



Italy During the Renaissance: Florence

Course Number

HIST-UA 9123 F01

Instruction Mode:

In-person

Brightspace course site<https://brightspace.nyu.edu/d2l/home/164408>**Spring 2022**

If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Study Away student for NYU Florence, please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via Brightspace so you are aware of site specific support structure, policies and procedures. Please contact florence.academicssupport@nyu.edu if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site.

Syllabus last updated on: 26 January 2022

Lecturer Contact Information

TBA

Prerequisites

N/A

Units earned

4

Course Details

- **Tuesday from 10:30am to 1:15pm**
- All times are Central European Time (CET) Please note that there is a gap in when Daylight Savings Time (DST) begins in Europe and the U.S. In the U.S., DST begins on Sunday, 13 March 2022 when clocks will be set 1 hour forward. In Europe, DST begins Sunday, 27 March 2022.
- **Location: Villa Ulivi, Classroom Firenze**
- Remote Participants: Your instructor will provide you with the Zoom link via NYU Brightspace.



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

Course 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.

Course Objectives

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

- Academic Commitment: 10%
- Term paper (8-10 pp.): 25%
- Midterm Exam: 25%
- Oral Presentation of 20 minute length: 15%
- Final Exam: 25%

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.

- **Oral 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 (circa 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. The



first week available for presentations is that of **Feb. 22**, the last one that of **May 3**. Students are invited to **sign up** for a presentation by **February 11**. 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 Apr. 26**. No extensions will be granted.
- **Midterm/Final:** they will consist of two parts. The first part will be a list of names, dates and events which students must 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.

Attendance Policy

In order to keep each other safe, if you are not feeling well, we encourage you to remain in your residence and, if possible, attend class remotely.

Please make sure to inform your professor in advance so that they can turn on Zoom. Remote attendance is counted as regular attendance. You will not be marked absent.

For a detailed explanation of the global attendance policy, see the NYU Florence [Present vs. Absent Flowchart](#).

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

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.academicssupport@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](#).

Session 1 – 1 February.

Introduction: topics and format of course – **online synchronous**



Session 2 – 8 February.

The Renaissance: geography, chronology, and myth – online synchronous

Burckhardt “The Culture of the Italian Renaissance”, 4-15; Gombrich, “The Renaissance - Period or Movement?”, 23-46; Leonardo Bruni, 26-27; Leon Battista Alberti, 28-29; Christine de Pizan, 29-31

Session 3 – Make-Up Day: Friday, February 11.

The Making of the Italian Renaissance: Economy and Society – online synchronous

Goldthwaite, “The Preconditions for Luxury Consumption”, 61-67; Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 51-127

Session 4 - 15 February.

Site visit: the medieval city

Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 1-50

Session 5 - 22 February.

The Political Framework

Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 128-171; Najemy, “Governments and Governance”, 184-207

Session 6 – 1 March.

The Catholic Church and Religious Life

Peterson, “Religion and the Church”, 59-81; Trexler, “Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence”, 393-402; Boccaccio, *Decameron*, 68-89, 505-51

Session 7 - 8 March. MIDTERM EXAM

SPRING BREAK – Mar. 14-20

Session 8 – 22 March.

Site visit: Palazzo Medici and San Lorenzo

Session 9 - 29 March.

New Trends in Cultural Life: Humanism

Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe*, 8-41; Valla, “The Treatise on the Donation of Constantine”, 20-29; Bruni, *Panegyric to the City of Florence*, 149-175

Session 10 - 5 April.

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 - 12 April.

**Italy in the Eye of the Storm**

Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 256-280; Savonarola, "On the Renovation of the Church", 1-15; Guicciardini, "The Balance of Power in Italy", 279-284

Session 12 - 19 April. Site Visit: Palazzo Vecchio**Session 13 – 26 April.****Thinking the Crisis: Machiavelli**

Machiavelli, *The Prince*, and selections from the *Discourses*, all, and "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 14 – 3 May.**Towards the Counter-Reformation: Papacy and the Inquisition**

Ginzburg, *The Cheese and The Worms*, all

10 May – NO CLASS: Reading Day**Session 15 – Friday May 13. FINAL EXAM****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 Lecturer

Matteo Duni received his PhD in History and Civilization from the European University Institute, Florence. His research interests focus on the history of religious beliefs and practices in late medieval and early modern Italy and Europe. His publications include the books *Tra religione e magia: Storia del prete Guglielmo Campana* (Firenze, 1999), *Under the Devil's Spell: Witches, Sorcerers and the Inquisition in Renaissance Italy* (Syracuse, 2007), and the proceedings of the international conference *Non lasciar vivere la malefica* (Firenze, 2008).

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 offences 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 email 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