

Disclaimer: This is an indicative syllabus only and may be subject to changes. The final and official syllabus will be distributed by the instructor during the first day of class.

The American University of Rome
English Writing, Literature, and Publishing Program

Department or degree program mission statement, student learning objectives, as appropriate

Course Title:	Writing Rome
Course Number:	ENG 203
Credits & hours:	3 credits – 3 hours
Pre/Co-Requisites:	ENG 102

Required Textbook (*subject to change*)

- Cahill, Susan (Ed.). *The Smiles of Rome, A Literary Companion for Readers and Travelers*. New York: Ballantine Books, an imprint of The Random House Publishing Group, 2005. (Available in Kindle edition from amazon.com)
ISBN: tba
- Shankland, Hugh (translator) and Constantine, Helen (Ed.). *Rome Tales*. Oxford University Press, 2011. (Available in Kindle edition from amazon.com)
ISBN: tba

There will also be a course reader and handouts in class.

Only selected chapters must be read, according to weekly schedule.

Entry Fees

Students must pay their own entrance fees when required.

Course description

This course explores the city of Rome through writing. On-site classes provide an interdisciplinary, studio-art approach to the generation of written work. Through the studied practice of descriptive writing and the examination of setting as a vital literary component, students will create their own textual map of the Eternal City.

Course Learning Objectives

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

1. write descriptive prose in response to sites encountered in Rome utilizing setting as a pivotal literary component.
2. apply their writing skills to several literary disciplines including the personal essay and travel writing, short fiction, and poetry.
3. comment on a wide variety of contemporary writers and writing styles and gain a foundation for the continued study of contemporary English and Italian Literature.
4. demonstrate the ability to think and write critically about literature. Students will have mastered techniques to offer criticism of works read in class, the work of fellow students, as well as their own work on an ongoing basis.
5. demonstrate the ability to present their work both orally in-class to peers and textually through written assignments.

6. write more confidently and be able to utilize the skills developed during the course in other fields of study.
7. consider Rome a more intimate part of their own intellectual and aesthetic development.

Course Learning Activities

- In class discussions: Each week students will read scheduled texts in preparation for class discussion. Using traditional writer workshop techniques and terms, which will be introduced in class, students will be asked to participate in class discussions, responding to and addressing literary issues stemming from the assigned readings.
- Peer group workshop: A portion of the class will be devoted to peer reviews of class creative work in development. Using the workshop model, students are expected to read and respond to each other's written assignments orally and textually.
- The Rome Journal: Each student will maintain a "Rome Journal" in which he/she will write in and out of class and use as the original drafts toward their assignments.
- Written assignments: Students are expected to do a variety of writing assignments during the semester. Writing assignments will include creative nonfiction such as diary, memoir, personal essay, and or travel writing, short fiction, and poetry.
- Rome Portfolio: At the conclusion of the course, students will assemble draft and final versions of all written assignments into a portfolio that will include creative nonfiction, fiction, and poetry. Final versions may be revised to incorporate or respond to in-class and instructor critiques.

