1. Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?

Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present

Such organizational culture emerged around 2009-2010, when we prepared for assessment of Spanish and French Majors. At that time the department completed a course matrix for each of the languages offered. The report for 2010-2011 included assessment data for the gateway Minor courses such as Italian 1A through 2B.

However, as area head, I had already prepared assessment tools for the new course, Introduction to Italian Cinema 104A, in Spring 2007. Since I recently taught this course again in Spring 2011, I was able to further assess learning goals and outcomes. Please see attached assessment grid, tools, and samples of student work at the end of this document.

Through courses in Italian language, cinema (104A/B), civilization (130), and literature (110 and 111), the Italian minors attain knowledge of current socio-cultural habits, politics, history and literature of Italy. Students then apply this knowledge through their ability to comprehend, speak, read, and write in Italian.
This semester we are collecting data for Italian 1B. These findings will appear in the 2011-2012 assessment report. On the first class day I will administer a pre-assessment test. The results will be compared with a post-test, to be given at the end of the semester.

2. Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.

Italian Minor Program Goals Learning Objectives/Outcomes

NO PRIORITIZATION: all interconnected in an ascending order

a. Students demonstrate knowledge of everyday or current cultural habits, eating, travel, shopping for clothes and food

1a. Students apply practical skills including oral communication and creative thinking to another culture

b. Students engage in conversations in the target language in a variety of contexts and testing conditions

1b. Students apply practical and analytic skills including oral and written communication to a foreign culture.

c. Students demonstrate basic knowledge of the history, literature, and current social and political developments in the target culture

1c. Students engage in analytical and critical thinking regarding another culture and therefore learn about the differences between it and their
1. For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible. All of our departmental learning goals and outcomes are perfectly aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals, for example, the above skills and goals allow students to gain “Knowledge of Human Cultures” through the study of languages. This type of study involves “critical and creative thinking,” “written and oral communication,” as well as “engagement” in “Global intercultural knowledge and competence.” [Please limit your response to 400 words or less]

For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.

a. Students demonstrate knowledge of everyday or current cultural habits, eating, travel, shopping for clothes and food

1a. Students apply practical skills including oral communication and creative thinking to another culture. 

Method: Diagnostic exam given at the beginning of the semester, pre-assessment tool and post test to be given at the end to measure goals and outcomes

b. Students engage in conversations in the target language in a variety of contexts and testing conditions

1b. Students apply practical and analytic skills including oral and written communication to a foreign culture. Method: Oral diagnostic tests given throughout the semester. Students quiz each other on a series of questions. At the end of the semester they perform a short dialogue in specific situations (likes/ dislikes, school, travel, health, etc.) for the instructor

c. Students demonstrate basic knowledge of the history and current social and political developments in the target culture
1c. Students engage in analytical and critical thinking on regarding another culture and therefore learn about the differences between it and their own culture. 

Method: 
Guiding questionnaires for Cinema course, ITAL 104 A. See the end of this document.

b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.

Please see attached rubric

d. Students discuss literary and intellectual developments in the target culture

1d. Students engage in written and oral communication teamwork and creative thinking.

Method: A. Students read dialogues from the Italian Renaissance and Romantic period then write their own dialogues in the style and spirit of those they have read. B. Students are tested on these dialogues and must identify the themes, genres, typical language, historical context, and function of each. (To be carried out in ITAL 130 The Dialogue form)

Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program. Please see attached rubric and sample questionnaires.

d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

The rubric to grade the pre- and post-test was developed by the Assessment committee to evaluate the proficiency level of students in the 1B language courses at the beginning and the end of the semester to determine the impact and measure the differences between goals and outcomes.

The results of tests and responses on student questionnaires will allow the instructor to assess whether the goals have been met.
Please see samples of student responses to ITAL 104A and B Questionnaires.

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per learning outcome]

(If the requested data and/or analysis are not yet available for any of the learning outcomes, please explain why and describe the plan by which these will occur. Please limit your response to 500 words or less.)

2. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per item]

a) Students demonstrate knowledge of everyday or current cultural habits, eating, travel, shopping for clothes and food

A new internet learning system was adopted in 2009 for all Italian Minor gateway courses such as Ital 1A through ITAL 2A/B, !Lrn Cengage Learning Center. This allows the students further oral practice and direct interaction with each other and with the instructor (through online chats and recordings)

b) Students engage in conversations in the target language in a variety of contexts and testing conditions

Diagnostic test will be given this semester at the beginning and the end.

c) Students demonstrate basic knowledge of the history, literature, and current social and political developments in the target culture

Guiding questionnaires have been rewritten or revised to better direct the students toward critical viewing, analysis, and comprehension. Please refer to samples.

d) Students demonstrate basic knowledge of the history and current social and political developments in the target culture

Testing and writing assignments, i.e. writing a dialogue similar to those read in class, will help to determine if goals are being met.
3. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur. In its most recent self study for assessment our department conducted a survey and sought data from alumni to measure the longer term effects of accomplishment or our program’s learning outcomes. I quote part of their findings: Additionally, 87.8% of the current students responded positively [52.8%] strongly agreed and 35% agreed] that “The F. L. program has helped me learn about differences and similarities between my language and the language I have studied (Likert #4).” Among the alumni surveyed, 91.1% of the responses were positive [67.9%] strongly agreed and 23.2% agreed]. Both of these findings, while indirect measures, indicate students’ consent that the Department of Foreign Languages is meeting the learning goals related to language and cultural knowledge. More specifically in the case of Italian, one of my students Rosalinda Garcia, recently completed an M.A. in Italian Studies at New York University. Kaitlin Gerardi recently found a job working for a major European designer while JR, William Giovannetti, once President of the Italian Club, is completing graduate work in International Relations.

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization? My program, along with the Department of Foreign Languages in general, has been providing instruction that is in alignment with the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning.

As stated in our departmental Self Study document, the Italian Minor along with the Department of Foreign Languages has developed and implemented an assessment plan based on the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning. This assessment plan includes five goal areas: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. The department adopted the current assessment plan based on the following goals:

Students completing programs in the Department of Foreign Languages will:
communicate in language(s) other than English;

- gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures;
- develop insight into the nature of language and culture;
- participate in multilingual communities and acquire information.

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

4. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]

The Italian Minor serves students from all disciplines especially, music, humanities and religious studies, Communication, English, TESOL, Spanish, and other Language majors often minor in Italian, heritage speakers and so forth.

We are currently sharing and planning collaboration with the Departments of History, Music, English (TESOL), and Education. Many film majors obviously take Italian courses as well. Several of these projects are a natural result of the suggestions our external reviewer, Edith Benkov made to us in her Academic Review Report of April, 2011, page 8.

All of our Italian syllabi state the course goals which reflect all foreign language program goals including cultural literacy. For example, the four language acquisition courses develop the “four basic skills” “speaking, aural comprehension, reading and writing.” The department’s focus on cultural knowledge may be seen in our program’s statement that “It is through the advanced language, literature and culture courses that students become familiar with a foreign language, begin thinking in that language and become familiar with the literary and cultural contributions made by the people speaking it,” and therefore cease to find that language "foreign." (from Self Study)
Appendix

GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT PLANS

Department of Foreign Languages

GE AREA/C4

I.

A. Course Name and Number
   Ital 104A Introduction to Italian Cinema I

B. Coordinator of multi section courses
   Should more than one section ever be offered, Professor Barbara Carle will act as multi-section coordinator

C. Department Oversight
   The Section Area Head, Professor Barbara Carle, reviews course syllabi every semester

D. Compliance Procedures
   The Area Head for Italian and the Departmental Chair are responsible for ensuring that all classes comply with GE Area criteria.
II. GE LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Apply processes of critical analysis to the text-based courses within this category.
2. Demonstrate a comprehension of the aesthetic/cultural values and historical developments within the content of the course.

III. COURSE SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

1. Learn about Italian Civilization (art, politics, theatre and customs) through cinema.
   2. Identify the contributions of diverse artistic movements and of contrasting ideologies and directors (women, marxists, neorealists, comedy and satire, etc) to Cinema.
   3. To develop a critical understanding and cultural knowledge of Italian Cinema and to enjoy and appreciate it as well.

IV. ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Assessment is conducted through **guiding questionnaires** which are distributed **BEFORE** each film.

These questionnaires highlight the technical, cultural, Marxist, Feminist, Neorealist, aesthetic, comic/satirical perspectives of each movie. Students learn to be sensitive to these issues and view points by finding the answers to the guiding questionnaires while watching each film.

**PLEASE SEE SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRES ATTACHED.**

Class discussions after each viewing, based on guiding questionnaires help to further realize course outcomes.

V. CRITERIA

Students meet criteria of learning objectives when they learn how to critically view the films by appropriately responding to the guiding questionnaires.

