

Studying Modern Languages at Oxford

Studying Modern Languages provides both practical training in written and spoken language and an extensive introduction to literature and thought written in European languages. You can study a broad range of literature, or focus your studies on any period from the medieval to the present day. A wide range of other options allow you to explore subjects including linguistics, philology, film or gender studies or advanced translation.

Modern Languages have been taught in Oxford since 1724. The faculty is the largest in the country, and undergraduate students have access to the Taylor Institution Library, the biggest research library in Britain devoted to modern languages.

Language is at the centre of the Oxford degree and the course aims to teach spoken fluency in colloquial and more formal situations, as well as the ability to write essays in the foreign language, and the ability to translate into and out of the foreign language with accuracy and sensitivity to a range of vocabulary, styles and registers. You will also develop your reading skills to a high level.

Studying Modern Languages - Italian, Portuguese or Spanish at St Anne's

Visiting students who are already studying Italian, Portuguese or Spanish may be interested in extending those studies at St Anne's. To apply for any of the modern language teaching visiting students need to have some language proficiency in the language applying for already, ideally to a 300 level in a US system, or the equivalent of two years university level. When applying applicants should indicate the level of language study already undertaken, and ideally submit one essay written in the language they are applying for.

Study durations

You can apply to study Modern Languages Italian, Portuguese or Spanish as a joint subject.

	Ext AY	AY	Fall Term	Hilary and Trinity terms	Studied with other subjects
Modern Languages – Italian, Portuguese or Spanish Literature	☒ With another subject	☒ With another subject	☒ With another subject	☒ With another subject	☒ Classical Archaeology and Ancient History; Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; Classics; English Literature; History; History of Art; Medical Humanities; Modern Languages; Music; Philosophy; Economics; Law; Politics; Computer Science; Experimental Psychology; Maths

ITALIAN

Studying Italian at St Anne's gives students the chance to choose from a wide variety of courses: translation into and out of Italian, speaking, listening and grammar, literary and linguistic topics, ancient and modern texts, Italian cinema and other options.

Italian literature, cinema and linguistics lectures and tutorials are usually conducted and assessed in English, though most of the language classes will be taught in Italian. Students are expected to read and quote from literary texts in their original Italian version, so a very good level of Italian is required. Many of the Professors in the Faculty are native Italian speakers, so there are plenty of opportunities to listen to and work in Italian at Oxford. We accept students with different levels of Italian language proficiency onto the programme, though usually we would expect students to have completed Intermediate Italian Language (or the equivalent of four semesters' study in Italian Language). Completion of literature courses in any language at the 200 Level or higher would be an advantage.

Studying Italian at St Anne's

Students who take Italian at St Anne's become part of a small, friendly community of around 8-10 students across all years of study. Our 'Italianists' are also part of the much larger and very vibrant community of Modern Languages majors at the College. Students studying Italian will receive individual attention from a dedicated Professor in Italian, your 'College Lecturer', who helps you design your course schedule for Italian and meets with you regularly to see how you are progressing. Depending on the options you choose, they may also teach you in small-group tutorials for Italian literature.

College teaching is supported by lectures and seminars in the Modern Languages Faculty, and by language classes in the Language Centre. Both the Faculty and the Language Centre are near to College.

Courses

Students are typically taught through a combination of lectures (typically 2-6 per week), tutorials (typically 8 per term) and classes (typically up to 24 per term if language options are taken)

In addition to language classes, the following Italian courses have previously been available -

- Paper IV: Linguistic Studies i. History of the Italian Language from the Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century
- Paper V: Linguistic Studies II. Modern Italian
- Paper VI: Medieval Italian Literature 1220–1430
- Paper VII: Renaissance Italian Literature 1430–1635
- Paper VIII: Modern Italian Literature (1750 to the Present Day) and Cinema
- Paper IX: Dante's *Commedia*
- Paper X: Early Prescribed Authors
- Paper XI: Modern Prescribed Authors

Please email visiting.students@st-annes.ox.ac.uk for course descriptions.

PORTUGUESE

The Literature and Culture of the Portuguese-Speaking World

The Portuguese language is spoken on four continents by over 250 million speakers. A complex and still fraught legacy of imperial expansion that started in the fifteenth century, the Portuguese language (and therefore its related literatures) covers a vast and varied terrain.

