# FRANCOPHONE, ITALIAN AND GERMANIC STUDIES, PHD: ITALIAN STUDIES

The Graduate Program in Italian Studies in the Department Francophone, Italian, and Germanic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania offers students a range of curricular options that provide a broad academic base in Italian literature, intellectual history, film, cultural studies, and critical theory, as well as the most current pedagogical theory and practice. Students are encouraged to shape a curriculum that will prepare them in a primary period of interest as well as a secondary focal area. Students may complement their studies with up to four courses outside the Italian Studies section--for example, in another Romance language, Comparative Literature, English, and History. Certificate programs in the areas of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, Global Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Cinema Studies and Urban Studies, for example, are also available. Interdisciplinary study is encouraged through participation in the wide range of seminars, lectures, and colloquia sponsored by the various Graduate Groups and affiliated research institutes and centers at Penn, including the Center for Italian Studies, and at the many cultural institutions in the Philadelphia area.

Great resources are available to the graduate students in Italian, including the world-renowned Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts. The Program in Italian Studies collaborates actively with the Kislak Center to provide students with hands on experience with rare material in conjunction with classes, talks, conferences, and book exhibits. Additionally, individual dissertation research abroad is encouraged and summer research funding is available competitively through the Salvatori Fund or other sources.

Finally, the Center for Italian Studies coordinates scholarly activities among faculty and students across the humanities, organizing research groups, visiting lectures, film screenings and major academic conferences.

All students admitted to the program are awarded full financial support through the University's Benjamin Franklin Fellowships. Students who enter the program with previous graduate work may be eligible to transfer some credits toward the Ph.D.

**For more information:** https://figs.sas.upenn.edu/italian/graduate-program (https://figs.sas.upenn.edu/italian/graduate-program/)

The degree and major requirements displayed are intended as a guide for students entering in the Fall of 2026 and later. Students should consult with their academic program regarding final certifications and requirements for graduation.

## Curriculum

The Ph.D. program in Italian Studies is planned as a five-year sequence. Requirements for the Ph.D. include:

| Code | Title | Course Units |
|---|---|---|
| FIGS 7770 | Francophone, Italian and Germanic Proseminar [1] | 1 |
| FIGS Topics Course [2] | | 1 |
| FIGS 5000 | M.A. Exam Preparation [3] | 1 |
| FIGS 5900 | Teaching and Learning | 1 |
| *Literary Theory Course* | | *1* |
| FIGS/COML/CIMS 6060 | FIGS Theory Proseminar: Special Topics | |
| COML 5010 | Comparative Literature Proseminar | |
| COML 6050 | Modern Literary Theory and Criticism | |
| COML 6820 | Seminar on Literary Theory | |
| COML 6090 | Global France | |
| FREN 6050 | Modern Literary Theory and Criticism | |
| GRMN 6050 | Modern Literary Theory and Criticism | |
| ITAL 6050 | Modern Literary Theory and Criticism | |
| SPAN 6820 | Seminar on Literary Theory | |
| Italian Studies Electives [5] | | 12 |
| Up to 3 courses outside Italian in another field pertinent to the student's area of specialization | | |
| **Additional Requirements** | | |
| *M.A. Examination* | | |
| At the end of the first year, in order to continue in the program, students must pass an oral M.A. exam, focused on a reading list of 25 titles. Students will attend a course in the second semester of their first year to prepare for the exam. | | |
| *Foreign Language Requirement* | | |
| A translation exam in two foreign languages appropriate to the student's prospective field of specialization (N.B. students specializing in Medieval or Early Modern studies must choose Latin as one of their two languages). To fulfill the requirement, aside from a translation exam, students may otherwise opt to take a summer reading course at Penn. The student's performance in the course will be evaluated by the course instructor together with the FIGS Graduate Chair. | | |
| *Teaching Requirement* | | |
| Four semesters of undergraduate teaching are required, one course per semester of the second and third years. | | |
| *Dissertation Proposal* | | |
| Following successful fulfillment of the Ph.D. Examination, the candidate will shape a dissertation project and writing schedule at the end of their third year, or at the beginning of their fourth year. | | |
| **Total Course Units** | | **17** |

## University PhD Benchmarks

In addition to Program requirements, the following milestones must be completed:

| Code | Title | Course Units |
|---|---|---|
| Qualifying Evaluation | | |
| Candidacy Examination | | |

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|---|---|
| Dissertation Defense/Oral Exam | |
| Dissertation Deposit | |

For more information view the University's Academic Rules for PhD Programs (https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/academic-rules-phd/).

1 The FIGS Proseminar, FIGS 7770 Francophone, Italian and Germanic Proseminar, an introduction to graduate life—a course taken in the first semester of the first year.
2 A content course usually taken in the second semester of the first year. Topic varies every year.
3 Taken in the second semester of the student's first year.
4 Teaching and Learning—a course taken during the first semester of the student's second year to support and implement their service as teaching fellows.
5 A minimum of 9 electives in Italian studies is needed (cross-listed courses included). Courses will be chosen in consultation with the Graduate Chair. Depending on their content, courses from other departments may also count, with the approval of the Graduate Chair.
6 Students are permitted to continue coursework past 17 course units with Graduate Chair approval.

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