Fall 2018 - Florentine Villas
ARTH-UA 9308 or ITAL-UA 9404 9656  
Tuesdays, 9:00-11:45 a.m.  
Villa La Pietra, Aula Le Vedute

Class Description:
This course examines the Florentine villa, attempting to define this specific architectural typology and identify the unique contributions to its history made in and around Florence, primarily in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Emerging from the Middle Ages, the villas of the Florentine area are among the most powerful embodiments of the “rebirth” of classical antiquity that defines the spirit of the Renaissance. The villa is here defined in accordance with its meaning both in antiquity and throughout the early modern period as a domestic structure integrated with its surrounding agricultural estate. Phenomena to be explored include: the evolution of the forms of the patronal residence, from the early Renaissance castle-villas to the classicizing villas of the later fifteenth- and early sixteenth-centuries; the emergence of the formal garden and the identification of some of its most characteristic elements; the rapport between the villa and its urban cousin, the palace. Special emphasis is given to the villas and gardens of the Medici and to the study of Villa La Pietra itself.

Instructor Details:
Name: Bruce Edelstein  
NYUGlobalHome Email Address: edelstein@nyu.edu
Office Hours: Mondays, 3:00-5:00 p.m., or by appointment
Office Location: Villa La Pietra
Office Extension: 07246

Desired Outcomes:
On completion of this course, students should:
- Have improved their ability to think critically, engage in complex reasoning and express their thoughts clearly through their written work
- Have improved their understanding of the methodologies of art history
- Have mastered a basic understanding of how to research questions in art history
- Understand how to read an architectural plan, section and elevation
- Define the characteristics of a Renaissance villa and identify specific contributions made by Florentine architects and patrons to the typology

Assessment Components
- Class Participation: 10%
- Response Papers (3 critical analyses of assigned texts, as indicated in the syllabus; each approximately 3-5 double-spaced, typewritten pages in a 12-point font): 15%
- Midterm Exam (approximately 6-8 handwritten pages): 35%
- Final Exam (approximately 6-8 handwritten pages): 40%
Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Exams: The main graded assignments for this class are a midterm and a final exam. The midterm and the final exam are comprised of three essay questions. You will be presented with three broad topics discussed in class the week before the exam; one of these will be chosen as the prompt for the exam itself. You are expected to write a well-organized essay, with an introduction, exposition and conclusion in response to the question. **You are expected to cite relevant sources analyzed in class – texts and villas, or specific features of the latter; answers that do not cite any of these sources will not receive full credit.** The final exam will have the same format. While the final is comprehensive, it will give greater weight to material discussed in the second half of the course. Both the midterm and the final are carefully timed: **see below if you are entitled to an Academic Accommodation.**

Written Assignments: Over the course of the semester, you will write three short critical responses to readings indicated on the syllabus (3-5 pages). For each of these texts, you should identify the basic themes treated by the author and consider how these are relevant to the material being studied in class. Try to offer critical reflections on the author’s methodology or approach, considering the merits or possible limitations of these. Your text is not intended to be a research paper; however, if it is useful for comparative purposes, you are welcome to refer to previously assigned readings.

Submitting your work: all work must be printed and submitted at the end of the class for which it is due. Electronic submission will not be accepted. See also below, “Late Submission of Work.”

Readings
Readings are listed under the weeks for which they are assigned and must be done in **advance** of those classes. It is essential that you keep up with the reading as it serves as the basis for class discussion. Active participation in class discussion is an essential component of your class participation grade, worth 10% of your final grade.

Assessment Expectations

**Grade A:** The student’s work demonstrates an understanding of the subject that goes beyond assigned course readings. The student writes essays/exam questions that are an original synthesis of source materials, demonstrating the ability to evaluate source material critically. Written arguments are clear, well-organized and well-presented; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student has distinguished himself/herself throughout the course of the semester for his/her contributions to class discussion.

**Grade B:** The student’s work shows a clear understanding of assigned readings and materials covered in class. The student writes clear, well-organized and well-presented essays/exam questions; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student is prepared in class and asks relevant questions.

**Grade C:** The student’s work shows a basic understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. However, written and/or oral work is deficient in one or more of the following areas: clarity, organization or content. The student’s work is generally in need of improvement.

