



La Tavola Italian Club

created by La Tavola
Executive Board

LE ORE DI CONVERSAZIONE

WRITTEN BY KATHRYN STANGEL



This semester, the Italian Club conversation hours were a hit! On Monday evenings and Tuesday afternoons, we gathered in the language lounge to practice our Italian with guided help from the professors and previous students. We saw an improvement in numbers from previous semesters, in addition to consistent participation between the Italian 111 and 115 sections. We look forward to next semester, with plans for themed conversation hours already underwraps!

Some notable events & concepts:

- Battleship with verb conjugations
- Visit to University Galleries
- L'ora di conversazione e lettura (Italian book readings)
- Pictionary
- Constructing sentences and questions
- Descriptions and characteristics





VI PRESENTIAMO IL NOSTRO NUOVO PROFESSORE DI ITALIANO

WRITTEN BY DR. FRANCESCO FERRARI

My name is Francesco Ferrari, a name so comically Italian that I harbor an irrational fear of one day finding myself in the 'La Mia Famiglia' chapter of a textbook. In August of this year I joined the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures as a professor of Italian. I am originally from Calabria, located in the toe of the boot of Italy. It is a region famous for its chili peppers, spicy cuisine, and scenic beauty. Though less commonly known, even to many Italians, it is also home to the Arberesh Italian-Albanian minority of which I am part: an ethnic-linguistic minority scattered across the south, the majority of the

settlements residing in Calabria. If you happen to travel to southern Italy, you might come across small villages, like mine, where after almost 500 hundred years people still speak a local dialect with ancient Albanian roots. I may be biased, but I believe it to be one of Italy's best kept secrets .

I also spent some of the most formative years of my life in Bologna, a city that many of you already know, and may be considering visiting for a study abroad opportunity or simply for a holiday. If you would like any advice while visiting the city please don't hesitate to ask! While living there, I completed my undergraduate and master's degrees at the University of Bologna, and afterwards, moved to Champaign-Urbana for my PhD in Italian Studies. While teaching language classes at elementary and intermediate levels I completed my dissertation exploring how nostalgia shapes the way we view the past. I am passionate about understanding the phenomena that objects we encounter throughout our lives become tangible markers for meaning. When I am not working, I try a new recipe or hike through the forest preserves of Illinois in search of a single hill...

Thank you all for welcoming me into your La Tavola community, and I hope to contribute a spark of Italy into what is already a vivacious exploration of Italian culture.

CANTANTI ITALIANE

PLAYLIST CREATED BY DR. FRANCESCO FERRARI

This year Dr. Ferrari made us a playlist full of great Italian songs! The playlist includes 23 songs by artists including Carmen Consoli, Elisa, and Donatella Rettore, among others. Scan the qr to reach the playlist on Spotify! We hope you enjoy! If you would like to see more content like this from La Tavola feel free to let us know!





ISU IN BOLOGNA!

WRITTEN BY KILEY BEINER

Studying abroad was something that I thought I would never be able to do. The reasons mostly being money and fear of all the unknowns that come with living in another country. This summer, despite my doubts and worries, I took part in a three-week trip to Bologna, Italy. In the long run, it actually saved me some money and turned out to be one of the best experiences of my life. Bologna was so much more than I expected it to be. I've been to Rome. I've been to Milan, Florence, Venice—but for me, none of those places compared to Bologna. It's a smaller city, removed from a lot of the tourism you'd encounter elsewhere. It makes you feel like you live there and are part of the community. The food there was the best out of anywhere I've been before, and the city itself was so beautiful and laced with rich history, and the people were all friendly, welcoming, and (for the most part) willing to deal with my somewhat broken Italian. Plus, it was only three weeks. Because of this, I never really felt homesick or even worried, knowing I'd be home soon. This also made it easier for my money to last the whole trip because I didn't have to budget for an entire semester or year. I reminisce every day on the time I spent there and feel that it genuinely changed the trajectory of my life. I can't imagine spending my future anywhere else. If you think a study abroad experience is impossible, it might not be, and I advise you to reach out to Dr. Edwards to come up with solutions that might allow you to make going to Bologna a reality.

