Italian Department goes Green!

We are proud to announce that the Italian Department achieved the status of Green Department at the 2-leaf level this semester. Our interns Cass Michaud, and Jasmine Yuan walked all members of the group through a 20-minute manual on how to best reduce water, energy, and waste at their workspaces. Sergio Parussa, the chair of the department, and his faculty Daniela Bartalesi-Graf, David Ward, Serena Grattarola including head administrator Jael Matos pledged to maintain 25 sustainable habits at their offices. Among other pledges, they jointly agreed to order only from local caterers whenever possible and to only use reusable utensils, plates, and cups instead of disposable ones. This practice takes hold with many progressive offices that like to end the plastic avalanche. If you like to know more about the Green Office Certification please contact sustainability@wellesley.edu

Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook at Wellesley College Italian Studies & Cultural Society.
If you’d like to be featured in our next edition under “Alumnae Spotlight”, please send an email to Jael Matos at jmatos@wellesley.edu.
Daniela Bartalesi-Graf for the past few years has been busy developing our online courses in the Italian language and culture (Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced) which reopened in their second edition on February 11th, 2019 on the edX platform. Just like their first edition, which ran January 2015-January 2017, these online courses are offered as MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), i.e they are free and open to all. Here is the link to register: edX.org/school/wellesleyx

This second edition, in addition to the content already offered in the first (video skits and interviews, slide show with animation with or without narration, self-corrected activities, and grammar charts), features new downloadable Podcasts and a new testing program.

At the beginning of April, two months after the courses opened, thousands of learners had already enrolled from all over the world, with about 700 new learners registering every week. Here are some details:

- Italian Language and Culture. Beginner: 12,852 students enrolled from 156 different countries.
- Italian Language and Culture. Intermediate: 3,059 students enrolled from 120 different countries.
- Italian Language and Culture. Advanced: 1,872 students enrolled from 115 different countries.

The second edition of our fourth online course, AP® Italian Language and Culture (2018-2019), opened on the edX platform on August 20th. This is also a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) and is therefore free and open to all. To register go to this link: edX.org/school/wellesleyx

AP® Italian Language and Culture (2018-2019) features authentic media, such as video interviews with Italians on a variety of cultural themes, short stories, newspaper articles, audio files and much more. This course is designed for all intermediate/advanced learners of Italian wishing to improve their language skills, not only for high school students preparing to take the AP Italian exam in May 2019.

In summer 2019 we will be conducting new video interviews in Italy and will be working on readings. So stay tuned for the improved edition of AP® Italian Language and Culture (2019-2020) due to be published on edX in late August 2019!

Finally, these courses are also successfully used on our campus, both in our Intensive track (ITAS 103 and ITAS 203) and in some of our Intermediate classes (ITAS 201).

Besides working at our online program, Daniela has enjoyed hiking through two Utah National Parks during Spring break. If you need a change from the green rolling hills of Italy or the woods and lakes of New England, Utah offers dramatic rocky landscapes and high altitude deserts.

Other activities that kept her busy outside the online and campus classrooms included boxing and lifting weights every morning at the Wellesley gym, visiting her daughter in Toronto (with the goal of trying a new ethnic restaurant each time), and reading graphic novels by the Italian writer and artist Zerocalcare (a recent discovery of hers: highly recommended for a summer read!)
In April of this year, Flavia Laviosa founded the book series Trajectories of Italian Cinema and Media, published by Intellect. This series intends to engage with diverse academic communities, build new conceptual frameworks, and foster a globally-focused and representative corpus of scholarship in Italian cinema and media studies. As editor of the series, Flavia intends to trace the evidence of Italian cinema’s international polysemy and polycentrism, define the extent of its inspirational force, examine other cinemas’ artistic innovations resulting from their osmosis with the Italian film tradition, and foster comparative analyses of themes and genres between Italian and other world cinemas. The series also aims to provide an international forum for research on media and new communication technologies, focusing on theoretical approaches to and aesthetics of texts within Italian social, political, economic and historical contexts, and exploring comparative studies of Italian and international media. The book series will respond to the emerging critical interdisciplinary approaches to Italian cinema and media, to explore new directions, to interpret artistic intersectionality and transmediality in global productions, and shape new paradigms for film and media studies. As Editor of the *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies*, Flavia is also pleased to announce the publication of the special issue (Vol. 7:3, 2019) on Academy Award winner Italian filmmaker Paolo Sorrentino: a trans-cultural and post-national auteur. This issue is guest-edited by Prof. Annachiara Mariani, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The second international conference of the *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies* wants to reach out to academics working in particular niches, and give their work a platform. Italian cinema and media turn to other countries’ productions for inspiration and vice versa. The lure of Italian cinema’s legends and the interest in revisiting its genealogy create bridges across global artistic languages in the effort to preserve harmonies and reconcile tensions. In moving away from mainstream pathways, the Conference also intends to get Italian cinema and media studies out of their canonical silo, engage with diverse academic communities, build new conceptual frameworks, and promote research beyond Western and Euro-centric bases to foster a more globally-focused and representative corpus of scholarship.
Over the last year, like many contemporary Italianists, David Ward has been active in the promotion of Italian Studies and knowledge of the Italian language as important components of a twenty-first century humanistic education. He strongly believes that every student who graduates from an institution of higher learning like Wellesley should have attained an advanced level of proficiency in at least one foreign language, preferably one she hadn't studied when she began her degree. Students with high levels of proficiency in a language are well suited to act as the cultural mediators we need more than ever in today's world.