These questionnaires are graded and are due the week following each film viewing. They must be three pages, with typed double spaced responses. Answers must be as specific as possible and refer to precise scenes and moments of the film.

**Students are allowed to resubmit their questionnaires if they receive a low grade.**

An "A" is earned for thoughtful, in depth responses, addressing details of the film, technical aspects, lighting, camera shots, etc, cultural elements, contrast between Italian/American customs, and high degree of critical observation and appreciation of the film.

An "A" means excellent grammar, organization
and coherent style.

A "B" is attained for thoughtful in depth responses which address all the above issues, but in which the high degree of critical observation is usually lacking and lack of clarity is usually present.

A "C" is given for complete but usually perfunctory responses, which are lacking cultural and critical sensitivity, but which do reveal effort and some appreciation.

A "D" or an "F" are given to incomplete, late or rushed and superficial responses, which show no effort nor thought.

Instructors comments will be specific in pointing out excellent and good responses while explaining what is lacking in insufficient or superficial ones or with poor grammar, lack of organization and poor stylistic choices. Questionnaires may be rewritten one time for grade improvement and to achieve learning objectives.
VI. Timeline for implementing this assessment plan

When the course is offered, which is uncertain, due to budget crisis, etc, perhaps in 2007-2008, and again in 2013.

VII. Feedback mechanisms that will be used to revise assessment plan and techniques

I will further revise the questionnaires and require more film analyses if I determine that the established outcomes and objectives are not being met.

VIII. Writing Component of the Class: The questionnaires require detailed, drawn out responses of at least three pages for each film. We usually view a minimum of 12 films.

This means that the students main work is writing about each film viewed. Clear responses, correct grammar and coherent style are also graded and may be improved upon second submission of questionnaire.
ATTACHMENT: SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRES

1. General Knowledge Questionnaire on Italian Cinema

1. Do you know any Italian film directors? If so name them. (Please do NOT include Italian-American directors)
2. Name any Italian actors you have seen perform, name any Italian actresses. (Please do NOT include Italian-American actors)
3. Do you know any European film festivals? The Cannes film festival, the Leone d’oro prize at the Venetian film festival? The Donatello prize?
4. List the Italian directors who have won the Oscar.
5. List the Italian actors/actresses who have won an Oscar.
6. Which Italian directors have been honored at the Oscars?
7. Which Italian director had a deliberately anti-Hollywood film aesthetic?
8. What was the first golden age of Italian cinema?
9. What was the second golden age?
10. Which Italian film movement had the greatest impact on world cinema in an innovative sense? What distinguishes it from American cinema?

2. Guiding Questions with Film Vocabulary

While watching a film, judging and criticizing we must keep in mind that we are viewing a work of FICTION whose language is VISUAL, a VISUAL ART.
In a written narrative we rely on the written word, in a film narrative we rely on images and the connections between them are not always immediately evident.

1. What sort of camera movements seemed to recur in this film?
   - a pan, when the camera films its subject horizontally from a fixed position simply by turning on its axis (Roma città aperta: panning of Rome and the Vatican as the young boys are walking downhill toward the city)
   - tilt, a vertical version of the pan, that is, up or down movement of the camera from a pivotal point
   - quite often the camera itself moves, a tracking shot, moving forward, backward or diagonally in relation to the subject.
   - Neorealist films often use an objective camera style, a technique which aims at reproducing the appearance of reality, as in Ladri di biciclette by De Sica.
   - Other films could prefer subjective camera style, which attempts to underline the emotional connections between film character and the audience as in Il conformista.

2. What sort of camera shots occur in this film? Did any shots strike you more? Why? The camera sets itself in a relation of distance vis-à-vis its subject.
Consider how the camera moves, and at what distance from subject to subject. Zoom in and zoom out shots, did you notice any?
Close ups, medium shots and full shots, these all affect how we view the character. How was the protagonist filmed?
Consult pages 105-109 of A Student’s Guide to Italian Film for definitions and examples of these shots.
3. Assembling the Shots, Editing or MONTAGGIO/MONTAGE.
Consider the manner in which single shots are assembled, the way they are connected, mounted in a frame. The film editor must assemble selected shots into coherent sequences, which when run through the projector, will form the SCENES and EPISODES of the film narrative.
In a cut, two different shots are joined together, so that the second replaces the first. A transition provides what cannot be found in the cut, that is a way to smooth over the differences between individual shots.
Did you notice the following transition devices?
4. Perhaps one of the most important elements of any visual art is the question of LIGHTING. Lighting is crucial in black and white films, essential in any film. The proportion of light to dark in any scene is called tonality, thus the lighting will help set the tone and create the ATMOSPHERE of the film.
   - What did you notice about the lighting in this film?
5. Did the soundtrack interfere with the visual images or reinforce them?
Consider the use of music and dialogue after considering the above elements.
6. Consider the actors, facial gestures, poise, articulation. Were they convincing?
7. Consider the cultural elements in this film, use of non professional actors, lighting, etc. How is this film different from the American films you have seen? Finally whether or not you liked or disliked the characters, thought they were good or bad, this should have NO relevance in your manner of judging the film.

