Keeping our Italian language and culture alive in American schools

NY-NJ-CT

Local Observatory on AP Italian Language and Culture
What is the AP exam?

- Advanced Placement examinations are taken each May by high school students at participating American, Canadian, and international educational institutions.
- The tests are the culmination of year-long Advanced Placement (AP) courses at the high-school level.
A Brief History of the AP

- After the end of World War II, the Ford Foundation funded a committee studying education. In 1952 it recommended allowing high school seniors to study college level material and to take achievement exams that allowed them to attain college credit for this work.
- The College Board, a non-profit organization based in New York City, has run the AP program since 1955.
AP Fact Sheet

- Many high schools offer AP (up to 10,000)
- AP courses are offered in 39 different subjects. Each year 2 million high school students take 3.5 million AP exams.
- As of 2013, the most taken AP exam was AP English Language with 476,277 students, and the least taken was Japanese with 1,169 students
AP Courses

**AP Capstone**
- AP Research
- AP Seminar

**Arts**
- AP Art History
- AP Music Theory
- AP Studio Art: 2-D Design
- AP Studio Art: 3-D Design
- AP Studio Art: Drawing

**English**
- AP English Language and Composition
- AP English Literature and Composition

**History & Social Science**
- AP Comparative Government and Politics
- AP European History
- AP Human Geography
- AP Macroeconomics
- AP Microeconomics
- AP Psychology
- AP United States Government and Politics
- AP United States History
- AP World History

**Math & Computer Science**
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- AP Computer Science A
- AP Statistics

**Sciences**
- AP Biology
- AP Chemistry
- AP Environmental Science
- AP Physics B
- AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism
- AP Physics C: Mechanics
- AP Physics 1
- AP Physics 2

**World Languages & Cultures**
- AP Chinese Language and Culture
- AP French Language and Culture
- AP German Language and Culture
- AP Italian Language and Culture
- AP Japanese Language and Culture
- AP Latin
- AP Spanish Language and Culture
- AP Spanish Literature and Culture
Why take the AP Exam?

- Many colleges and universities in the U.S. grant credits or advanced placement based on AP test scores.
- Those in over twenty other countries do likewise.
- Colleges may also take AP grades into account when deciding which students to accept.
AP Italian Language and Culture

The Advanced Placement Italian Language and Culture course is intended to give students a thorough background in Italian language and Italian culture, equivalent to a college-level course.
A Brief History of the AP Italian Course and Exam

1985: First mention of the lack of an achievement test for Italian
1992: First achievement test: 900 students
1999: First note on the advisability of developing an AP test or an AP-type test in Italian
2000: Proposal for an AP Program in Italian.
2003: The College Board decides to develop an AP course and exam in Italian
2005, September: The first AP Italian Courses are offered.
2006, May: 1,597 students took the AP Italian exam for the first time.
2007: 1,642 students took the exam
2008, April: The CB announces that the AP will be suspended — unless external funding becomes available — because too few students were participating in it to warrant the cost.
2008, May: 1,930 students took the exam
2009, May: 2,282 students took the exam
2010: Suspended
2011: Suspended
2011, September: The AP Italian Language Program is reinstated
2012, May: 1,806 students took the exam
2013, May: 1,980 students took the exam
2014: ..... 
2015: ..... 
2016, May: We need at least 2,500 students taking the exam
Exams in the TRI-STATE area 2006-2013

NY
NJ
CT
Advocacy

The restoration of the program is not the destination but rather the foundation of an important effort aimed at promoting the diffusion of Italian in schools as well as the formation of teachers and instructors.

Claudio Bisogniero, Ambassador
Why take the AP Italian Exam?

1. To save time and money;
2. To show colleges that a student is already investing in a global cultural model for his/her future;
3. To strengthen his/her transcript;
4. To save money by qualifying to enroll in an Italian university with his/her American high school diploma and three AP exams, one of which must be the AP Italian Language and culture exam.
Advocacy

◆ PARENTS:
  – Speak to your children about selecting Italian as their foreign language of choice and encourage schools in your community to offer courses in Italian studies, given Italy's rich historical culture.

◆ TEACHERS
  – Speak to your department chairperson and your principal, and together you can organize and develop an AP Italian language and culture course for your district and school.

◆ COMMUNITY
  – Mobilize in order to ensure that Italian and Italian-American history and culture, as well as the Italian language, do not fall by the wayside.
◆ STUDENTS

• Speak to your principal about adding Italian.
• Italian language education will enhance a student’s understanding and appreciation of the vast contributions of Italians and Italian Americans to American history, government, philosophy, art, architecture, science, medicine, and much more.
We have a challenge in front of us: that of keeping our Italian language and culture alive in American schools.

Natalia Quintavalle, Consul General

Is it possible? YES!
High school students

High school students enrolled in language course

High school students interested in Italian

High school students studying Italian

High school students taking AP Exam

Potential and actually

- High school students
- High school students enrolled in FL
- High school students interested in Italian
- High school students studying Italian
- High school students taking AP exam
J. LEADING DESTINATIONS of U.S. Study Abroad Students

- 14 of the top 25 destinations are outside Europe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Place of Origin</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>2010/11</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>270,604</td>
<td>273,996</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>32,683</td>
<td>33,182</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>27,940</td>
<td>30,361</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>25,411</td>
<td>25,965</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>17,161</td>
<td>17,019</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>13,910</td>
<td>14,596</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>9,962</td>
<td>9,736</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>8,551</td>
<td>9,018</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>6,262</td>
<td>7,230</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>6,798</td>
<td>7,007</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>4,835</td>
<td>4,589</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>-5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIONS</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>— Increase the number of high schools offering Italian</td>
<td>≈ 20,000</td>
<td>≈ 660</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>— Increase the number of high school students of Italian</td>
<td>≈ 2,360,000</td>
<td>≈ 75,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>— Increase the number of teachers of Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 2% of the Foreign Language teachers at High School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>— At colleges and universities:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Increase the number of majors in Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>— Increase the number of graduate courses in Linguistics and Language Pedagogy of Italian Language and Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td>44 (almost all of them are focused on Literature)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Geographical Distribution of Schools and Colleges Offering Italian in the USA
Strategic Plan of the National Observatory

- **Greater mobilization at the local level**
  - via the creation of local branches of the Observatory;

- **Outreach to those schools that do not yet have Italian programs, and support to the existing Italian programs**
  - (meetings with the local school authorities; supply of materials and subsidies; sponsorship of grants/scholarships; etc.);

- **“Adopt a school, a class, a teacher” initiatives:**
  - if every organization would sponsor, as of now, the opening of 2-3 new classes of Italian, we would see a marked increase in the number of students taking the AP Italian exam in the coming years;

- **Sponsorship of AP level Italian courses:**
  - this would allow for a plethora of course and exam offerings in many high schools where AP Italian is not offered, thereby making the goal of 2,500 students taking the exam in 2015-2016 feasible;

- **Monetary incentives to students:**
  - so that they take the AP Italian exam.
We cannot sit idly by: a step away from victory, we cannot and indeed must not fail to, once again, offer all our support in order to achieve our goal in a secure, concrete, and definitive manner. 

(...) Let us join our forces, and victory shall be ours!

Claudio Bisogniero
Our goal is that much closer and accessible!

Let us join forces, and victory shall be ours!

We count on your generous help and support!

“Many thanks!” • “Grazie infinite!”