

Small Group Analysis -- Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

This SGA is not intended for use in review, tenure/promotion, or reappointment at Vanderbilt University.

Instructor: Antonella D'Aquino Course: Italian 101
of students: 9 # of groups: 3
Consultant: Peter Felten SGA date: October 28, 1999 (12:40 p.m.)

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of groups giving that response. Student comments appear in the standard font; Peter Felten's comments appear in italics.

1. What aspects of this course and/or the instruction are most helping you learn?

- utilizes different learning media, such as TV, overhead, videos (3)
- uses different methods of teaching, such as lecture, group work, educational games (2)
- class conversation in Italian (2)
- incorporates homework into daily lessons
- open to questions
- comfortable atmosphere
- professor has first-hand cultural information about Italy
- she is nice and friendly
- she is very thorough
- she has a positive attitude toward teaching and the subject matter
- she doesn't let us get bored
- she is very patient and doesn't get frustrated with us
- she is accessible and willing to help outside of class
- she is flexible and is always positive and supporting

2. What aspects of this course and/or the instruction would you recommend be changed to enhance your learning? Specific suggestions? *(All suggestions are indented.)*

- more listening exercises
- take more time on the more difficult concepts
In our conversation, students said they would rather spend less time on vocabulary and memorization drills so more class time would be available for learning complex grammatical structures.

3. Any other comments?

- She is very energetic and easy to approach.
- She is nice.
- Grammar Olympics are great!

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Instructor: Antonella D'Aquino Course: Italian 101
of students: 13 # of groups: 4
Consultant: Peter Felten SGA date: October 28, 1999 (10:05 a.m.)

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of groups giving that response. Student comments appear in the standard font; Peter Felten's comments appear in italics.

1. What aspects of this course and/or the instruction are most helping you learn?

- Italian conversation, when we have to respond in Italian (4)
- games, songs, movies, Grammar Olympics, etc. (4)
- asking questions in Italian to class (3)
- variety of learning methods (2)
- worksheets (2)
- good assessment of daily learning since the exercises we turn in are handed back the next day and provide us a way to tell what we need to work on
- verbally doing lessons
- going over the exercises
- instructor is enthusiastic about the material
- review sheets for the quizzes
- explanations in English

2. What aspects of this course and/or the instruction would you recommend be changed to enhance your learning? Specific suggestions? *(All suggestions are indented.)*

- review more (4)
 - go over information more than once in class, particularly prior to a quiz (2)
 - don't do video/"brown-page" right before the test (2)
 - review the day's lesson in the last 5 minutes of each class period
 - review old and new rules together in sentences
 - more verbal exercises
 - have an intensive review session immediately before each test
- more English examples to help teach Italian grammar rules
- it is helpful when she goes over the grammar, but it would be nice if she did this more
- go over different exercises than the ones in the book
- correct answers to textbook exercises
- go over some translations sometimes
- go over compositions in class before we have to write one for a grade
- we don't like answering questions in order according to where we're sitting
 - call on people randomly

Comments from student evaluations
Spring 2000
Italian 101b 03 Elementary Italian
Antonella D'Aquino

Total Responses: 17

Total comments: 17

1. She was great. Had fun in class.
2. The professor was very encouraging and very helpful.
3. I really liked the class. She made it fun. 5 hours was hard, but she made it ok. She helped a lot.
4. I really liked the course. Being a 5-hour class meeting everyday, it was demanding but doable. Professor D'Aquino communicates well with students.
5. Professor D'Aquino is always very enthusiastic in class, making the learning experience very enjoyable. She also gives each student an opportunity to speak in class which helps immensely when learning a language. She used many different mediums when teaching, such as lectures, videos, and cassette tapes which made class more interesting.
6. This course 101B has been my favorite thus far at Vanderbilt. I know it is largely due to the instructor's enthusiasm, helpfulness, and niceness. I would highly recommend this class, especially the instructor. She has been overly helpful and a joy to learn from.
7. The instructor had a youthful flare and presented the material with enthusiasm & creativity. Overall, an excellent teacher. She understands the needs of her students.
8. instructor was always well prepared. Grading was fair. Class time was always structured effectively.
9. The instructor was very well prepared and easy to follow. She does a good job if we don't understand something. She is fair and explains everything clearly. The class does not really need to be 5 days a week, I think 4 would complete the same material, especially after we have taken the final. It feels pointless to come to class after the class is pretty much over. But I like that the exam is early.
10. Perfect for course b/c native speaker, organized & caring, covers material well, writes fair tests and quizzes.