3. Guiding Questions to Roberto Rossellini’s Rome, open city. (Roma, città aperta, 1945)
1. This film was a landmark in Italian cinema for many reasons, among them, the fact that it so completely reflected the moral and psychological atmosphere of a precise historical moment. What are some of the means it uses to achieve this atmosphere?
2. What sorts of different styles are combined in this film?
3. What are the main historical themes?
4. What divisions does it portray in the Italian resistance?
5. Are the main characters complicated or can you easily categorize them?
6. What contrasts did you notice in terms of mood? From comic to tragic?
7. What effect do these contrasts have on the viewer?
8. Give examples of different types of shots: a pan, a tilt and a tracking shot.
9. Comment on the use of close ups in the film.
10. Comment on the film’s lighting.
11. Which actors were more convincing? Which characters did you prefer?
12. Are there many instances of irony in the film?
13. What is your opinion of this film?

4. Guiding Questions to De Sica’s Ladri di biciclette (Bicycle Thief)
1. Does De Sica use many panning shots?
2. Do you notice many scenes of crowds, markets, streets, piazze, churches, etc.? Where is the protagonist in these scenes?
3. How is the protagonist placed in most shots? In closed or open spaces? Against anonymous geometric lines, walls, windows, balconies, or against open spaces, rivers, fields, etc.?
4. What is the relationship between the city of Rome and the protagonist?
5. Can we say that the city itself is a protagonist?
6. Do you see a contrast between what the reporter says at the police station regarding the day’s worthy stories, the bicycle theft “would not deserve two lines in a stray dog column”, “nothing today, only a stolen bicycle,” and the importance of the bicycle for the protagonist, Antonio Ricci?
7. How are the following places filmed? The slums, flea markets, brothels, the sports stadium?
8. Are there any elegant places filmed?
9. How does the camera treat Bruno, the child?
10. Does De Sica use any zooms?
11. Comment on the final fade-out of the film.
12. How would you summarize the plot?
13. Do you perceive any contrast between bright spaces, bright lighting and dark, cramped spaces with dimmer lighting?
14. What does the music do for the story?
15. What is the social element in this film? Is the historical context important?
16. Are there any “stars” in this film? Does De Sica use non-professional actors only?
17. Is the question of different social classes highlighted in the story? How?
18. What sequence did you find most striking and why?
Respiro, Nuovo Mondo & Rocco and His Brothers

Guiding Questions to Emanuele Crialese's Respiro, 2002

1. Family values are always important in Italian films. In all three of these films we saw for class this was apparent, even in Respiro when the mother was still looked down upon by the villagers family kept her close. The husband did not want to send her away because he felt that she needed them. When she goes into hiding her son comes to her everyday with food and clothing and this shows the tremendous value of family and responsibility that is apparent in family. Although Pane e tulipani showed a family that was divided, family and the importance of keeping a home was important.

2. I felt like one has to conform to society in order to survive and thrive within it. Grazia is not given this chance; she is seen as someone who is different than everyone else in the society so she must be deported from the island and go to the main land. Non-conformist is not an accepted way of life. You must conform or be taken out. Fortunately for Grazia she had a loving son who took care of her even when society told him not too.

3. I thought the cinematography was very beautiful in this film and especially the images of the sea and rock structures were exceptionally beautiful. The cinematography really added to the sadness of the movie and the struggles of Grazia. The beauty and mystery of the sea appropriately replicated the beauty and mystery of Grazia.

4. The tonality was very consistent and the warm bright colors were very effective in making you feel like you were there on the island with the people. The blue of the ocean and sky really stands out in the movie and it is very vibrant.

5. The relationship between Pasquale and Grazia was extremely strong. The very young boy often took on a parent role with his mother in order to keep her safe and in good health. When it was time for her to leave the island he helped her hide and daily would come to her to tend and be there for her. The devotion to his mother really plays a big role in this relationship.
6. The sound track is similar in that it is true Italian music that feeds off the emotion of the characters. The music feels authentic as does the characters and storyline. I felt the music was very important in this film and made it form together as a whole.

