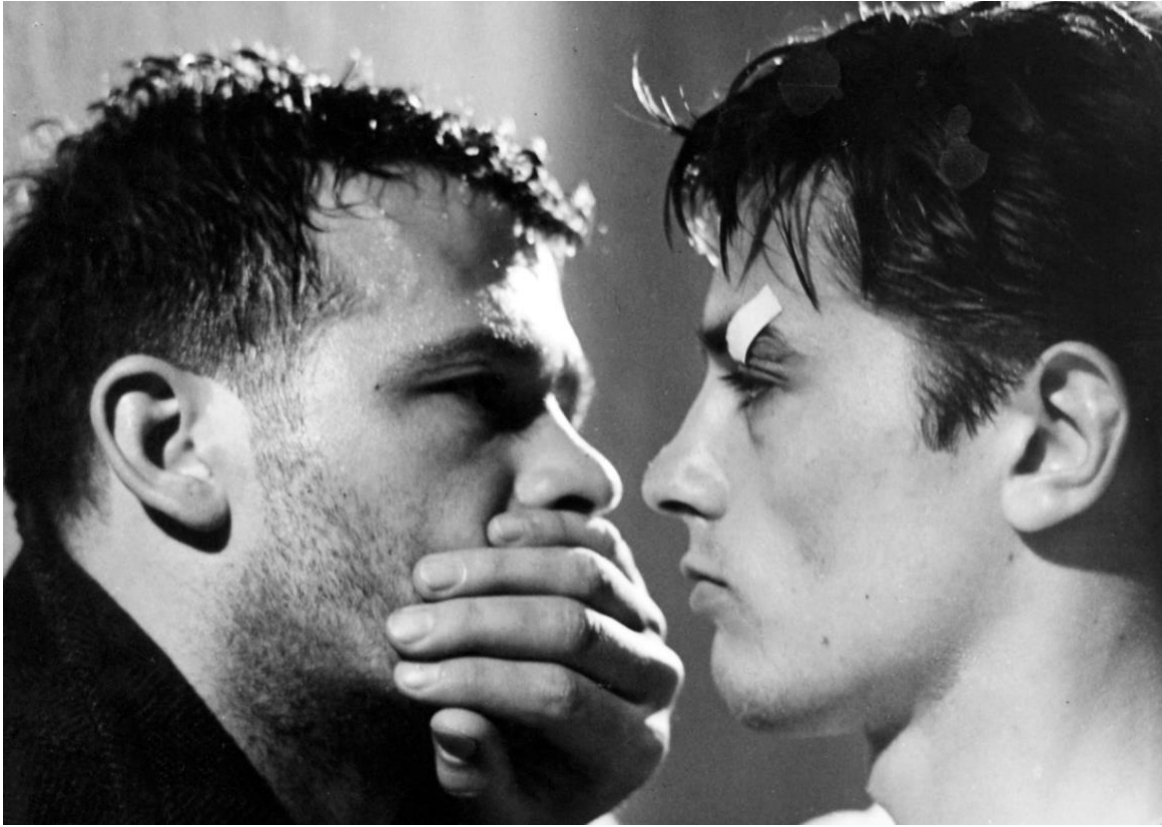


ITALIAN CINEMA

Section 8P31 Class #26213



When fascism fell in 1943, Italy was reborn as a Republic, with a new Constitution, rebuilt by the generation that had opposed and resisted the regime during the war. In the wake of this political and social transformation, an artistic movement emerged that would revolutionize cinema worldwide: neorealism. These films foregrounded the lives of the lower classes and depicted marginalized communities in a country still largely rural and underdeveloped. A new cinematic language took shape, minimizing the use of film sets and bringing production outdoors, onto the streets of a nation undergoing reconstruction, often relying on non-professional actors to enhance realism.

The 1950s brought an economic boom, but the 1960s and 1970s were marked by profound social conflict, particularly in factories and universities, that reshaped Italian society and culture. Cinema both reflected and intervened in these upheavals, articulating a growing sense of disenchantment as well as aspirations for radical political change. By contrast, the 1980s witnessed the decline of these transformative energies, giving way to a new conformism and

precipitating a deep crisis in the national film industry, a crisis whose effects are still visible today.