On a more academic level, he is currently working on two article-length projects: one on Kai Zen, a narrative ensemble consisting of four young Italian writers; and a study of Rome’s Foro Italico (formerly known as Foro Mussolini), a site near the present day Olympic Stadium where the fascist regime memorialized what it considered its achievements. He will be reading a paper drawn from this project at Reunion 2019 on Friday June 7th at 3.30pm.

Beyond Wellesley, his family of wife Eugenia, a fellow Italianist, with whom he will be celebrating a big wedding anniversary in June–our 25th–and daughter Anna (not to mention our 12 year-old cockapoo Lucky), continues to be as close-knit as it always has been. Our highlight this year has been the trip Eugenia and he took to Rome in November to visit Anna, who spent her fall semester studying there (and would like to be there now, who can blame her?)

This academic year has been a bit challenging for Jael Matos. She was assigned to work in the Italian Studies Department in addition to the Department of Spanish. This was not her “first rodeo.” Jael has helped many Academic Departments over the years when they were in need of support. So, for Jael this was a welcomed opportunity to share with the Italian Studies how her knowledge and skills will benefit not only the Department but the students as well. They have certainly welcomed her with open arms as well as her ideas to “get them on the map!” Her semester was busy with many lectured events both during the Fall and Spring semester. But she definitely took the time to take a few vacation breaks. In January, she travelled to Croatia and Slovenia with her sister Mara. They travelled to Dubrovnik, Split, and Opatija, Croatia and to Bled and Ljubljana, Slovenia. The weather was chilly but not as cold as it was in Boston. Her favorite part of the trip was a walking Games of Thrones tour around Dubrovnik where some of the most iconic scenes in the series were shot. Overall it was a great trip, which she will never forget. Where is Jael off to next? Stay tuned!
Was this your first time in the U.S.?
Last August, for the first time in my life, I set foot in the United States when I landed at Boston Logan Airport. I had a warm welcome from my host family Jael Matos, the Academic Administrator for Italian Studies and her sister Mara. I stayed with them for two days before moving to Wellesley. They took me around Boston the day after I arrived— it was love at first sight and I couldn't be happier. When I arrived at Wellesley College, I was even more excited to spend a year in this amazing place.

Was it hard to get used to life in the U.S. and at Wellesley College?
Every beginning is always hard. I was away from home and my family, but I was ready to make new friends, learn as much as I could and merge into American culture. I didn’t realized how much time has passed so quickly. I have been lucky since the beginning as I met wonderful people in the Wellesley community with whom I spent my time with and whom I could rely for support anytime. I have stayed really busy and involved in all the activities that Wellesley offers.

What will you miss most about life here at Wellesley College?
Without any doubt I will miss my friends here: those in Tower, particularly in the Italian corridor, as well as the other exchange students and the TAs. I’m really grateful I had the opportunity to share moments with them that I will never forget. I will also miss the great environment of the Italian Department; it was a pleasure to work with people who are so passionate about teaching the Italian language and culture to students. Being in this environment, I grew a lot both from a personal and a professional point of view.