7. The natural world in this film is very beautiful and authentic; it is of the natural world and the beauty that surrounds us. I felt this film worshipped the beauty of nature and how it can affect us and our daily lives. It is far different then my world because we live in a very mechanical and urban area. Nature like in this movie is not like how it is in our world. The cultural differences are not so much different in the sense that a woman in her condition may also be outcast in our world. We live in a very judgmental world where we say being different is okay when really we do not think it is. The same thing would happen here, we would think a woman like that must be in an institution.

8. The inhabitants are very focused on their daily lives and how they lead them. They are focused on getting their daily jobs and routines taken care of and they do not like anything to interfere or be different. This is why Grazia becomes an outcast; she cannot conform to their routine and is seen as too different from the rest of the inhabitants.

The Golden Door (Nuovo mondo) Emanuele Crialese, 2006

1. The world of the Sicilians is very rough and hard, the people struggle daily to put food on their plates and they are looking for anything to help them make it in life. They live in tiny homes and their prized possessions are the animals they buy or breed. It is very hard for them to be in love with life because they are given so little to enjoy it with. The Mancuso are different from other families in their town because they seek to find a way out of the village. They want to be successful and to have money and food so they plan on moving their family to the States in order to begin a new life.

2. The landscape is filmed with many sweeping shots and tracking shots. You see the landscape as the camera glides across it. Although the country as a whole is beautiful this small Sicilian village is very run down and falling apart. It feels isolated and you feel as if the people do not have a chance of a good life.

3. The scene when the ship is going to leave the dock is very interesting and unique. The ship is located right next to the dock but at first you do not know that. There are hundreds of people on the ship and hundreds standing on the dock so it appears that it is one swarm of people standing. But eventually as the boat leaves the dock you see that there are actually people on a ship. It is very interesting to see the people that you once thought were a big group, were actually two groups of people.

4. Characters do not really change instead you see more about them and how they react to certain things. You feel apart of their daily lives and routines especially on the ship scenes were they had to adjust to life at sea. It is very interesting to see as they live their lives in front of the camera. Some characters do change like the youngest brother who is presumed to be mute but actually speaks in the end.
5. A lot of scenes are in silence the most prominent is the love scenes between the British woman and the Italian father. Their love or affection towards each other grows in silence as they look at each other and grow with one another. There are a lot of things that happen on the ship but one of the most interesting was the storm at sea. The entire scene is shot from within the boat which is very unique. Usually storms at sea are shown from the outside so you see how epic it is.

6. Lucy Reed is an mysterious British woman who finds Mancuso and his family and decides to try to get in America with them. Her background is not known, she is dressed well so she may have been wealthy at one point and wanted to come to the States to start a new life. We do not know and it is never spoken about in the film. She is drawn to the Mancuso because she saw a loving family that wanted to start new and fresh in America with no questions asked. She wanted someone who would not ask her questions and would almost accept her without hesitation.

7. The dialogue is very important because of the lack of dialogue. Whenever someone speaks it is usually something that is important towards the story or is funny. Many important scenes happened towards the end when Mancuso was trying to legally wed Lucy. This was one of the few times they speak during the movie and it happened to be when they were trying to arrange their own marriage.

8. Ellis Island is portrayed as a place where people enter in the New World; it is seen almost like a prison in a way because the people must stay there for days as they go through a long process of gaining citizenship. The tonality is very dark and brown colors are used mainly throughout these scenes. The scenes are not bright but they are well lit, although it is dark colors you feel a sense that everything will be okay for the family.

9. Three cultural worlds are strongly contrasted. Consider the characters that represent each on Mancuso represented the immigrants and their world, Lucy represented the English and European world and the men in charge of Ellis Island represented freedom of the New World. These three worlds made up the movie and showed how important America, the New World, was to the rest of the world and the chance of change it provided.

10. The three parts of the film are the beginning when they show the village in Italy, the middle of the movie takes place on the ship and finally the third and final part is of the family gaining their citizenship. The first part describes the family and their struggles and wants in their poor village. The middle identifies what it must have been like traveling all the way from Europe to New York. Finally the last scene depicts the struggles of becoming an American and how your family can be torn apart from it.

