If in the collective imaginary fashion is linked to glamour, style, and aesthetics, no country more actively evokes and embodies these concepts than Italy. Italian identity, culture, and economy remain deeply connected to fashion as both an institution and industry. Well before Italy’s belated unification in 1861, fashion long played a key role in the construction of national style and courtly life from the Middle Ages and Renaissance to the twentieth-century design houses which reshaped not only commercial and aesthetic trends, but solidified Italy’s association with post-war design culture more broadly. This course explores the development of Italian fashion from its roots in Medieval Communes to the dynamics of the modernity and the post-modernity of the 19th and 20th centuries, concluding with a close look at contemporary fashion as a creative force of socio-cultural change.

**This is a 2 credit course**