IL CINEFORUM

WRITTEN BY KATHRYN STANGEL

Holding to tradition, La Tavola hosted 3 individual films throughout the semester. We introduced new films to our repertoire, which enticed movie-watchers from a broader interest pool. While only registered Italian language students are allowed to attend, we will continue showing classic Italian films next semester—so stay tuned for the list and dates!

List of films:

- September: *Luca* (Casarosa 2021)
- October: *Suspria* (Argento 1977)
- November: *Natale a Tutti i Costi* (Bognetti 2022)





UN SEMESTRE AL'ESTERO - A FIRENZE!

WRITTEN BY NICO EDWARDS-TESTOLIN

My name is Nico Edwards-Testolin, and I completed a direct enrollment program at Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici (LdM) in Florence during the Spring 2023 semester. I was there for nearly 4 months immersing myself in Italian life, language and culture. I'd like to recap my study abroad, the experiences I had, as well as the internship I completed.

Studying in USA vs. Florence

There were many noticeable differences between student life in Florence compared to what I was used to at ISU.

I took mostly Italian language classes, which focused on improving our Italian and learning about Italian society and culture, as well as one Italian science class (that met a Gen Ed requirement) and an Italian cooking/nutrition class. What I enjoyed was how engaging the Italian classes were; we spent more time conversing about a variety of topics than focussing on grammar in the book. There is also a fun routine of taking breaks with your classmates to go get coffee or food down the block before coming back for the second half of class.

Life in USA vs. Florence The biggest difference in culture in Florence compared to the USA is the pace of life. I've learned meaningful things such as enjoying the present moment, not always being in a rush and really cherishing time with friends and loved ones. As I made my way around town, I would see teenagers and people my age spending time together outside, whether they were at a park, sitting outside at a cafe, or just talking in the street. The community there just seems so much more tight-knit than here, and it has to do with the value of social connection ingrained into every person there.

Learning Italian and Internships Through LdM, I applied for and was chosen for an Italian communication internship. I was placed in a fine arts high school just on the edge of the city. My role was being a teaching assistant, where I participated in 3-4 classes a day, 3 days a week, helping and sometimes teaching students English (often through English or Italian songs or by talking about life in the USA). Through this I was also improving my Italian as my interactions with the students taught both them and me simultaneously. This is just one option available in the internship program at LdM, but it was so much fun, an incredible opportunity, and I was welcomed so warmly by the students and professors.

Why should you study abroad? It goes without saying that studying abroad is an experience you will never forget. I have seen many new places and made countless memories and friends I am still in contact with. When you study abroad, the possibilities are truly endless of the things you can do and the places you can go. If you are learning Italian or are in the Italian studies minor, the Italian classes available at LdM can help you finish the minor in no time in the most unique way.. And if LdM doesn't look like the right fit for you, there are many other study abroad programs partnered with ISU to pick from! I am forever grateful that I had the opportunity to spend a semester in Florence because of the memories I made and the second home that I created there.



SERATA PASTA

WRITTEN BY NICO EDWARDS-TESTOLIN

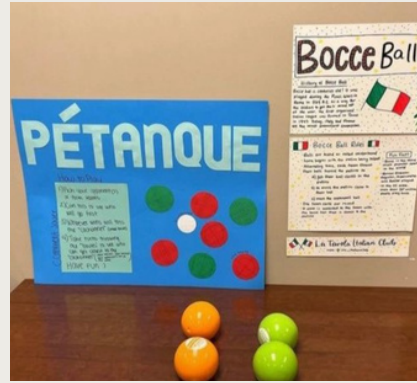
La Tavola continued the tradition of hosting pasta night this past November! Italian language students and members of La Tavola Italian club had the opportunity to learn how to make homemade pasta, roll it out and prepare it for dinner. With the help of Dr. Edwards and her husband, Giovanni, students first watched a video describing the ingredients and steps of how to make the pasta, then learned how to use the pasta machine to roll it out, cut it, and cook it. It's a fun cultural night that results in a delicious dinner.