Assessment tools

Participation in class discussions and workshop critiques	10%
Creative nonfiction essay (first draft and final revision)	20%
Short fiction (first draft and final revision)	20%
Roman poem (first draft and final revision)	20%
Final Writing Rome Portfolio	15%
Other written assignments including Roman Journal, short critical responses to nonfiction, fiction, and poetry, and in-class assignments	15%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction into the course and presentation of the course materials. Introduction to key terms, the Rome Journal and Portfolio, and the workshop critique methodology	Buy books and a notebook, which will be your Roman Journal We will read Joan Didion's "On Keeping a Notebook" in class
Week 2	The Personal Essay and POV Phillip Lopate "On The Necessity of Turning Oneself into a Character" (Reader) Andre' Aciman, "Roman Hours" (Smiles of Rome) Alice Steinbach, from "Without Reservation" (Smiles of Rome) Natalia Gizburg, "Such is Rome" (Smiles of Rome)	Assignment 1: Begin your Roman Journal—list at least 8 nonfiction topics in the style of travel, memoir, and or personal essay that you could write about. Rome should feature We will read Andre' Aciman's "Memoirists and Truth" in class and then we will take a short excursion to a nearby site. Bring your Rome Journal Read essays. Be prepared to discuss each in regards to POV, theme, structure, and other aspects of literary analysis
Week 3	Travel and Description William Zinsser "Writing about Places; The Travel Article" (Reader) Adam Hochschild "Travel Writing: Inner & Outer Journey" (Reader) Muriel Spark "My Rome" (Smiles of Rome) Elizabeth Bowen "A Time in Rome" (Smiles of Rome)	Assignment 2: Write a 1-2 page response to one of the essays assigned so far. You should analyze one or two aspects of it from the perspective of a writer. See the handout, "How to Critique an Essay" for ideas on what to discuss.
Week 4	Writing about Art and Architecture Phillip Lopate, "Research and Personal Writing" (from To Show and To Tell, Reader) Sigmund Freud, "The Moses of Michelangelo" (from The Smiles of Rome) Simon Schama, from "Bernini and the Four Rivers" (from The Smiles of Rome)	Assignment 3: 2-3 page Essay or Memoir CNF pieces due. Bring copies to class for workshop.
Week 5	Anne Hull, "Revising Over and Over Again" (from Telling True Stories, Reader) Read the CNF of your classmates distributed in prior class period.	Be prepared to offer oral and written critique of your classmates' CNF work (see guidelines for criticism)
Week 6	Setting, POV, Plot, Theme Alberto Moravia, "Romulus and Remus" (from Rome Tales) Tobias Wolff, "The Benefit of the Doubt" (from Reader)	Assignment 3b: Final Draft of CNF Essay or Memoir due. Assignment 4: Write a 1-2 page critical response to one of the two pieces of fiction. Analyze either setting, character, or plot. See "How to Critique Fiction" for guidelines.
Week 7	Dialog and Character Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Release" (from Rome Tales) Bernard Malamud, "Behold the Key" (from Reader)	Assignment 5: Ride a Bus or Tram in Rome. Create a short scene (1-2 pages) between two characters. Focus on character and use dialog if possible. Bring copies of your short sketch to class. Brainstorm at least 5 ideas for your Short Fiction and bring to class.
Week 8	Historical Fiction and Research Jane Alison, from "The Love Artist" (from The Smiles of Rome) Giorgio Vigolo, "The Beautiful Hand" (from Rome Tales)	Assignment 6: 3-4 page draft of Short Fiction due. Bring copies for everyone in class.

Week 9	Read the short fiction of your classmates distributed in prior class period.	Be prepared to offer oral and written critique of your classmates' fictional work (see guidelines for criticism)
Week 10	Handout: Poetry, Terms and Definitions Edith Wharton, "Villa d'Este" (from Smiles of Rome); Anthony Hecht, "The Gardens of the Villa d'Este" (from Reader) Christopher Bakken, "Stake;" John Ciardi, "An Apartment with a View;" Jack Gilbert, "The Spirit and the Soul;" Miroslav Holub, "Creative Writing;" Oskar Pastior, "An Interview;" Delmore Schwartz, "Narcissus;" David St. John, "Lucifer in Starlight;" Gerald Stern, "Another Insane Devotion;" Jesper Svenpro, "The Starlings;" Richard Wilbur, "Baroque Wall Fountain in the Villa Sciarra Garden"	Assignment 6b: Final Draft of Fiction Short Story Sketch due. We will read Wharton and Hecht in class. What differentiates a poem from prose? Read assigned poems and begin thinking about the use of form, metaphor, image, language, juxtaposition, tone. Assignment 7: We will use a written 'recipe' to develop and write our own poems in class.
Week 11	Time and Memory Anthony Hecht, "A Hill" Czeslaw Milosz, "Campo dei Fiori"	We will read Hecht and Milosz in class. How does time and memory function in these works? See the handout "How to Critique Poetry" for guidelines. Roman Journal: Walk to a area or place in Rome where you've never been (e.g, a neighbourhood, a church, a cemetery,...). Brainstorm at least 8 ideas for writing your own poem.
Week 12	Writing about and critiquing poetry Re-read all poems assigned for class.	Assignment 8: Each student will have been assigned one poem (from those already listed). Write a 1-2 page critical analysis of the poem highlighting the use of form, description, metaphor, image, language (rhyme, assonance, repetition), or tone. How does place (i.e., Rome) function in this poem. Be prepared to present and take questions about your analysis in class. Assignment 9: Draft Roman Poem due. Bring copies to distribute in class.
Week 13	Read classmate Roman Poems distributed in prior class period. Be prepared to offer oral and written critique of your classmates' poems (see guidelines for criticism) Prepare to discuss preparation of Rome Portfolio.	Be prepared to offer oral and written critique of your classmates' poems (see guidelines for criticism) Prepare to discuss preparation of Rome Portfolio. Assignment 9b: Final Roman Poem due. Assignment 10: Re-read one of the assigned texts (CNF, fiction, or poetry) and write a one-half to one-page analysis of how one traditional aspect of ANOTHER genre functions in the work. Assignment 11: Hand in a copy of your Rome Portfolio.
Week 14	FINAL EXAM	