**Grade D:** The student’s work shows occasional understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work is deficient in one of more of the follow areas: clarity, organization or content. The student does not participate in class discussion and has not frequented the instructor’s office hours.

**Grade F:** The student’s work does not demonstrate understanding of the subject treated in assigned
readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work are either insufficient or are not submitted. The student appears unprepared in class and has not frequented the instructor’s office hours.

Grading Guidelines

- A=94-100
- A-=90-93
- B+=87-89
- B=84-86
- B-=80-83
- C+=77-79
- C=74-76
- C-=70-73
- D+=67-69
- D=65-66
- F=below 65

Grading Policy

Please refer to Assessment Expectations and the policy on late submission of work.

Academic Accommodations

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see the Moses Center for further information.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalized by a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to the number of class times over a single week.

Excused Absences:

In case of absence, regardless of the reason, the student is responsible for completing missed assignments, getting notes and making up missed work in a timely manner based upon a schedule that is mutually agreed upon between the faculty member and the student. The only excused absences are those approved by the Office of Academic Support; they are as follows:
**Absence Due to Illness**

- If you are sick, please see a doctor. Contact the Office of Student Life for assistance.
- For absences that last for two or more consecutive days, a doctor’s certificate, “certificato medico” is required. The doctor will indicate in writing the number of days of bed rest required. Please note these certificates can only be obtained on the day you see the doctor and cannot be written for you afterwards.
- Absences can ONLY be excused if they are reported WITHIN 48 HRS of your return to class via the online NYU Florence Absence Form
- OAS will not accept a student email or telephone call regarding an absence due to illness
- OAS will only notify faculty of absences REPORTED on the ABSENCE FORM
- The Office of Student Life, when assisting you in cases of severe or extended illness, will coordinate with the Office of Academic Support to properly record your absences

**Due to Religious Observance**

- Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday
- Information regarding absences due to religious observance must be provided at least SEVEN DAYS PRIOR to the date(s) in question using the online NYU Florence Absence Form
- Please note that no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retroactively.

**Due to a class conflict with a program sponsored lecture, event, or activity**

- All students are entitled to miss one class period without any penalty to their grade in order to attend a lecture, event or activity that is sponsored by La Pietra Dialogues, Acton Miscellany or the Graduate Lecture series.
- Information regarding absences due to a class conflict must be provided at least SEVEN DAYS PRIOR to the date(s) in question using the online NYU Florence Absence Form
- Please note that no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retroactively.

Students with questions or needing clarification about this policy are instructed to contact a member of the Office of Academic Support located in Villa Ulivi or to email florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu

**Late Submission of Work**

- All course work must be submitted on time, in class on the date specified on the syllabus.
- To request an extension on a deadline for an assignment, students must speak to the professor one week prior to the due date
- To receive an incomplete for a course at the end of the semester, two weeks before final exams, both the student and the faculty member must meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs to review the request and if granted, they must both sign an Incomplete Contract detailing the terms for completing missing coursework.

**Plagiarism Policy**

PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY FORM:
The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

In the event of suspected or confirmed cases of plagiarism, The faculty member will consult first with the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs as definitions and procedures vary from school to school.
The Writing Center, located in Villa Ulivi, offers you feedback on any type of writing, at any stage in planning or drafting; very rough drafts are welcome. Sign up for a consultation at the Writing Center’s website and submit your working draft or ideas at least six hours in advance to NYU Florence Writing Center. You can drop in for a consultation M-Th, but remember that appointments are given priority. Please also note that the Writing Center does not correct or “fix” your writing but prompts you to think and work. The aim is to create stronger writers in the long term, not necessarily perfect papers in the short term.

Required Text(s)
All assigned readings are to be found online, through links available on our NYU Classes course website.

Copies of each textbook are available for consultation and short term loans in the Villa Ulivi Library. Extra copies of some textbooks are also available for semester long loans. For more information on Books and Course Materials go here.

Supplemental Texts(s)
Texts that students are not required to are in NYU-FL Library or available on line:


Internet Research Guidelines
The careful use of internet resources is encouraged and a list of recommended websites will be given. Failure to cite internet and other non-traditional media sources in your written work constitutes plagiarism.

