CIS (The Centre of Italian for Foreigners) at the University of Bergamo has been organizing courses in the Italian language and culture for foreigners since 1978, courses for the teaching of Italian as a foreign language since 1991 and on-line language activities in blended learning environments. It also carries out various other activities including:
the publication of the CIS series for the training and updating of teachers of Italian as a foreign language (published by Guerra) and the publication of various books for the teaching of Italian to foreigners. CIS also participates in research projects in linguistic acquisition, sociolinguistics and the methodologies involved in the teaching of foreign languages.
The University is situated in the ancient upper town which is rich in artistic and historical monuments. The low part of Bergamo is a town of middle size which lies at the foot of the Orobic Alps not very far from beautiful lakes such as Iseo and Garda. It is also easy to reach Milan (35 Km. far away) by rail and motorway.

The method

Basically our teachers use a communicative approach, the principal goal of which is the development of communication skills, i.e. the ability to speak and write appropriately according to the situation and the intention of the speaker.
We do not neglect the study of grammar in our course.
The following are some of the main qualities of our approach:

- the student, in various activities - individually, with a partner or in small groups - is always an active participant;
- the course aims at developing, in an integrated way, the five basic linguistic abilities (listening, reading, conversation, speaking and writing);
- didactic material consists of authentic unsimplified texts, with the characteristics of variety and multimediality;
- in order to assure a motivating and entertaining class and to accomodate different learning styles we use a great variety of teaching techniques;
- we also offer a tutorial service, outside class hours, once a week, to assist students with individual linguistic problems and to lend books, audio/video materials.

NON-INTENSIVE COURSES

(G1, G2) GENERAL COURSES

There are two courses, one in autumn and one in spring. These courses are open both to foreigners and to Erasmus and extra-European students.
Length: 15 weeks (it is also possible to attend the courses for a shorter period - for a reduced fee - after consultation with the Coordinator)
Lessons per week: 4 hours (two afternoons)
Levels: 5 (beginner (A1), elementary (A2), pre-intermediate (B1), post-intermediate (B2), advanced (C1)) according to the results of an entry test
Certificate of attendance
Final test (on request, you will receive a certificate bearing the marks obtained)
Guided tour of Bergamo

(S1, S2) WRITING COURSES

There are two courses, one in autumn and one in spring.
Length: 15 weeks

Lessons per week: 2 hours (one afternoon)
Addressee: Erasmus students and foreigners who have already a good oral competence (from B1 onwards) but have very little or no practice in writing
Certificate of attendance
Final test (on request, you will receive a certificate bearing the marks obtained)
Guided tour of Bergamo

(E1, E2) BUSINESS ITALIAN COURSES

There are two courses, one in autumn and one in spring.
Length: 15 weeks
Lessons per week: 2 hours (one afternoon)
Addressee: Erasmus students and foreigners with a good knowledge of general Italian (from B1 onwards) who want to learn the economic language
Certificate of attendance
Final test (on request, you will receive a certificate bearing the marks obtained)
Guided tour of Bergamo

SUMMER INTENSIVE COURSES - JULY

(L1, L2, L3, L4, L5) GENERAL COURSES

Length: 4 (L1), 3 (L2, L3), 2 (L4, L5) weeks
Lessons per week: 25 hours (5 lessons of one hour each a day: 3 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon)
Levels: 5 or 6 (beginner (A1), false beginner (A1+), elementary (B1), pre-intermediate (B1), post-intermediate (B2), advanced (C1)) according to the results of an entry test

- Final test for those who attend the course in the fouth week; the test takes place in the last week which is dedicated to preparation for this test.

Maximum number: 100 participants
Minimum age: 18
Deadline: applications should reach the University address by Friday of the second week of June (after this deadline people will be considered if there are places remaining)
Lectures on contemporary Italian culture: intermediate and advanced levels attend 2 lessons a week in the afternoon on contemporary Italian culture (e.g. Literature, Art, Cinema, Linguistics, Sociology)
Recreational activities:

- one afternoon a week students can choose from singing, theatre, editing a newsletter, photography and Italian dances
- a writing competition
- a party at the end of the course
- excursions: a guided tour of the lower part of Bergamo and one of the upper City of Bergamo; one day cultural trip to a city of artistic interest in Northern Italy (e.g. Verona, Milan, Como). This trip is optional and costs 10 €.

Certificate of attendance
Final test (on request, you will receive a certificate bearing the marks obtained)
Guided tour of Bergamo

E-LEARNING ACTIVITIES

CIS offers e-learning language activities to improve listening, reading and writing skills together with exercises to refine grammar; all on-line activities will be constantly tutored by an Italian teacher.
The e-learning program can be combined with General language courses (G e-learning) and Intensive Summer Courses (L e-learning), or with individual tuition through webcam or chat (I2).

INDIVIDUAL TUITION

On request, there is the possibility to attend individual lessons (in classroom or through webcam/chat) in which the student can work on his weak points or develop some special topic or ability.
For lessons out of Bergamo, ask the secretary for the details regarding the cost.

"AD HOC" COURSES

The University can also organize, on request, tailor made courses in the Italian language and blended learning courses (classroom activities + on-line activities) for private or public companies. It is necessary that these courses are held on the companies own premises. The course content will be specific to the needs of the company and its employees.