11. The family decides to stay in America even after the grandma decided to go back, she told them they must stay. They obeyed he wishes and stayed back behind her. I do not think the immigration authorities were always fair in determining who stayed and who went back. They discriminated against some people determining who was smart based off of a block test. I think this was foolish and was wrong to except people to know what to do and if they didn’t they must be stupid.

12. The myth of America is represented very visually; they show the family swimming in a river
of milk. Although this was in their head and a dreamlike state, it still showed the myths of America very visually and believed to be real. There are even pictures of giant vegetables that are believed to be in America. It is very amusing to see how people actually believed all these great things were in store for them when they got off the ship.

13. I would have to choose the scene of the river of milk; I did not think that immigrants believed the myths of America were actually true. I did not think they actually took them literally, I found this very interesting and it changed my way of thinking. Overall this film changed my way of thinking of immigrants and I was deeply moved and affected by what I saw. A great movie and I am happy it was the last film we saw in class. I think this correctly identified what it was like to come to America during this time and how different this must have been for the people.

14. These types of films are important to see on a large screen because they are films on such a large scale. They depict things that are important to see on a big screen, such as the river of milk because it is more amazing and different on this large screen. You get a better sense of the scope of the film by seeing it on such a large scale.

Rocco and His Brothers

1. There seem to be a lot of tracking shots; the camera moves side to side a lot like in the scenes where the family would walk through the city. The tracking shots followed the brothers and other characters in the film so it felt like you were there with the characters. Tracking shots typically are eye-level since they are grounded on a track on the ground. So since they are eye-level you see what the characters see at their level. Within these tracking shots there are also pan shots as the camera moves side to side within the frame.

2. There are many medium close-up shots in the film and I felt this was very effective. Sometimes close-up shots are too overwhelming and wide shots are too far away from the actors so medium close-ups shots are fitting for films. You are able to see the emotion of the characters as well as seeing the action that is taking place. There were not any zoom in shots that I noticed, most Italian films tend not to use zooms but instead ring the camera in closer to the actors through cuts.

3. There were some cuts that can be considered transitions because they would fade into one another. I noticed that a lot in Italian films they use more transitions such as fade ins or dissolves. In Hollywood films there tends to be more clean cuts that go from one scene to the next without overlapping. I felt that through this class this is something that I saw to be unique to Italian films and filmmakers.

4. The lighting in this film was very light, as it was black and white there has to be adequate lighting to make sure that you can see everything. If black and white films do not have enough lighting the movie will be far too dark and if a movie is too dark it drains the audience. In order to get the right affect on the audience you have to make sure there are not too many scenes that
are dark. In this film the lighting was perfect and balanced. You can see everything taking place and even when the scenes were taking place at night there was still enough light to see what was happening.

5. The soundtrack was very traditional in terms of Italy; it depicted superbly what was taking place visually. You got a great sense of the Italian culture because of the music that was used. In Rocco and His Brothers you really got a sense of the emotion of the film through the music that was being played in the background. I felt that without the music track this movie would not have the same effect. Music is vital and I feel since most Italian films do not have much dialogue they rely heavily on music.

6. I thought the characters in Rocco and His Brothers were very convincing because the actors depicted very poverty stricken people. The emotion of this story is brought to life by the character’s faces and reactions to what was going on around them. I thought the actor’s faces were very convincing and responded well to the situations at hand. Movies that are very emotional and are about real life problems, always need great facial gestures and body emotion from its’ actors.

7. This film, along with most Italian films, is very different then what I am used to through American films. “Stars” are not required to make a great Italian film, they use the actors that fit the role and the story that they are telling and they know everything will fall into place around them. Since most Italian films, like this one, have cultural elements they require actors that are unconventional and fit the culture and elements they are depicting. I really liked the characters in the movie especially Rocco. I felt he had the most care and love of all the characters. He always wanted to see the good in people and never the bad, always quick to forgive than to curse or hate. Even when his brother rapes the woman he loves, Rocco still finds a way o forgive his brother. Most of the characters in this movie were very good actors that I enjoyed watching.
La Vita Nuova

She was a woman of grace, of beauty, and of tenderness. She inspired all those she passed to an increased level of morality. She caught the attention of any man who saw her. She possessed a disposition that seemed angelic, almost too perfect for an earthly human. This character was created in the form of a real life infatuation of Dante’s. Her name was Beatrice. She was the subject and inspiration for Dante’s work *La Vita Nuova* from which the XX sonnet, which will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs, was taken. Though the XX sonnet is more specifically about love itself, Beatrice is still mentioned in the sonnet and love is directly related to the subject of Beatrice.

