”—life style (*il dolce far niente*), fashion style (Valentino, Prada, Gucci, etc.), film style (Fellini and the like), and, for better or for worse, a certain sort of rather effusive political style (Mussolini, Berlusconi, and their ilk, among others). The specific objective of this course is to categorize and analyze the major changes that have taken place in the peculiarly Italian style of television advertising during the past fifty years.

After a general introduction to the language of television advertising, students will compare chronologically ordered versions of Italian TV commercials for a variety of high-use products (for instance, food, house-cleaning products, personal care items, cars) in order to identify changes that have taken place at the level of vocabulary, grammar, and language register as a result of new socio-cultural dynamics that have come to characterize present-day Italy. The Italian commercials will then be compared to/contrasted with equivalent ads broadcasted in US to uncover similarities and differences.

Although the course will focus on language change, it will also draw attention to socio-cultural changes that have taken place in the Italian society since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly with respect to the role and figure of women (and how they are portrayed in TV commercials vis-à-vis to men), and the structure, life style and values of the ‘typical’ (or ‘stereotypical’) Italian family.

### COURSE MATERIAL

Selected chapters/sections from the texts listed below. All the reading material will be available on Canvas.

### ATTENDANCE & CLASS PARTICIPATION

Regular attendance and **active** participation in class discussion are required. More than **three** will lower the final grade; for the fourth absence, three points will be deducted from the final grade; four points will be deducted for the fifth absence, and so forth, up to a maximum of **ten** points. This policy will be strictly enforced.

## ASSIGNMENTS

- **Journal:** Weekly entries summarizing and commenting on reading assignments and class lectures, to be submitted for grading as indicated in the syllabus. The amount of pages for each entry will change during the semester and will be assigned in class prior to each deadline.
- **Five thought pieces** (500–750 words) in which students comment on the different versions of a commercial.
- **Eight in-class unannounced quizzes.**
- **One mid-term exam:** Short-answer questions on assigned readings and commercials.
- **Research project:** In groups of three/four, students will:
  - a. Write a short paper on the ‘history’ of a commercial of their choice;
  - b. Create an original commercial for the product selected which will be presented in class.

## GRADING:

- **Participation**                      **15%**
- **Thought pieces**                      **20%**
- **Quizzes**                              **15%**
- **Mid-term exam**                      **25%**
- **Research project**                      **15%**
- **Oral presentation**                      **10%**

## USE OF CANVAS

In this class, I use Canvas, a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>, to distribute some course materials. You can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.

**TUTORS** *Please refer to the French and Italian Department’s web page or visit the French and Italian Department’s Undergraduate Office in HRH*

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/frenchitalian/student-resources/Tutors--Translators.php>

Be aware that tutors ARE NOT ALLOWED to do homework for you rather give you individual attention in mastering complex grammatical structures and oral skills. Moreover, if the professor deems – due to a discrepancy with your oral and written performance in class – that your homework has been done with the help of a computer-translation-program or a tutor, you will receive a ‘no-grade’ for that paper; the ‘no-grade’ will neither lower nor raise your overall grade average. Please read carefully the policy on Scholastic Dishonesty.

## REQUIRED UT UNIVERSITY NOTICES AND POLICIES

### ***University of Texas Honor Code***

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

### ***Documented Disability Statement***

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

### ***Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)***

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD).

Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

### ***Q drop Policy***

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”

### ***Emergency Evacuation Policy***

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

### **LIST OF READINGS (TENTATIVE)**

- Danesi, Marcel. 2008. *Popular culture: introductory perspectives*. Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield. Chapter 8, Advertising, branding and fads.
- Borrelli, Nicola. 2010. *Advertising across Cultures: A Linguistic-semiotic Analysis of British and Italian TV Commercials*. Roma: Aracne.
- Annunziato, Sarah and Francesco Fiumara. 2015. Targeting the parents through the children in the golden age of Italian television advertising: The case of *Carosello*. *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies* 3(1-2). 11-26.
- Bacchilega, Christina and John Rieder. 2014. The fairy tale and the commercial in *Carosello* and *Fractured Fairy Tales* (pp. 336-349, 358-359). In Pauline Greenhill and Jill Terry Rudy (eds.), *Channeling wonder. Fairy tales on television*, 336-359. Detroit: Wayne State University press.

- Crompton, P. M. and R. McAlea. 2000. Rhetorical devices in television advertising. In Jackie Cannon et al. (eds.), *Advertising and identity in Europe: The I of the beholder*, 32–41. Bristol, UK/Portland, OG: intellect.
- Marshall, Jill and Angela Werndly. 2002. *The language of television*. London/New York: Routledge. Unit 2: Signs and signification.
- Geis, Michael L. 1982. *The Language of Television Advertising*. New York: Academic Press. Chapters 1: Introduction; Chapter 2: Saying things indirectly; Chapter 5: Some words and phrases on advertising English.