Any advice for other Language Assistants?
My advice to the next language assistant is to live every moment to the fullest so that at the end you won’t regret any of it. Wellesley has so much to offer and to teach you so take advantage of it all! And never try the pineapple pizza!
**Sergio Parussa** is currently the Resident Director of the ECCO program in Bologna. As part of the cultural activities organized by the program, Sergio took the ECCO students on several field trips to artistic cities in Italy, such as, Ferrara, Ravenna, Padova, and Venice (see photos). During his stay in Bologna, Sergio was invited by to give several lectures on his scholarly research. In particular, he gave three presentations on the works of twentieth-century Italian writer Giorgio Bassani at the Department of Visual Arts of DAMS, the Philology and Classical Studies program of the University of Bologna, and the Liceo Ariosto in Ferrara.
As our bus passed the red brick porte marking city limits, I didn't know what to expect of my 3rd year fall semester in Bologna. The only thing I was certain of was that I was excited to get to know this new city that I had heard so many magical things about from previous ECCO students. Never having lived in an urban setting, the ability to explore all the hidden piazze, study spots, cafes, trattorie, and historical monuments of the city struck me as an exciting chance to grow in a completely new, stimulating environment. Another reason studying in Bologna seemed particularly bella was that, unlike Florence, Rome, or Venice, the Red City was still not overly touristic or a place where you were more likely to hear English than Italian. In turn, I anticipated a more authentic cultural experience in which I wouldn’t be sacrificing historical, artistic, and cultural richness of living in a medieval Italian city while still studying in a supportive, organized American program. As I would discover in the coming weeks and months, I came to appreciate even more that Bologna offered the perfect mix of an authentic Italian cultural experience with all the convenience of accessible inter-city and international transport given its central location in the nation. Bologna presents the opportunity to visit the majority of southern and northern Italian cities (and even international destinations via Bologna’s airport, like Barcelona and Paris). I really appreciated that ECCO took advantage of this locality to organize amazing, informative trips to Venice, Ravenna, Padua, Florence, and Modena. These program-covered experiences really helped me appreciate the great variety and depth in Italian cities and their cultures without breaking the bank. However, even with all this travel, it was always very relieving to return to a smaller, less chaotic, and safe city. The reason that I actually didn’t travel as much as some of my peers was that Bologna itself is a fantastic city to be a student in. Because of the University of Bologna’s presence, the city is basically like a big college town, containing many opportunities for social and academic encounters for students. While I was in Bologna, there were several free concerts, cheap and delicious restaurants, discounted movies and theater shows, and food festivals that were catered to students. This fact also offers the chance to meet students from many places—not only from all over Italy, but also from other international destinations. In fact, I had friends and roommates from Tunisia, Turkey, and Zimbabwe; it was such a special experience being able to study in a foreign context alongside students that had much to share from their own unique international experiences.

All of these personal observations aside, the last and most important point is that the staff and professors at ECCO are fantastic. I always felt supported academically (if I had questions about classes both at ECCO and in the University of Bologna), but also mentally in the process of getting accustomed to life in Bologna and abroad in general. The staff members of the ECCO office (Giuliana and Antonietta) were always ready to help with any inquiries whether related to homesickness, travel suggestions, where to get the best tortellini in brodo and ragu bolognese, questions about extracurricular opportunities in the city…really anything! I took History of Art and History of Science within ECCO, and these two courses were all the more interesting because we were able to step out of the classroom and see the origins of the artistic and scientific phenomena that we were discussing in the classroom just a moment ago. Perhaps the acme of these opportunities was the fact that these two courses organized trips to Venice (to see work by Titian and Tintoretto), as well as Florence (to see the Galileo Galilei Museum and the Uffizi). I learned so much but was able to appreciate my studies so uniquely and profoundly because our location in the center of Italy, in the Western world’s oldest university. I didn’t know what awaited me after passing the first red-brick porta to enter Bologna, but I’m so happy that my experiences surpassed my wildest expectations for my fantastic time abroad.
Carolyn Johnson ’21. This January, I travelled along with ten other Wellesley students and one New York University student to Rome to take Italian 202W, an immersive language course. For the duration of our three weeks in Rome we attended morning classes and spent afternoons discovering the history, culture and food of the city. In class we learned grammar and discussed documentaries on feminism in Italy. After watching the documentary entitled “Senza Rossetto”, the directors came to our class to hear our discussion about the film and answer our questions. It was an amazing experience to be able to talk about the documentary with the directors in person, and I think that we would all agree that it was one of our favorite classes. One of my best days of the trip was during the first week, when I visited the Colosseum and Foro Romano. It was so much fun to discover these ancient historical sites with friends, and as the weather was warm and sunny we decided to get gelato afterwards. The majority of our group spent the first weekend in Florence. We visited the Uffizi Gallery, climbed to the top of the Duomo, wandered across Ponte Vecchio, made our way to Piazzale Michelangelo, and even visited the Gucci Garden, a museum on the history of Gucci (which was free for students). I went on a day trip to Naples for the second weekend with a small group of friends, where we explored Pompeii and then spent a few hours eating pizza and wandering around the city. Overall, the Italian wintersession program and course in Rome was an amazing experience and I am so incredibly glad that I applied for it!
Alumnae Spotlight