Additional Required Equipment: N/A
Class Assignments and Topics
The locations for classes that meet on site are specifically indicated. All other classes meet in our regularly assigned classroom.

Session 1 - Sept. 4
Introduction: Defining the Renaissance Villa; Florence in the Renaissance

Session 2 - Sept. 11
Antiquity and the Middle Ages
Reading:

Session 3 - Sept. 18
The Monastic Cloister and the Representation of Paradise
Location: Museo di San Marco (meet at entrance)
Reading:

Session 4 - Sept. 25
The Early Villas of the Medici: Trebbio, Cafaggiolo, Careggi, Fiesole
Due: Response Paper on Ackerman, “The Early Villas of the Medici”
Reading:

Session 5 - Oct. 2
Rus in Urbe, I: The Innovations of the Medici Palace
Location: Palazzo Medici Riccardi (meet at entrance)
Reading:
Session 6 - Oct. 9
A New Paradigm: Poggio a Caiano
Due: Response Paper on Pellecchia, “Reconstructing the Greek House”
Reading:


Session 7 - Oct. 16
The High Renaissance Villa in Rome: The Belvedere, Villa Madama and Villa Giulia
Reading:


Session 8 - Oct. 19
Field Trip: Medici Villas: La Petraia, Castello, Prato, and Poggio a Caiano
Meeting point: TBC
Reading:


Session 9 - Oct. 23
Midterm Exam

Session 10 - Nov. 6
Medici Villas and Gardens of the Duchy and Grand Duchy: Castello and Pratolino
Due: Response Paper on Butters, “Pressed Labor and Pratolino”
Reading:

Session 11 - Nov. 13
Sculpture from Medici Villas and Gardens
Location: Museo Nazionale del Bargello (meet at entrance)
Reading:

Session 12 - Nov. 20
Rus in Urbe, II: Eleonora di Toledo and the Creation of the Boboli Gardens
Location: Giardino di Boboli, Pitti Palace (meet at entrance to Pitti Palace)
Reading:

Session 13 - Nov. 27
Villa La Pietra: The Villa in Time
Reading:

Session 14 - Dec. 4
Villa La Pietra: The Villa in Time
Reading:

Session 15 - Dec. 11
Final Exam
Classroom Etiquette

- Eating is not permitted in the classrooms. Bottled water is permitted.
- Cell phones should be turned off during class time.
- The use of personal laptops and other electronic handheld devices are prohibited in the classroom unless otherwise specified by the professor.
- We recycle! So keep it green! Please dispose of trash in the clearly marked recycle bins located throughout the on campus buildings.

Required Co-curricular Activities

See Field Trip description in Session 8 above.

The field trip is an integral part of the course and your attendance is required. Should you have a conflict with a field trip in another course, please speak to someone in the Offices of Academic Support to determine how to resolve your field trip conflict.

Suggested Co-curricular Activities

Suggested optional co-curricular activities will be announced in class and/or via email by the professor throughout the semester.

Your Instructor

Bruce L. Edelstein is an art historian. At NYU Florence he is Coordinator for Graduate Programs and Advanced Research and serves on the Academic Advisory Committee. He is Affiliated Faculty in the department of Italian Studies at NYU. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1995 after completing a dissertation on the patronage of Duchess of Florence Eleonora di Toledo, a reflection of his broader interest in mechanisms of court patronage and the exercise of female authority in Renaissance and Early Modern Italy. He has held teaching positions at the Florida State University Florence Study Center, Syracuse University in Italy and the Harvard University Graduate School of Design and curatorial positions at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and the Fogg Museum in Cambridge, Mass. His publications include articles on Eleonora di Toledo’s investment policy, the typology of the Albertian hortus, the hydraulic system of the lost Neapolitan villa of Poggioreale as a model for sixteenth-century Medici gardens, the iconography of Abundance in the courtly persona of Eleonora di Toledo and the mid-sixteenth-century appearance and function of the Camera Verde in the Palazzo Vecchio. During the academic year 2001-2, he was a fellow at the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti. During the academic year 2015-16, he was Visiting Scholar at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, while completing the manuscript for a book on the early history of the Boboli Gardens. He is co-curator of the exhibition “Miraculous Encounters: Pontormo from Drawing to Painting,” seen at the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, the Morgan Library and Museum in New York, and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in 2018-2019.