Through cinema, this course will trace Italy's transformation from a predominantly agricultural nation at the fall of fascism to a modern, industrialized country integrated into the European Union at the turn of the millennium.

Instructor Name: Pietro Bianchi

Course meeting times: M, W, F Period 3 (9:35 AM - 10:25 AM) Turlington 2334

Screenings: M Period 9 – 11 (4:05 PM – 7:05 PM) Rolfs Hall 0115

Office Hours: Monday (1:30 – 3:30) at Turlington 4342 or on Zoom (personal ID: 561 851 9876). (NB: Zoom appointments have to be scheduled in advance by email, even during office hours).

Course website: elearning.ufl.edu

Instructor Email: pietrobianchi@ufl.edu

Course Objectives

Through active and sustained engagement with course materials, activities, and class discussions, students will:

- Gain familiarity with the history of Italian cinema from the end of World War II through the early 1980s.
- Develop the ability to contextualize Italian postwar cinema within its historical and geographical frameworks.
- Acquire advanced skills in reading, interpreting, and critically engaging with theoretical works in film theory, film history, and film studies.
- Build a solid understanding of Italian history in the postwar period.
- Learn to approach films from a variety of critical and theoretical perspectives.
- Strengthen skills in critical analysis through the processes of viewing, discussing, and writing about films.
- Explore the philosophical dimensions of cinema, including questions of ethics, ontology, and the relationship between film and knowledge.
- Locate, evaluate, and effectively incorporate scholarly research in film theory, critical theory, and film studies into academic writing.

Required Readings and Films

The only book you are required to purchase for this class is:

- **Peter Bondanella and Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (London: Bloomsbury Academic).**

All other readings will be provided on Canvas (in the *Files* section). While the page count may not be extensive, the readings must be approached with thoroughness and care. They are integral

to our work together, and it is crucial that you keep up with them, devoting the necessary time and energy to understanding their arguments.

Assigned readings will include reviews and scholarly articles that interpret and analyze films, as well as book chapters and essays offering an overview of Italian history in the second half of the twentieth century. Historical readings are considered as important as those on film and will form part of your assignments. Some texts will be theoretical and challenging, while others will be more accessible. You are expected to come to class prepared—able not only to summarize the content of each reading but also to reflect on it critically. If you encounter difficulties, you are encouraged to schedule an appointment with me or attend office hours.

Screenings of required films will take place every **Monday at 4:05 PM in Rolfs Hall 0115**, organized by Isabella Motta-Zack. Attendance is mandatory, as these screenings are an essential component of the course. Films must be watched attentively and respectfully. The use of laptops, cell phones, or other devices during screenings is strictly prohibited. Please bring a notebook to record impressions and notes during viewing.

Be aware that many of the films required for this course include scenes of menace, violence, sexual violence, and the deaths of humans and other living beings. Some may also include nudity and scenes of sexual activity.

All assigned materials (readings, films, and lectures) will form the basis for in-class discussions, presentations, two quizzes, and the final exam. Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

Calendar of the screenings

M Period 9 – 11 (4:05 PM – 7:05 PM) Rolfs Hall 0115

9/1 - *Rome Open City* (Roberto Rossellini) (to watch at home)

9/8 - *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica)

9/15 - *Rocco and His Brothers* (Luchino Visconti)

9/22 - *La Strada* (Federico Fellini)

9/29 - *La notte* (Michelangelo Antonioni)

10/6 - *Mamma Roma* (Pierpaolo Pasolini)

10/13 - *La vita agra* (Carlo Lizzani)

10/20 - *Fists in the Pocket* (Marco Bellocchio)

10/27 - *A Fistful of Dollars* (Sergio Leone)

11/3 - *The Working Class Goes to Heaven* (Elio Petri)

11/10 - *Deep Red* (Dario Argento)

11/17 - *The Scent of the Night* (Claudio Caligari)

Organization of the Class

This is a discussion-based course in which active participation is essential and will be a significant component of the final grade. Students are expected to contribute thoughtfully to class discussions by asking questions, highlighting passages from the readings, and offering interpretive insights.