*La Vita Nuova* is a work containing both poetry and prose narrative. In the narrative Dante explains his reasoning behind the poetry, essentially why he wrote it and what he meant by it. Throughout the *Vita Nuova* Dante mentions his protagonist Beatrice, but in the XX section, Dante speaks of the nature of love, not specifically Beatrice. In the XIX section Dante writes a lovely canzone about the graciousness and seemingly divine characteristics of Beatrice, and his audience were to, “Donne ch’avete intelletto d’amore,” “Women that have intelligence of love.” This canzone was the cause behind the XX section. In the prose narrative of the XX section, Dante explains, “Appresso che questa canzone fue alquanto divulgata tra le genti,” that after this canzone had become a good deal known or dispersed among the people, one of his friends urged and entreated him to write a piece about the nature of love. Dante felt that perhaps this friend
was “. . . avendo forse per l‘udite parole speranza di me oltre che degna,” having much more expectation and hope in Dante’s genius. Perhaps Dante was trying to be humble by saying this. Whatever the case may be, all we know is what Dante wrote in his prose. This is what he recounts, “Onde io, pensando che appresso di cotale trattato bello era trattare alquanto d’Amore, e pensando che l’amico era da servire, propuosi di dire parole ne le quali io trattassi d’Amore,” meaning, that when he, thinking that being so near to such beautiful recounts (the XIX section containing the beautiful canzone that became well-known) he now was to recount a good deal of love, and also thinking that his friend deserved a response from him, Dante consented to write a piece dealing with the nature of love. The sonnet itself is split into two sections, each dealing with an aspect of love. Dante explains “. . . ne la prima dico di lui in quanto è in potenzia; ne la seconda doco di lui in quanto di potenzia si reduce in atto,” “. . . in the first I speak about love as a force, and in the second portion of how this force [love] is seen in action.”

Dante opens the first section with, “Amore e ’l cor gentil sono una cosa.” This opening line is the most significant part of the sonnet, and contains the most enriched meaning. One could translate this as, “Love and the gracious heart are one thing.” To Dante, a gracious heart and love were inseparable from each other. A person reached a place of true noble excellence if they possessed the “cor gentil.” It carries the idea of a person who had been cultivated in excellence through poetry, music, grace, and knowledge. This “cor gentil” would also possess characteristics of kindness, chivalry, talent, and a cultivated heart. The second line of the first part of the sonnet also expands on the idea of the “cor gentil.” Dante wrote, “si come il saggio in suo dittare pone,” as the sage in his work maintains, “e così esser l’una sanza l’altro osa com’alma razional sanza ragione,” so to be (to exist) the one without the other as the reasoning soul without reason. Here Dante is making a comparison. The sage of whom he is speaking is the
poet Guido Giunizelli and of the poem he wrote titled “Al Cor Gentil Rempaira Sempre Amore.” It helps to understand Dante’s reasoning if one understands also what Guinizelli wrote. In the poem Guinizelli wrote “Al cor gentil rempaira sempre amore, come l’ausello in selva a la verdure, nè fe’ amor anti che gentil core, nè gentil core anti ch’ amor, natura.” Here he is saying that love always returns in the gentle heart as a bird comes back around to the green forest. He says that nature did not create love first then the noble heart, neither the noble heart first then the love. This is another comparison Dante referred to in order to reinforce his point. If both love and the gracious heart were not created one after the other, then they were created at the same time and together, therefore, they cannot exist one without the other. Further in Guinizelli’s poem he writes another beautiful illustration to reinforce this point, “Non appena ci fù il sole lo splendere fù forte e lucent, e lo splendore non fu creato prima del sole. L’amore nasce nel cuor gentil come il calore nello splendore del fuoco.” Here Guinizielli is creating a picture. As soon as the sun was here the shine was (existed) strong and bright, and the shine was not created before the sun. The love is born in the gentle heart as the heat/warmth (exists) in the shine of the fire. What he is depicting is that as soon as the sun came into existence it possessed a shine that was strong and brilliant. It is logical to say that the shine could not have shone if it were not for the existence of the sun. In the same way that warmth exists together with the fire, and the shine exists with the sun, so love is present together with the gentle heart. The idea is that when a person is cultivated in knowledge, grace, poetry, music, chivalry, and heart cultivation, then a person possesses a noble heart, which to Dante, and to those who also believed in the noble heart, was a state of being that went beyond religion. And if one possessed the “cor gentil” then one had love, because, as a reasoning soul cannot exist without reason, so the gracious heart cannot exist without love.
In the rest of the first section, Dante goes on to explain that nature creates both the heart and the love when it is influenced to love from the heavens; that love is as the “signore,” and the heart is its home. Inside this home, love rests sleeping. It can be in this sleeping state at times for only a short while and sometimes for long. How love moves from this restful state into an awakened state Dante explains in the second part of the sonnet.

