Course Description

I. - OBJECTIVES

1. General:

This introductory course is designed for novice learners with no formal instructional background in Italian. The aim of the course is to enable students to become a Basic User of the language, i.e. to communicate in Italian, in speech and in writing, as well as to comprehend oral and written texts, applying basic structures and vocabulary in a variety of contexts (see appendix 1, Basic User, levels A1).

The course approaches language in a holistic manner. All four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) will be given equal weight during the classroom hours and in the evaluation of the students' work throughout the course. The student will also acquire knowledge about Italian culture in a broad sense; historical and social aspects will be introduced along with specific customs and facts of daily life.

2. Specific:

Reading Comprehension Skills
Reading comprehension skills will be developed and enhanced through exposure to authentic texts such as lists, descriptions, newspaper clips, advertisements, and short literary excerpts. Effective reading strategies include relying on cognates (words that are similar in Italian and in English), and scanning the text for relevant information. Students will also be encouraged to explore alternate sources for reading materials (i.e. Internet sites), on their own, or with a conversation partner. In addition, to enhance students' reading comprehension skills, as well as their knowledge of idiomatic usage of linguistic forms, one chapter per week from the short novel “Pasta per due” will be assigned for individual reading, with follow-up in-class group activities. Students are also invited to read on-line Italian magazines and newspapers available at www.mediatime.net; www.international.rai.it. Panorama, Espresso, and Focus, Italian
magazines of general interest, are available at the Carleton University Library, in the periodical section.

**Listening Comprehension Skills**
For listening comprehension, in-class opportunities will include video and audiotapes, instructor input, as well as exchanges with peers in group or pair work. It is also expected that students seek out other opportunities, on an on-going basis, outside of the classroom for exposure to *authentic* speech. Attending Italian cultural events in the community, watching Italian films, eventually without subtitles, radio and TV newscasts, web sites, are all efficient ways to increase listening comprehension.

**Oral and Written Communicative Skills**
The tasks for both oral and written expression will focus on practical applications of structures and vocabulary to situations relevant to daily life. Students will be given specific assignments to carry out either in groups or pairs, during class time - interviewing people, collecting and presenting information, role playing, etc., or individually, in the form of short compositions or projects, to be handed in at regular intervals (details will be given in advance each time).

**Course Work**
Classroom work will be primarily devoted to interactive and communicative tasks supplemented by grammar-based exercises. Different activities will develop aural comprehension, speaking, reading and writing; the basic emphasis will be on activities directed at improving oral comprehension and production, as well as reading and writing.

Participation is an essential part of language learning. As such, it will serve as the basis for evaluating the students' work in the course. Please note that participation means more than attending classes: it requires the learner to make a conscious effort towards USING the language. While the instructor will act as a motivator and facilitator to help students learn how to learn the language, the students must learn to take an active role in the learning process.

Classroom time will be spent on creating an environment in a collaborative effort where Italian will be the main vehicle of communication in meaningful contexts. The textbook, the workbook, a short story, as well as other materials provided by the instructor will be used as reference points, to start from and to expand upon.

In addition, students will be required to work in their own time with the program Tell-Me-More: Italiano, using the on-line materials as assigned by the instructor.

Since the aim is to devote the majority of class time to practicing language skills, students must study the vocabulary and grammar rules presented in the textbook, in the workbook, in on-line materials, or in handouts before coming to class. While students will develop individual approaches to learning the language, rather than relying solely on the teacher for language practice, they will also take part in the learning of their
classmates through pair and group work. The classroom environment will encourage students to start producing the language early on, and to use communicative strategies such as risk taking, guessing, predicting, paraphrasing, etc., effectively. To support the language skills, grammar points will be introduced and practiced with each unit in the textbook and in on-line materials.

Students who miss a class will be expected to find out about the work from other students. **All assignments** have to be completed by the due date. Special circumstances may be discussed with the instructor before a due date.

**Textbooks:**
Tell-Me-More, on-line program. *In order to access the program students must purchase the pass from the Book Store at Carleton University (membership valid for 4 months from activation date).*

**Dictionaries:** Students can use any medium-size, bilingual dictionary. *Cautionary note:* please be aware of linguistic “traps” that are easy to fall into when looking for word-for-word translation in an unfamiliar language. It is a good idea, therefore, to check a particular word in both sections of the dictionary (i.e. Eng./It-It./Eng.). Students can also consult on-line dictionaries such as:

- [www.demauparavia.it/](http://www.demauparavia.it/) (synonyms)
- [www.garzantilinguistica.it](http://www.garzantilinguistica.it)
- [www.wordreference.com/](http://www.wordreference.com/)
- [http://dizionari.corriere.it/dizionario_italiano.shtml](http://dizionari.corriere.it/dizionario_italiano.shtml)
- [http://dizionari.corriere.it/dizionario_italiano_inglese.shtml](http://dizionari.corriere.it/dizionario_italiano_inglese.shtml)

II. - EVALUATION PROCEDURES

A major part of the evaluation will be based on in-class activities, tasks and assignments. All course work should be handed in a folder. The final course mark will be composed of the following:

- **In-class participation, group work, and quizzes** 20%
- **On-line work** 20%
- **One mid term in-class test** 20%
- **One in-class group project** 20%
- **Final examination** 20%

--------
100%

**PLEASE NOTE THAT A FINAL MINIMUM GRADE OF “C” (63%-66%) IS REQUIRED TO MOVE TO THE NEXT (INTERMEDIATE) LEVEL OF ITALIAN.**
Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

In-class participation, group work, and quizzes (20%) See: Classroom Work
Please note that attendance is compulsory. Absences (including employment-related absences) and cumulative late arrivals will reduce the in-class participation mark each term. Medical absences will not be counted, provided the student presents a valid medical certificate. A student must attend a minimum 80% of classes in order to qualify for a passing grade. Failure to meet this requirement will automatically result in a failing grade.

On-line work (20%)
Students will be required to do the assigned on-line work using the program “Tell-Me-More”, for a minimum of one hour per week.

Mid-term in-class test (20%)
The in-class test (duration approximately 2 hours) will consist of tasks similar in format and approach to the activities and exercises done in class, and it will include exercises in language structure, reading comprehension, and written expression, as well as listening comprehension. Week of November 16, 2009.

Final examination (20%)
The final examination will be held during the period scheduled by the University: December 9-22, but in a regular classroom setting.

Oral in-class group project (20%)
Students will sign up for the in-class presentation of a project in Italian. Presentations will be group presentations of 3 students. The project outline will be discussed in advance with the instructor, including the division of the work among the group members. Topics can vary; however, the presentations will have to show evidence of an independent investigation regarding a particular aspect or phenomenon of Italian life/culture. Each project has to include some questions for a group discussion following the presentation. Length: max. 15 minutes including question period. Presentations will start the week November 2, 2009.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism, the passing off of someone else’s work as one’s own, is a serious offence and it, as well as any other instances of academic cheating, will be dealt with in accordance with university regulations, as per the university calendar (see relative page in Undergraduate Calendar 2009-2010).
III. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term.

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation

IV. - Other issues
Please visit the following pages for information on the Student Academic Success Centre, the Learning Commons, and the Writing Tutorial Service:
http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/advisingcentre/
http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/learning-support-services/
http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficient User</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2</strong></td>
<td>Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1</strong></td>
<td>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent User</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2</strong></td>
<td>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic User</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong></td>
<td>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1</strong></td>
<td>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>