Florentine Villas: An Interpretation Based on Historical and Social Factors

Course Number
ARTH-UA 9308 F01

Brightspace course site https://brightspace.nyu.edu/d2l/home/206950

Fall 2022

Please contact florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site.

Syllabus last updated on: 30-08-2022

Lecturer Contact Information
Bruce Edelstein
Office Hours: Appointments available via Zoom or in person on request

Units earned
4

Course Details

- Thursdays, 9:00am-11:45pm

- All times are Central European Time (CET). Please note that in Europe, Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, October 30th 2022 and clocks will be set one hour earlier.

- Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class.

- COVID-related details: In the interest of protecting the NYU Florence community, we are closely following CDC and local guidance around COVID-19 and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being are our top priority.

Course Description

This course examines the Florentine villa, identifying the contributions made to this specific architectural typology. 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, as it was 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.

Course Objectives
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
You are expected to attend class in person or remote synchronously. Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

- Academic Commitment: 10%
- Oral Presentations (5-minute presentation of at least one of the readings over the course of the semester): 15%
- Midterm Exam (approximately 6-8 handwritten pages): 35%
- Final Exam (approximately 6-8 handwritten pages): 40%

Exams: 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.

The exam prompts are broadly construed to allow you to address the larger themes discussed in class and particularly to demonstrate your knowledge of the reading. 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. In this context, it is sufficient to cite the name of the author to whom you are referring.

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: if you are entitled to an Academic Accommodation, please see below regarding Moses Accomodations Statements.

Submitting your work: Please submit all of your work in electronic form. All electronic submissions must be made as in GoogleDocs or Word. Please do not submit PDFs. Please submit your assignments prior to the start time of the class indicated as the due date on this syllabus. Electronic submissions received subsequently will be considered late. Late submission will result in a lower grade or evaluation for your 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. On a rotating basis, you will be assigned responsibility to present key ideas from one of the required readings to the class. Your presentation should last no more than 5 minutes. You should identify 3-5 key ideas presented by the reading and at least one question that is raised by the text, which may be either a question you have about it or a question that you think would be useful to pose to the class. These presentations will be evaluated and contribute to your final grade.
Teaching & Learning Philosophy

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's contributions to class discussion have been distinguished throughout the course of the semester.

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 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.

Attendance Policy

Studying 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. 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 expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction on the participation component of the final grade for every week's worth of classes missed. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team by e-mail florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies. For two or more consecutive days of absences due to health reasons, a doctor’s note must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academics team.

*Please note that remote attendance will only be considered by the Office of Academic Support if for health reasons you are unable to attend class in person after two consecutive days of absence.*
Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed by getting notes from a classmate or meeting with your faculty member during office hours.

Exams, tests and quizzes, oral presentations, and/or important deadlines that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation.

For a detailed explanation of the global attendance policy, see the NYU Florence Attendance Policy Flowchart.

The Global Attendance Policy is posted in the Academic Policies tab in Brightspace, on the NYU Florence Student Portal website, and is posted around campus.

After you have read and reviewed the policies, if there is anything that still needs further clarification or raises a question, please reach out to florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu.

Final exams
Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work
Please refer to Academic Policies in Brightspace.

Required Text(s)
All readings are available online on the NYU Brightspace course site. Hard copies of some textbooks are available for consultation and semester-long loans in the Villa Ulivi Library. Please email florence.library@nyu.edu to reserve a copy. To request scans from books on reserve please fill out the Ulivi Library Book Scan Form.

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)
Recommended texts for further study, available in the NYU-FL Library:

- Bruce Edelstein, Eleonora di Toledo and the Creation of the Boboli Gardens (Livorno: Sillabe, 2022).