11. D'Aquino was always well prepared and filled the entire class period w/ activities.
12. Prof. D'Aquino was always well-prepared, but there were many things that were not helpful such as the book at the end of the semester and the movies. The video clips at the end of each chapter seemed like a waste of time also. I felt like we needed to be reviewing for the test instead of watching a video that is of no help.
13. She is very well prepared and does an excellent job of keeping us interested in the class. We do several things during each class period so it never gets repetitive or boring. I like the songs, games, movies, etc.
14. Professoressa D'Aquino is very well prepared for class. She does a great job in communicating in English to us. However, I believe the grading is extremely tough.
15. She was a very good professor, and it was good that she is Italian, and could add cultural things to the course.
16. Yes, well prepared. Sometimes she went just a bit too fast in Italian, but remained approachable for questions.
17. She is great. Her patience & willingness to help is wonderful. She makes the class interesting & fun.



Spoken Italian 214

Instructor's name: Antonella D'Aquino

Office: Furman Hall #231A

Office phone number: 343-2479

Office hours: MTR 10:00-11:00

Texts: *Parliamo insieme* by Julie Docker, Cambridge University Press.

A good dictionary is recommended but not required. You will receive additional material from me on a weekly basis.

Additional materials: Video recordings, slide presentations, films, newspaper articles, operas, modern music, TV-programs, comic strips,...etc.

Course description: This class combines the exposure to Italian grammar with cultural activities to make learning Italian a stimulating and enjoyable experience. I will bring to class a variety of material from newspaper articles, to poetry, to comic strips, to video recordings, etc. to help students to master skills in the four areas of communication: reading, writing, listening and, of course, speaking. You will be prompted to actively participate and interact with the other students in group-activities that will focus on Italian culture, such as, music, art, and cuisine. This will provide you with a broad spectrum of topics and will also help you to gain a cultural awareness of the language you are studying. In addition to this, we will watch Italian movies as well as TV-programs that portray the Italian lifestyle and daily events whose authenticity is beneficial in understanding different customs. Through the use of a variety of materials you will be further engaged in the development of linguistic awareness and you will also be stimulated to expand your horizon.

Course requirements: Throughout the semester you will be assigned homework from your textbook as well as supplementary exercises I will hand out in advance. You will also be required to give three oral presentations on pre-arranged topics. Quizzes will be announced one week in advance. Two hourly exams and four oral interviews are also part of the course requirement. In class written assignments are going to be a common practice during the semester as well as group activities.

Attendance: Required and extremely important. The purpose of this class is for you to gain proficiency in four areas of communication: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Only through

direct interaction with your instructor and students will you be able to gain expertise. Students are allowed five absences without penalty. Beyond that number one minimal grade unit will be deducted from the final grade for each additional absence unless the absences are documented adequately by a doctor, a dean, a potential employer, or another appropriate authority. Example: If a student has seven absences and would otherwise have earned a B+ for the course, I will deduct two minimal units from the final grade, giving the student a B- for the course.

Homework: Homework assignments must be written out clearly every day, and occasionally I will ask you to hand it in. If you don't know a particular word in an exercise or reading, look it up in the vocabulary list before asking me what it means. If you have a learning disability (or think that you might have one) please see me immediately.

Vocabulary: You are responsible for learning all the words at the end of every chapter. Learn them as you go along through the text; then use this vocabulary list to study from and for reference.

About the syllabus: Due to the nature of this class you will receive a detailed syllabus every two weeks.

Grading: Your final grade will be determined as follows

✓ Quizzes	25%
✓ Presentations	20%
✓ Exams	25%
✓ Oral interviews	20%
✓ Class participation, Pop quizzes, Homework, Written assignments	<u>10%</u>
	100%

Final suggestions: In order to learn the language, a lot of preparation is necessary. This involves understanding what is going on, and then practicing it until you can do it smoothly. A university-level language course goes about twice as fast as a high school course; what you did in a year in a high-school is covered in one semester in college. The university expects that for every hour you spend in class, you will spend two to three on homework. This number is just an average; some of you will spend more time and some of you will spend less. At certain times of the semester you will have very little work, and at others, more. Every effort has been made to keep the amount of work roughly even through the semester, but naturally it is impossible for us to predict exactly how long each assignment will take each student to complete. Be sure to budget enough time for studying.