With some exceptions (always check the course schedule), the weekly structure will be as follows:

- **Monday (class):** Introduction to the week's film and readings, along with historical and cultural contextualization.
- **Monday (4:05 PM, Rolfs Hall 0115):** Film screening (attendance required).
- **Wednesday:** Two or three students will begin class with short presentations (approximately five minutes each), sharing their reflections on the assigned film and readings and initiating a discussion. All students are expected to participate actively in the discussion.
- **Friday:** The discussion will be continued with the instructor providing commentary on the film and/or readings. Supplementary sources or excerpts from additional films may be presented.

Attendance and Participation (10%)

Active participation in class discussions is central to this course. Your engagement is not only graded but also fundamental to the collective success of our learning community. *I firmly believe that, more than an individual performance, a university class is a collective effort to enhance the knowledge of everyone, and we should all share responsibility for its success.* Please come prepared and contribute actively to discussions. Note that discussions will often include materials beyond the assigned readings and films, making regular attendance essential. Attendance is therefore mandatory.

- **Unexcused Absences:** You are allowed up to **three unexcused absences** (including screenings) for personal reasons. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your final grade by **3 percentage points** (e.g., a final grade of 91% would be reduced to 85% with five unexcused absences). More than **six unexcused absences** will result in automatic failure of the course.
- **Excused Absences:** Absences due to medical reasons or family emergencies require documentation submitted as soon as possible. Students must make up the material covered, including screenings and class notes. Absences for religious observances do not require documentation, but students must notify the instructor in advance so that attendance can be recorded appropriately.
- **Tardiness:** Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Students arriving within the first five minutes after roll is taken will be marked tardy. **Three tardies equal one unexcused absence.** Students arriving more than five minutes late will be marked absent, though they should check in with the instructor after class to confirm attendance.

Canvas Discussion Posts (20%)

Each week (normally on Wednesday, though occasionally on Friday – e.g., *Rome Open City* in Week 3 – so always check the schedule), you are required to post a short paragraph (approximately 150 words) in the *Discussion* section of Canvas. This post should include a brief reflection and/or a few questions regarding the material assigned for the day. The purpose of this assignment is not to test your knowledge of the reading or film (you are not required to summarize them!) but to encourage you to share what you find to be the most interesting issues and questions that arise from them. This can take the form of a question or a series of questions. An original post or a response to someone else's post will both be counted (discussions are encouraged!).

Deadline: Tuesday at 8:00 PM. Posts submitted after this deadline will not be graded.

You may skip this assignment once during the semester without penalty.

In-Class Presentation (5%)

Once during the semester, each student will give a brief (5-minute) presentation introducing the assigned film and readings for the day. Presentations should highlight key issues or questions and serve as a springboard for class discussion. Two or three students will present at the start of most Wednesday sessions. A calendar of presentations will be distributed by the end of Week 2.

Short Quizzes (20% + 20%)

There will be two short quizzes during the semester, each consisting of open-ended questions covering the assigned films, readings, and class discussions. Questions may address general themes or specific details, and are designed to test both comprehension and critical engagement.

Final In-Class Essay (25%)

On **Wednesday, November 19**, you will write a final in-class essay (50 minutes). You will be given five possible topics, all drawn from material studied during the semester. You will select one topic and develop a focused, analytical response. Detailed instructions and review guidance will be provided later in the course.

Evaluation

Evaluation method in this course is consistent with UF's policies on grading
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Grades are calculated on a numeric scale, as below:

A 93–100 A- 90–92

B+ 88–89	B 83–87	B- 80–82
C+ 78–79	C 73–77	C- 70–72
D+ 68–69	D 63–67	D- 60–62

A grade of 59 or below is a failing grade (E). A minimum final grade of C is required for General Education Credit.

Cell phones and Computers

The use of personal computers and other electronic devices in class is acceptable only for purposes related to class discussion and collaboration. Casual web browsing, emailing, chatting, texting, etc. unrelated to class activities will not be tolerated.