SERATA DI PITTURA

WRITTEN BY KATHRYN STANGEL

This past September, Italian Club members and art-enthusiasts alike gathered in the Language Commons to engage in a night of painting and fun! La Tavola Italian Club began this annual tradition to encapsulate the versatility of Italian culture. Aside from weekly events, like conversation hours, and other Club offerings, we host a wide range of events throughout the semester, such as Una Serata di Pittura ("An Evening of Painting"). With snacks and Italian hits serenading throughout the room, we spent the evening doing paint-by-numbers inspired by famous Italian paintings. Another purpose of the event was to showcase Italian artists and their works, such as Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus*. We had an amazing turnout, with students across a variety of years and majors. The results were unique and definitely colorful; but we all agreed that at the end of the day, it was just fun creating art with each other!



EVENTI MULTICULTURALI

WRITTEN BY ALISON SKELTON

This semester, La Tavola collaborated several times with other LAN Language clubs. During Homecoming, our officers helped to create the departmental float. Students across all clubs were invited to walk in the parade and hand out candy to the spectators. We learned right before the parade that the LAN Float had won 1st Place RSO Float! It was a pleasure to participate in this group effort.

In November, we collaborated on a multicultural karaoke and games night with all of the LAN clubs. Each club brought a game for everyone to play and some special cultural foods to taste. La Tavola provided an indoor set of Bocce ball and contributed a Panettone to share. Panettone is a fluffy sweet Italian bread often with dried fruit or chocolate and is traditionally enjoyed during Natale (Christmas). Everyone had a wonderful time trying the different cultural foods and playing the games.

A third multicultural collaboration was with both Pi Delta Phi/Francophone Club and Sigma Delta Pi, the Spanish Honor Society, when we held our first ever Cheese Tasting Night. Each club contributed a few different cheeses from their languages' cultures. La Tavola shared Parmigiano Reggiano, fresh Mozzarella, Pecorino Romano, and Asiago. Along with the Italian cheeses, Dr. Edwards' husband, Giovanni, baked some wonderful fresh focaccia. Pi Delta Phi/Francophone club contributed baguettes and well-known French/Swiss cheeses. Sigma Delta Pi provided queso fresco, Manchego, and other cheeses from Spanish speaking countries and set up a beautiful charcuterie board which included dried meats made by Dr. Pancrazio. Members from all three language clubs had a great time socializing and tasting the variety of breads and cheeses from around the world.

We are looking forward to participating in next semesters' LAN club collaborations.



WHY SHOULD YOU MINOR IN ITALIAN STUDIES?

WRITTEN BY KILEY BEINER

What does a minor in Italian actually do? Many less spoken languages are viewed as less important to learn, less useful, and unimpressive, so why minor in Italian when so many other languages are more widely spoken? If your goal is solely to speak to as many people as possible, a minor in Italian may sound useless, but if you are passionate about Italian, you can still follow your heart and involve the language in your life and career. As an English major, Italian has worked wonderfully into my degree, but also into my career prospects. Italian has proven useful for translation of Italian poetry and literature, but also will be useful for the future, as I plan to teach English in Italy as a career. Even if your major has nothing to do with language, or even nothing to do with the arts, that does not mean that minoring Italian would be useless. If you are taking Italian for a language requirement, you only need to take a few classes beyond ITA 115 to complete the minor (and ITA 116 also counts toward a Gen Ed requirement!). Besides this, many companies look to hire people who are proficient in more than one language, regardless of the field. It might even be impressive to employers that you've chosen to learn a lesser spoken language. Besides your career, language opens you up to a whole new world of people you might never have been able to communicate with before. Perhaps you can start speaking in Italian to your nonna, or use it to reconnect to your heritage. A minor in Italian would not only potentially benefit your career, but could change your perspective on the world and open your eyes to the beauty of language and culture. Italian is not a useless language. It is a language with rich history, literary importance, and is the mother tongue of millions. There are no downsides to internationalizing your major, and no downsides to learning a language.

<https://illinoisstate.edu/catalog/undergraduate/languages-literatures-cultures/#italian-minor>



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President- Leah Brecheisen

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If you are interested in joining La Tavola Italian Club, find us on Instagram @latavola_isu and become an official member at Redbird Life!

If you have interest in adding the Italian Studies minor, reach out to Dr. Edwards at Lcedwar@ilstu.edu to talk about how it fits into your schedule