Studying Portuguese at St Anne's

The following papers introduce aspects of the geographic and historical range of literature written in Portuguese, which can be studied either by those who can read Portuguese already or who want to explore this fascinating world through translation. The more specialized options, centring on faculty's dual research interests in Portuguese Modernism and the early modern period, explore textual culture alongside both the visual/performing arts and the material culture of the periods concerned.

Courses

Courses are taught by fortnightly tutorials in St Anne's and students can attend a range of lectures provided by the Sub-Faculty of Portuguese. Courses on early modern topics take advantage of rare book collections in Oxford and objects held in the Ashmolean museum.

An Introduction to the Literature of the Lusophone World: Questioning the Canon

*available either for Portuguese speakers or in translation

One, two, or three terms

This course offers a whistle-stop tour of some of the Lusophone world's key writers, from the sixteenth century to the present day. Whilst we will look at some canonical figures, we will reflect on how and why these figures have been so celebrated and whether their works wholly fit with the ideological agendas that have often claimed them as important. The course will also take in marginalised voices to throw the canon into new light.

Writers covered might include: Gil Vicente, Luís de Camões, Fernando Pessoa, Machado de Assis, Clarice Lispector, Lídia Jorge, José Saramago, Luís Bernardo Honwana, Mia Couto, Pepetela, Paulina Chiziane.

Empire and its Discontents: An Alternative Introduction to the Literature of the Portuguese Discoveries

*available either for Portuguese speakers or in translation

One or two terms

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Portugal was at the forefront of world history. It sent ships further than any other nation, establishing a vast, global empire. Though nationalist sentiments, particularly during Salazar's dictatorship in the twentieth century, have tended to laud this period as a Golden Age and cast it as the epoch of seemingly unending triumphs of technology, conquest, and conversion, writers at the time were often perturbed by what was happening and gave expression to this anxiety in a variety of forms. This course re-visits, then, some of the most celebrated texts in Portuguese history and explores the shadier side of the discoveries that they expose. We will read plays by the father of modern theatre, Gil Vicente, the poetry of Portugal's national bard, Camões, and the early modern bestseller, Mendes Pinto's *Peregrinação*. We will also turn, however, to shipwreck stories to hear tales about lives lost at sea, consider the moral backlash against the untrammelled expansion of trade found in satirical poetry of the period, listen to the voice of a black African envoy to Portugal and his view on cultural differences, and try to see where women's experiences of these male-dominated imperial activities may be found. Alongside literature we will look to the visual and material culture of the period, exploring some of the collections at the Ashmolean museum and rare books held in Oxford libraries. This course gives you a Renaissance you can (quite literally) touch and feel in all its complexity.

The Shock of the New: Portuguese Modernism(s)

*available either for Portuguese speakers or in translation

One or two terms

This course explores the dizzying culture of the first decades of the twentieth century. Painting, dance, music, literature, journalism all fed into each other, as artists raced to find new modes of and media for expression — this is reflected in the material studied for this course which surveys how Portuguese writers responded to the buzz of modern life, travelled around Europe and beyond seeking new sensations to inspire their art, and tried to come to terms with their place in a new and rapidly-changing world. Two key scandals in Portugal during this period were the publication of António Botto's homoerotic poetry and the release of the Modernist magazine *Orpheu* whose writers were called mad by the mainstream press. Writers like Florbela Espanca and Judith Teixeira were also breaking taboos by asserting their place as women poets in a literary world dominated by men. All serve as case studies to measure the cultural turbulence of this fascinating period.

SPANISH - The Literature and Culture of Medieval Iberia

This subject offers a unique insight into the literature and culture of one of the most fascinating and rich periods of Spanish history, following the Islamic invasion of 711 up to the fall of Granada in 1492. Topics include: War and the hero, Representations of women, Medieval al-Andalus: faith, culture and society, Wrongdoing and transgression.

Students will explore the varied literary output of the period through topical approaches which will allow for both close examination of primary material and the chance to study critical approaches to medieval literature and to consider the texts within the fascinating multicultural context of medieval Iberia. Students will have the chance to study some of the earliest examples of Spanish literature so it offers linguistic benefits, as well as an obvious appeal to any students with an interest in history, particularly that of medieval Europe. The subject will introduce you to some key texts, authors and genres, including the world famous Poema de Mio Cid, Spain's signature epic poem.

The topics listed correspond to the research interests of college faculty, and with prior approval, it may be possible to offer other courses too.

If you have any questions, please email visiting.students@st-annes.ox.ac.uk