Plagiarism and Cheating

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [See the UF Conduct Code website for more information](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Policies on the use of GenerativeAI in this class

U-M GPT, ChatGPT, and other similar technologies are advancing rapidly and there are many instances where they will be key tools in your schoolwork and career. For the purposes of this class, we are asking all students to pledge that they will *not* use these technologies. We believe this is key for this learning environment because we want you to learn how to *critically engage with* the material we’ll be discussing, including learning how to search for and identify relevant sources, synthesize these materials, and make recommendations without the aid of technology. Artificial Intelligence cannot do this learning for you. Students who are found to have used GenerativeAI or the like to complete their assignments will receive a grade of zero for that assignment.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [See the “Get Started With the DRC” webpage on the Disability Resource Center site](#). It is important for students to share

their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

- The email they receive from GatorEvals
- Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
- The central portal at <https://my-uf1.bluera.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Resources:

- E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.
- [Academic Resources](#): 1317 Turlington Hall, Call 352-392-2010, or to make a private appointment: 352- 392-6420. Email contact: teaching-center@ufl.edu. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information](#).
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information](#).
- UF Student Success Initiative: Visit <https://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/> for resources that support your success as a UF student.

Campus Health and Wellness Resources:

- UF Whole Gator Resources: Visit <https://one.uf.edu/whole-gator/discover> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#)

SCHEDULE OF THE COURSE

Week 1-2

F 8/22

Explanation of the Syllabus

M 8/25

Introduction to the course

W 8/27

Italy from Fascism to the Resistance

(reading) Martin Clark, *Modern Italy. 1871 to the Present* (ch. 14: Fascist diplomacy and Fascist War)

F 8/29

Italy from Fascism to the Resistance II

(reading) Martin Clark, *Modern Italy. 1871 to the Present* (ch. 15: Resistance and renewal: Italy from 1943 to 1948)

Week 3

M 9/1 - (No class) Labor Day

(film to watch at home) *Rome Open City* (Roberto Rossellini)

W 9/3

Introduction to *Rome Open City* (Roberto Rossellini)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 3. Neorealism: A revolutionary and Problematic New film Aesthetic)

F 9/5

Discussion on *Rome Open City* (Roberto Rossellini)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 3. Neorealism: A revolutionary and Problematic New film Aesthetic)

Discussion Post #1

Presentations #1

Week 4

M 9/8

Intro to *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 4. Neorealism's many faces: widening the range of the Camera's Eye)

Screening (9/8) - *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica)

W 9/10

Discussion on *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 4. Neorealism's many faces: widening the range of the Camera's Eye)

Discussion post #2

Presentations #2

F 9/12

Discussion on *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica)

(reading) Francesco Casetti, "Cinema and Reality"

Week 5

M 9/15

Intro to *Rocco and His Brothers* (Luchino Visconti)

(reading) Martin Clark, *Modern Italy. 1871 to the Present* (ch. 17: The Economy and Society Under the Republic)

Screening (9/15) - *Rocco and His Brothers* (Luchino Visconti)

W 9/17

Discussion on *Rocco and His Brothers* (Luchino Visconti)

(reading) Veronica Pravadelli, "Visconti's *Rocco and His Brothers*: Identity, Melodrama, and the national-popular"

Discussion post #3

Presentations #3

F 9/19

Discussion on *Rocco and His Brothers* (Luchino Visconti)

(reading) Veronica Pravadelli, "Visconti's *Rocco and His Brothers*: Identity, Melodrama, and the national-popular"

Week 6

M 9/22

Intro to *La Strada* (Federico Fellini)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 5. The Cinema of the reconstruction and the return of melodrama)

Screening (9/22) - *La Strada* (Federico Fellini)

W 9/24

Discussion on *La Strada* (Federico Fellini)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 5. The Cinema of the reconstruction and the return of melodrama)

Discussion post #4

Presentations #4

F 9/26

Discussion on *La Strada* (Federico Fellini)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, “*La strada* The Cinema of Poetry and the Road beyond Neorealism”

Week 7

M 9/29

Intro to *La notte* (Michelangelo Antonioni)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 8. The Italian Art film: Auteurism in Visconti, Antonioni, Fellini, and De Sica)

Screening (9/29) - *La notte* (Michelangelo Antonioni)

W 10/1

Discussion on *La notte* (Michelangelo Antonioni)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 8. The Italian Art film: Auteurism in Visconti, Antonioni, Fellini, and De Sica)

Discussion post #5

Presentations #5

F 10/3

Quiz #1

Week 8

M 10/6

Mamma Roma (Pier Paolo Pasolini)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 10. Myth, Marx, and Freud in Pier Paolo Pasolini and Bernardo Bertolucci)

Screening (10/6) - *Mamma Roma* (Pier Paolo Pasolini)

