



Fall 2019 – Italy during the Renaissance: Florence

HIST-UA9123001 / MEDI-UA9123001

Tuesday 9:00am-11:45

Classroom Pisa, Villa Ulivi

Class Description:

This course presents an overview of the political, social, and cultural history of Italy from roughly 1300 to 1600. Its aim is to provide students with a basic understanding of the forces and processes that shaped the states and the societies of the Italian peninsula in an era of extraordinary changes: from the developments of urban civilization and the rise of humanism in the fourteenth and early fifteenth century, to the political and religious crisis of the late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento, and finally to the establishment of a new balance of power and a new cultural climate in the course of the sixteenth century.

Instructor Details:

Matteo Duni, PhD

NYUGlobal Home Email Address: md90@nyu.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Villa Ulivi Office Location: TBA

Villa Ulivi Phone Number: +39 055 5007 300

Desired Outcomes:

On completion of this course, students should:

- Have mastered a basic understanding of the social structures, the political and ecclesiastical institutions, as well as of the cultural movements, that characterized the Renaissance period in the Italian peninsula;
- Be able to appreciate the extent to which concepts, institutions, ways of conceiving human life dating back to the Renaissance still have an impact on our ideas and on the world we live in;
- Have a good grasp of the historical context in which Renaissance art and architecture have been created.

Assessment Components

- **Attendance, participation and class presentation: 25%**
- **Midterm exam: 25 %**
- **Final exam: 25%**
- **Term paper (8-10 pp., typewritten): 25%**

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Class presentations: Students have to present to the class on a theme chosen among the weekly topics listed on the syllabus (it is also possible to choose alternative topics: ask the professor). Students will have to show clearly the main points discussed by the author(s) of the texts, expressing their personal point of view, comparing the readings examined to other texts read in class, and explaining whether they are convinced of the authors' opinion and why. Presentations must be an exercise in critical thinking, not a mere repetition of the readings' contents; they will have to be concise (max. 20 minutes), lively and to the point. After their presentation, students will chair the class discussion, that is, questions and comments from their peers. PowerPoint, handouts, and other creative methods of interaction/presentation are encouraged, but must be discussed with the professor. Students may have to read additional bibliography to prepare for presentation, and in any case must meet with professor beforehand. Presentations can be done in pairs, or in groups of three. The first week available for presentations is that of Sept. 24, the last one that of Dec. 3. Professor will circulate a sign-up calendar of presentations on Sept. 10. All students **MUST** sign up for a presentation by that day. No rescheduling of presentations will be allowed.

Term Paper: Students will choose a topic not necessarily related to the theme of their class presentation. Papers will be approx. 8-10 pages long (typewritten, double-spaced, with bibliography and notes). Professor will circulate a list of possible topics, and meet individually with students to help them choose one. The final deadline for the submission of the paper is Nov. 19. No extensions will be granted.

In-class Examinations: they will consist of two parts. The first part will be a list of names, dates and events which students have to identify with short definitions (2-3 complete sentences each). The second part will be composed of four essay questions. Students will choose two, and answer them fully, that is, with essays approx. two pages long each. The final exam will **NOT** be cumulative. Professor will hand out study sheets before both exams.

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 or more of the following 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 minus =90-93

B plus =87-89

B=84-86

B minus =80-83

C plus =77-79

C=74-76

C minus =70-73

D plus =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 the academic program.
- 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.

Writing Center:

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):

It is recommended that students purchase the books marked with *: they are available at the Paperback Exchange bookstore, via delle Oche 4/r. Two of them, Brucker's [Renaissance Florence](#), and Machiavelli's [The Prince](#) are freely available online. 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. The library of Villa Ulivi holds both the originals and the master copies of all the other readings.

For more information on Books and Course Materials go [here](#).

BROWN, ALISON, "The Humanist Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXIV (1961), 186-214.

*BRUCKER, GENE, *Renaissance Florence*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, University of California Press, 1983.