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In keeping with AUR's mission to prepare students to live and work across cultures, the University places a high value on classroom experience. As a result attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained. The University's attendance policy is as follows:

1.0. Minimum Attendance Requirement: Students must attend a minimum of 70% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

1.1. Automatically Accepted Absences

Students will not be penalized for one absence from classes meeting once a week;
Students will not be penalized for three absences from classes meeting twice a week;
Students will not be penalized for four absences from classes meeting more than twice a week, as in the case of some intensive courses.

1.2. If further absences are recorded, grade penalties will be applied according to the Instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus, and following the institutional parameters given in the Note* below.

1.2.1. If the Instructor does not specify an attendance policy, there will be no grade penalty other than that attached to the minimum attendance requirement, and any penalized absences recorded above the basic 70% attendance requirement for the course will be invalidated.

1.3. During Summer sessions where courses are taught more intensively over a shorter period the following applies:

- Students will not be penalized for two absences from class.

2.0. Tolerated Absences

Certain categories of absence will not be penalized but they will be counted as an absence (for a 3-credit course meeting twice a week). These absences are:

- The Model United Nations (MUN);
- Permit to Stay,
- SG's "Ambassador Program" (Student Government initiative)
- Religious Holidays

The American University of Rome makes all reasonable efforts to accommodate students who must be absent from classes to observe religious holidays. (Please refer to the Provost's Office list of accepted absences for religious holidays)

Not attending a class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally not be counted as an absence.

Students who will need to miss class in order to observe religious holidays must notify their Instructors by the end of the Add/Drop period (first week of classes), and must make prior arrangements with their Instructors to make up any work missed.

2.1. The list does NOT include academic field trips because these (including arrangements for travel) must not overlap with other classes.

3.0. Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances students should first consult their academic advisors.

*Note: No Instructor may penalize a student more than half a letter grade for each absence beyond the tolerated limit (e.g. from A- to B+).

Grade Point Average

A student's grade point average (GPA) is computed by multiplying the quality points achieved by the number of credits for each course. The result is then divided by the total number of credit hours taken. The Cumulative or Career Total Grade Point Average (CGPA) is the grade point average for all credit hours taken at the University and at approved study abroad programs. The GPA and CGPA are calculated by truncating after the second digit after the decimal point. Transfer credits have no effect on the CGPA at The American University of Rome.

Grades

Grades are posted on a secure area of the University's official website and are mailed to AUR degree students only upon written request. Grades are mailed to the various study abroad programs. Grades computed in the (GPA) reflect the following grade equivalents:

GRADE		GPA	
A	Excellent	4.00	94 – 100 points
A-		3.70	90 – 93.99 pts
B+	Very Good	3.30	87 – 89.99
B	Good	3.00	83 – 86.99
B-		2.70	80 – 82.99
C+		2.30	77 – 79.99
C	Satisfactory	2.00	73 – 76.99
C-	Less than Satisfactory	1.70	70 – 72.99
D	Poor	1.00	60 – 69.99
F	Failing	0.00	59.99 – 0
WU	Unofficial withdrawal counts as an F	0.00	
P	Applicable to development courses	0.00	
<i>Grades not computed into the grade point average are:</i>			
W	Withdrawal		
AUDIT (AU)	Only possible when the student registers for a course at the beginning of the semester as an audit student		
I	Incomplete work must be completed within the ensuing semester. Failure to do so results in automatically converting the I grade to the default grade, which is then computed into the grade point average		
P	Pass grade is applicable to courses as indicated in the catalog.		
WIP	Work in progress		