The opening of the second section reads: “Bieltate appare in saggia donna pui, che piace a li occhi si, che dentro al core nasce un disio de la cosa piacenti. . . ,” which when translated means, “Beauty demonstrated in a virtuous woman, which pleases the eyes, so that inside the heart is born a desire for the pleasing thing. Love has now been stirred. Dante continued the rest of the sonnet by writing that this desire for the pleasing thing can sometimes last so long that it can cause the spirit of love to be awakened, “. . . e tanto dura talora in costui, che fa svegliar lo spirito d’Amore.” Dante is writing that love is at first reposing in the heart. When it sees a beautiful, virtuous thing it stirs a desire in the heart because that virtuous thing has become pleasing, and if this desire lasts in the heart for a long time, it causes love to be awakened in a person’s heart. Dante wrote all of this using the example of a man coming to love a woman of virtue. So one could say that if a man saw a woman of virtue, she would become pleasing to him and he would begin to feel a desire for her. In the very last line Dante also wrote, “E simil face in donna omo valente,” of which he is saying as it is with a man so it can be with a woman. A woman can have love resting, reposing in the heart, and when she sees a man of virtue, her heart can be moved to desire him. He will become pleasing to her eyes and then in her heart a desire
will begin to stir, which is love arising from its restful state in the heart, and then realized in action by the desire.

Dante’s view of love is very interesting to me. Part of what makes it so interesting is that his idea of love was very radical in his day. At that time love was defined by what you did religiously. This new idea of Dante’s and others who also believed in the cor gentil was not love as seen through actions, though a person could reflect a cor gentil by their actions, but rather it was defined as a state of being. It was a developed heart, not one that was defined by what you did, but what you had developed. This is very interesting to me, though it is not what originally drew me to Dante’s Vita Nuova. I was originally drawn to La Vita Nuova because of the structure of the poetry. The text is so flowing that it glides off the tongue and sounds like one is speaking a gentle river of words. This is what makes the poetry so beautiful. I also liked the idea of how Dante mixes prose narrative and poetry. This is one of my first exposures to literature that is written in this way and I think Dante uses it very effectively. It gives much more meaning to the poetry because a reader can have background information of the poetry. These two reasons are why I like Dante’s Vita Nuova, the structure of the poetry, and the incorporation of prose narrative and poetry. Something, though, that I would disagree with Dante, are his descriptions of Beatrice as an almost goddess-like figure. Granted poetry should be given room for exaggeration because that is sometimes where the creativity is expressed, but personally, to me, love is not so perfect nor a person so perfect as Beatrice seems to be. These ideals of love are beautiful and have some aspects of truth, but I feel that in reality even the most loving person does not possess such a high level of perfection. It seems more a thing to be hoped for rather than realized in a person’s life. I believe there are people who can possess high levels of virtuous character, but not to such a high level of perfection as Dante seems to describe Beatrice.
The XX section of *La Vita Nouva* is a beautiful section that stands out among the other sections of this work. It stands out because it is a sonnet that deals with the nature of love, love in a more general sense, in comparison to the other pieces which mostly describe the virtuousness of Beatrice and how she affects others. Though one must note that if it not been for the XIX section, which was the canzone to “ladies who have intelligence of love,” the XX section may not have ever been written. After the poem of the XIX section had become famous, a friend urged Dante to write a piece dealing with the nature of love, of which Dante consented. The piece became a sonnet with two parts, the first dealing with love as a force, the second showing that force in action. The most meaningful part of this sonnet occurs in the very first line of the poem and reads: “Amore e l’ cor gentil sono una cosa.” “Love and the gracious heart are one thing.” Love can be resting in the heart for a long time or perhaps for a short time. But when it sees a person of virtue, that person becomes pleasing to the eyes and a desire is awakened for that pleasing thing. This is when love is realized in action. The meaning of this entire sonnet can be summed up by the first line of the sonnet, “Amore e l’ cor gentil sono una cosa.” As the sun cannot exist without the shine, nor the rational mind without the reason, neither can love exist without the gracious heart.