- BRUNI, LEONARDO, *Panegyric to the City of Florence*, in B. Kohl, R. Witt, eds., *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978, 149-175
- BOCCACCIO, GIOVANNI, *Decameron*, London-New York, Penguin, 1984, 68-89.
- “The Return of the Muses” in *The Portable Renaissance Reader*, eds. J. B. Ross and M. Martin McLaughlin, London-New York, Penguin, 1977, 123-126.
- BURCKHARDT, JACOB, “The Culture of the Italian Renaissance” in *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance*, eds. Benjamin G. Kohl and Alison Andrews Smith, Lexington (Mass.), D.C. Heath, 1995, 4-15.
- *GINZBURG, CARLO, *The Cheese and the Worms. The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, London-New York, Penguin, 1982.**
- GOLDTHWAITE, RICHARD, “The Preconditions for Luxury Consumption” in *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance*, 61-67.
- GOMBRICH, ERNST, “The Renaissance - Period or movement?” in *Renaissance Thought. A Reader*, ed. Robert Black, London-New York, Routledge, 2001, 23-46.
- GUICCIARDINI, FRANCESCO, “The Balance of Power in Italy”, in *The Portable Renaissance Reader*, 279-84.
- KENT, DALE “The Rise of the Medici” in *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance*, 156-65.
- MACHIAVELLI, NICCOLÒ, “Letter to Francesco Vettori” in *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance*, 195-197.
- *MACHIAVELLI, NICCOLÒ, *The Prince (with selections from the Discourses)*, New York, Bantam Books, 1981.**
- MATTINGLY, GARRETT, “The Prince: Political Science or Political Satire?” in *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance*, 179-86.
- NAJEMY, JOHN M., “Governments and Governance” in *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance: 1300-1550*, 184-207.
- NAUERT, CHARLES G., *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe*, Cambridge (UK), Cambridge University Press, 1995, 8-41.
- PETERSON, DAVID S., “Religion and the Church” in *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance: 1300-1550*, 59-81.
- RINUCCINI, ALAMANNO, “A Condemnation of Lorenzo’s Regime”, in *Images of Quattrocento Florence. Selected Writings in Literature, History, and Art*, Stefano U. Baldassarri and Arielle Saiber, eds., New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 2000, 103-114
- SAVONAROLA, GIROLAMO, “On the Renovation of the Church”, in *The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius Loyola*, John Olin, ed., Fordham UP, 1992, 1-15
- TREXLER, RICHARD, “Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence” in *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance*, 393-402.
- VALLA, LORENZO, “The Glory of the Latin Language” in *The Portable Renaissance Reader*, 131-5.
- “The Treatise on the Donation of Costantine” in *The Renaissance in Europe. An Anthology*, eds. Peter Elmer, Nick Webb and Roberta Wood, New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 2000, 20-9.
- VESPASIANO DA BISTICCI, “Portrait of Cosimo de’ Medici” in *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance*, 170-6.

Supplemental Texts(s):

Texts that students are not required to purchase 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.

Class Assignments and Topics:

Session 1 – Sept. 3

Introduction: themes, focus and format of the course

Session 2 – Sept. 10

The Renaissance: geography, chronology, and myth

BURCKHARDT “The Culture of the Italian Renaissance”, 4-15; GOMBRICH, “The Renaissance - Period or Movement?”, 23-46; BOCCACCIO, “The Return of the Muses”, 123-126

Session 3 – Sept. 17

Site visit: the medieval commune

BRUCKER, *Renaissance Florence*, 1-50

Session 4 – Sept. 24

The Making of the Italian Renaissance: Economy and Society

GOLDTHWAITE, “The Preconditions for Luxury Consumption”, 61-67; BRUCKER, *Renaissance Florence*, 51-71, 89-109.

Session 5 - Oct. 1

The Political Framework

BRUCKER, *Renaissance Florence*, 128-141, 151-160; NAJEMY, “Governments and Governance”, 184-207

Session 6 - Oct. 8

The Catholic Church and Religious Life

PETERSON, “Religion and the Church”, 59-76; TREXLER, “Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence”, 393-402; BOCCACCIO, *Decameron*, 68-89

Session 7 – Oct. 15

New Trends in Cultural Life: Humanism

NAUERT, *Humanism and the culture of Renaissance Europe*, 8-41; VALLA, “The Glory of the Latin Language”, 131-135, and “The Treatise on the Donation of Costantine”, 20-29; BRUNI, *Panegyric to the City of Florence*, 149-175

Session 8 – Oct. 22

MIDTERM EXAM

Fall break, Oct. 28 – Nov. 3

Session 9 – Nov. 5

Site visit: Medici Palace and San Lorenzo

Session 10 – Nov. 12

Republican Aristocracy: Florence and the Medici

KENT, "The Rise of the Medici", 156-165; VESPASIANO DA BISTICCI, "Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici", 170-176; BROWN, "The Humanist Portrait of Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae", 186-214; RINUCCINI, "A Condemnation of Lorenzo's Regime", 103-114

Session 11 – Nov. 19

Florence in Transition

BRUCKER, *Renaissance Florence*, 256-280; SAVONAROLA, "On the Renovation of the Church", 1-15; GUICCIARDINI, "The Balance of Power in Italy", 279-284

NOV. 19 -- TERM PAPER DUE

Session 12 – Nov. 26

Thinking the Crisis: Machiavelli

MACHIARELLI, *The Prince*, 'Dedication' and chaps. 1-3, 5-8, 12, 15-18, 24-26, "Letter to Vettori", 195-197; NAUERT, *Humanism and the culture of Renaissance Europe*, 70-2; MATTINGLY, "The Prince: Political Science or Political Satire?", 179-186

Session 13 – Friday Nov. 29

Site visit: Palazzo Vecchio

Session 14 – Dec. 3

Towards the Counter-Reformation: Papacy and the Inquisition

GINZBURG, *The Cheese and The Worms*, 1-57, 86-105, 119-121

Session 15 – Dec. 10

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

Please note that this course includes three site visits (one scheduled on Friday, Nov. 29). **These are an integral part of class, and thus attendance is mandatory.** Any unexcused absence will be penalized according to the rules indicated above (see “Attendance Policy”).

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

Matteo Duni's (PhD in History and Civilization, European University Institute) research interests focus on the history of religious beliefs and practices in late medieval and early modern Italy and Europe.