Additional Required Equipment
N/A

Session 1 - 01-09-2022
Introduction: Defining the Renaissance Villa; Florence in the Renaissance
Reading:
  ❑ James S. Ackerman, “The Villa as Paradigm,” Perspecta XXII (1986), 10-31

Session 2 - 08-09-2022
Antiquity and the Middle Ages
Reading:

Session 3 - 15-09-2022
The Monastic Cloister and the Representation of Paradise
Location: Museo di San Marco (meet at entrance)
Reading:
  ❑ Christopher Thacker, “Medieval Gardens,” in The History of Gardens (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), Chapter 5, 80-93

Session 4 - 22-09-2022
The Early Villas of the Medici: Trebbio, Cafaggiolo, Careggi, Fiesole
Reading:
Recommended:

Session 5 - 29-09-2022
Rus in Urbe, I: The Innovations of the Medici Palace
Location: Palazzo Medici Riccardi (meet at entrance)

Reading:
- Brenda Preyer, “Planning for Visitors at Florentine Palaces,” Renaissance Studies XII, 3 (Sept. 1998), 357-374

Session 6 - 06-10-2022
A New Paradigm: Poggio a Caiano

Reading:
- Philip Foster, “Lorenzo de’ Medici’s Cascina at Poggio a Caiano,” Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz XIV, 1 (June 1969), 47-56
- F. W. Kent, “Lorenzo de’ Medici’s Acquisition of Poggio a Caiano in 1474 and an Early Reference to His Architectural Expertise,” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes XLII (1979), 250-257

Session 7 - 13-10-2022
Sculpture from Medici Villas and Gardens
Location: Museo Nazionale del Bargello

Reading:

Session 8 - 14-10-2022, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (TBC) [Make-Up Day for 01-12-2022]
Field Trip: The Medici Villa at Poggio a Caiano
Meeting point: TBC

Reading:

Session 9 - 20-10-2022
Midterm Exam

Session 10 - 27-10-2022
The High Renaissance Villa in Rome: The Belvedere, Villa Madama and Villa Giulia

Reading:
- James S. Ackerman, “The Belvedere as a Classical Villa,” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes XIV, 1/2 (1951), 70-91

Recommended:

Session 11 - 03-11-2022
Medici Villas and Gardens of the Duchy and Grand Duchy: Castello and Pratolino

Reading:

Session 12 - 10-11-2022
Rus in Urbe, II: Eleonora di Toledo and the Creation of the Boboli Gardens

Location: Palazzo Pitti and Giardino di Boboli, Pitti Palace (meet at entrance to Pitti Palace)

Reading:

Session 13 - 17-11-2022
Villa La Pietra: The Villa in Time

Reading:
Session 14 - 24-11-2022
Villa La Pietra: The Villa in Time (continued), and Final Review
Reading:


01-12-2022
No class, substituted by field trip to Poggio a Caiano on Oct. 14

Session 15 - 15-12-2021
Final Exam

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities
It is STRONGLY RECOMMENDED that you attend two events planned for Museum Meetings this fall related to the exhibition, "Fragments of Paradise," currently at the Reggia di Caserta, near Naples, one of the grandest royal palace and garden complexes in Europe. Two paintings from the Acton Collection at Villa La Pietra are on loan to the exhibition!

- Tuesday, September 27, presentation of the exhibition by the curator, Alberta Campitelli, in conversation with others
- Friday-Saturday, October 7-8, overnight field trip to Caserta to visit the exhibition and other sites. Only 25 spaces available! If you wish to attend, you are encouraged to sign up immediately! Sign up by email to: villa.lapietra@nyu.edu

Your Lecturer
Bruce L. Edelstein is Coordinator for Graduate Programs and Advanced Research at NYU Florence and Affiliated Faculty in the department of Italian Studies at NYU NY. He received his PhD 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 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. 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. He was curator of the exhibition Miraculous Encounters: Pontormo from Drawing to Painting (Florence: Giunti, 2018), 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 2018-19. His book, Eleonora di Toledo and the Creation of the Boboli Gardens (Livorno: Sillabe, 2022) has just been published by the Uffizi Galleries.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism
As the University's policy on "Academic Integrity for Students at NYU" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your
home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offenses against academic integrity.

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. It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines
NYU Library Guides

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer and Office of Academic Support in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, NYU Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website.

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the Personalizing Zoom Display Names website.
Moses Accommodations Statement
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered
disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or
mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic
accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the
semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Florence.

Bias Response
The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which
members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias,
discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess
reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University
school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University's existing
Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that
helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the Web Form (link)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- Phone: 212-998-2277
- Local Telephone: 055 5007277