Hanae Yaskawa ’17. After graduating from Wellesley with degrees in Physics and Italian Studies, I moved back home to California and started working at a food and technology start-up. Though I enjoyed the wide range of tasks I took on as a result of the flexible role, from recruiting and interviewing new team members to organizing company-wide celebrations, I missed feeling whole-heartedly engaged and intellectually stimulated as the tasks became more repetitive. I became more invested in my active pursuits, marathon running and basketball officiating, the latter being my part-time job, but so rewarding I don’t count it as work. While experimenting with various running gear and refereeing uniforms, I developed an interest in athletic apparel. With the growth of “athleisure,” technical apparel designed for both functional and visual appeal, I believed it to be a great way to exercise the problem-solving skill and appreciation for beauty that my two majors taught me. This coming fall, I’ll move to Vancouver to begin graduate studies in technical apparel design at the Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and am excited to go back to school to learn with a new purpose. The past two years out of Wellesley were difficult, as I missed my friends and professors dearly and found it hard to find my next steps after quitting my first job. Yet “life is a marathon,” as the saying goes, and embracing the physical and mental challenges through the ups and downs are all worth the new perspectives you gain through the process.

Alexandra Solimano ’10. After 9 years working in financial services in various trading-related roles, I’m thrilled to share that I’m taking a few months off to decide what adventure to pursue next! While I haven’t had as many opportunities as I would have liked to utilize my language skills at work (hopefully that will change!), I’ve drawn upon my study aboard experiences countless times in the 10 years since I fell in love with Bologna. My time there - the friends I made, the adventures we had, the professors who taught us, the food we ate - changed my life in the most amazing way, as did the Italian Department, and for this I’m forever grateful. I feel very lucky to have the opportunity - and the time - over the next few months to re-engage with the language I love and finally return to Italy! A presto L’Italia, non vedo l’ora!
Catherine Marchetta ‘10. I just returned from a wonderful trip to Italy where I was lucky enough to catch up with many people I’ve missed so much since my days at Wellesley and studying abroad in Bologna, Italy during E.C.Co. Sergio and I enjoyed the spring weather while walking through Piazza Maggiore after I eating some of my favorite gelato, Alice e Pistacchio, from the Creperia Funivia! I caught up briefly with Professor Preti at the Bologna train station and go on “una bella passeggiata” through the charming streets of Bologna with my favorite Bolognese chef, Rita. I caught up with Maria Antonietta and Giuliana at E.C. Co. and I was very happy to meet two of the friendly Wellesley women studying in Bologna for the semester too! One afternoon I even made it up to the beautiful hillsides of Montepastore to visit Elizabeth Robinson, one of our awesome Wellesley alumnae living in Italy. It was a special trip that brought back fond memories of my studies in Bologna. The incredible people I met and friendships I made while living there still bring so much joy to my life, even though ten years have now passed since my junior year abroad in 2009. I wish all of my amazing peers from that semester the best and hope that current Wellesley students take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity to explore a new country and culture, make new friends, go on adventures in a new home, and cherish all of the excitement that comes along with this type of exploration. I’m graduating from medical school this month and I will be training to become a pediatrician. My time spent in Bologna had such a profound impact on me and I continue to speak Italian every day. I even did an entire job interview in Italian while applying for my residency placement here in the US. You never know where your studies in Italian will bring you and the fun, exciting ways you will meet new people because of your knowledge of this incredible language.
Cultural Events

The Department of Italian Studies invites you to a conversation on

Globalism and Localism in Italy, Europe and the US

with

Federico Rampini, noted Italian Journalist and Essayist

Tuesday, February 5th
4:30pm
Collins Cinema
Reception to follow

Questions? dbartale@wellesley.edu
Disability Services? disabilityservices@wellesley.edu
Italian Cooking Night
Pizza and Game Night! Left to Right: Francheska Kovacev ’22, Zaria George ’22, Rosalind Lucier ’21, Melissa Loza ’19, Francesca Gusella and Lara Prebble ’19 (not pictured)

Special thanks to Francesca Gusella, our Italian Studies Language Assistant and Lara Prebble ’19 for organizing these events during the ’18-’19 Academic Year. Grazie!
A Visit to the Archives

The Department had the privilege to visit to Archives Department at Clapp Library in the Fall to take a close look at the documents they had for Italian Studies. Unfortunately, due to the fire in the Great Hall in 1914 many items were lost, but some did manage to survive. It was interesting to see things that dated back from the early 1900s. The Department enjoyed their time in the Archives as a way to reflect on the history of the Department and to consider how we can use the archives for future projects for Faculty and Students alike.
Summer Internships Abroad - 2019

LIBERA, Southern Italy
Rosalind Lucier ‘21, Tatum Kawabata ‘21, and Antonia Rocchio ‘20

The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy
Rachel Beaton ‘21

End of Year Events
Graduation Breakfast, May 31, 2019
8:30am, Founders Hall 224