W 10/8

Discussion on *Mamma Roma* (Pier Paolo Pasolini)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 10. Myth, Marx, and Freud in Pier Paolo Pasolini and Bernardo Bertolucci)

Discussion post #6

Presentations #6

F 10/10

Discussion on *Mamma Roma* (Pier Paolo Pasolini)

(reading) Eleonora Sartoni, “(Mamma) Roma between Archaic and Modern Italy: Urbanisation and the Destruction of Poetical Dwelling”

Week 9

M 10/13

Introduction to *La vita agra* (Carlo Lizzani)

(reading) Martin Clark, *Modern Italy. 1871 to the Present* (ch. 17: The Economy and Society Under the Republic)

Screening (10/13) - *La vita agra* (Carlo Lizzani)

W 10/15

Discussion on *La vita agra* (Carlo Lizzani)

(reading) Elisa Cuter, “It’s a Hard Life for the Cognitariat: How Lizzani’s 1964 Film Depicts Precarious Intellectual Labor”

Discussion post #7

Presentations #7

F 10/17

No class (Homecoming)

week 10

M 10/20

Introduction to *Fists in the Pocket* (Marco Bellocchio)

(reading) Martin Clark, *Modern Italy. 1871 to the Present* (ch. 18: The Great Cultural Revolution: Italy in the 1970s)

Screening (10/20) - *Fists in the Pocket* (Marco Bellocchio)

W 10/22

Discussion on *Fists in the Pocket* (Marco Bellocchio)

(reading) Martin Clark, *Modern Italy. 1871 to the Present* (ch. 18: The Great Cultural Revolution: Italy in the 1970s)

Discussion post #8
Presentations #8

F 10/24

Discussion on *Fists in the Pocket* (Marco Bellocchio)
(reading) Deborah Young, “*Fists in the Pocket*: Ripped to Shreds”
(reading) Karl Schoonover, “Fists in the Pocket” (optional)

Week 11

M 10/27

Intro to *A Fistful of Dollars* (Sergio Leone)
(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 12. A Fistful of Pasta: Sergio Leone and the Spaghetti western)

Screening (10/27) - *A Fistful of Dollars* (Sergio Leone)

W 10/29

Discussion on *A Fistful of Dollars* (Sergio Leone)
(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 12. A Fistful of Pasta: Sergio Leone and the Spaghetti western)
Discussion post #9
Presentations #9

F 10/31

Discussion on *A Fistful of Dollars* (Sergio Leone)
(reading) Pietro Bianchi, “Not So Quiet on the Western Front”

Week 12

M 11/3

Introduction to *The Working Class Goes to Heaven* (Elio Petri)
(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 9. Neorealism’s legacy to a New generation, and the Italian Political film)

Screening (10/20) - *The Working Class Goes to Heaven* (Elio Petri)

W 11/5

Discussion on x
(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 9. Neorealism’s legacy to a New generation, and the Italian Political film)
Discussion post #10
Presentations #10

F 11/7

Discussion on *The Working Class Goes to Heaven* (Elio Petri)

(reading) Evan Calder Williams, "The Fog of Class War: Elio Petri's *The Working Class Goes to Heaven* Four Decades On"

Week 13

M 11/10

Introduction to *Deep Red* (Dario Argento)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 13. Mystery, Gore, and Mayhem: The Italian *Giallo*)

Screening (11/10) - *Deep Red* (Dario Argento)

W 11/13

Discussion on *Deep Red* (Dario Argento)

(reading) Peter Bondanella, Federico Pacchioni, *A History of Italian Cinema* (ch. 13. Mystery, Gore, and Mayhem: The Italian *Giallo*)

Discussion post #11

Presentations #11

F 11/14

Quiz #2

Week 14

M 11/17

Intro to *The Scent of the Night* (Claudio Caligari)

(reading) Ruben Demasure, "A Cinema of the Margins: The Curious Case of Claudio Caligari"

Screening (11/17) - *The Scent of the Night* (Claudio Caligari)

11/19

FINAL (in class)

11/21

Discussion on *The Scent of the Night* (Claudio Caligari)

(reading) Ruben Demasure, "A Cinema of the Margins: The Curious Case of Claudio Caligari"

Discussion post #12

Presentations #12

Week 11/23-11/30 Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15

M 12/1

Final Discussion

W 12/3

Concluding remarks