



SAS – SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

**SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**  
**COURSE TITLE: HISTORY OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE**  
**COURSE CODE: LAHSIR330**  
**3 semester credits**

### 1. DESCRIPTION

This course explores the meaning of the term 'Renaissance' when applied to the period of Italian history from circa 1350 to 1550. The subject will be approached from a variety of standpoints: social, political, economic, intellectual, scientific and artistic. The focus will be on the concept of Italian Renaissance Humanism and on the relationship between art and society during this period. Lectures will be supplemented by a number of visits to key historical sites in Florence.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

Through this course the students will become familiar with the different aspects of a period that exercises the minds of historians, artists, and philosophers to this day. Even though it is rather difficult to set precise dates for the beginning and end of the Renaissance - in fact, even the term Renaissance itself is under debate - the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries saw an astonishing amount of innovations in the arts, in the natural sciences, far-reaching geographical explorations, and important political changes that signal at the same time a return to the achievements to classical Antiquity and the beginning of modernity.

Since we explore the progress of this development in the city that is often called the birthplace of the Renaissance, we shall attempt to get as close as possible to the people whose lives and works we investigate by following them into some of the main churches, museums, and palaces of Florence.

### 3. REQUIREMENTS

No particular prerequisites for this course.

### 4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

### 5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

#### TEXTBOOK:

Kaborycha, Lisa. *A Short History of Renaissance Italy*, Pearson, 2011.

The text book is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

### FURTHER READINGS

(Books listed below are available in the FUA-AUF library)

- Ash Ronald and Adolf M. Birke (eds.), *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility: The Court*

*at the Beginning of the Early Modern Age*, Oxford 1991.

- Black Robert (ed.), *Renaissance Thought. A Reader*, London, Routledge, 2001.
- Bouwsma William J., *The Waning of the Renaissance 1550-1640*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2000.
- Brown Alison, *The Renaissance*, second edition, London and New York, Longman, 1999.
- Brown, Patricia Fortini, *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past*, New Haven 1996.
- Bruckner Gene A., *Renaissance Florence*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1983.
- Burckhardt Jacob, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, tr. S. G. C. Middlemore, intr. Peter Burke, London, Penguin, 1990.
- Burke Peter, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy*, Princeton 1999.
- Cameron Euan, *The European Reformation*, Oxford 1991.
- Celenza Christopher M., *The Lost Italian Renaissance*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.
- Cochrane Eric, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries, 1527-1800: A History of Florence and the Florentines in the Age of the Grand Dukes*, Chicago 1973.
- Duggan Christopher, *A Concise History of Italy*, Cambridge 1994.
- Findlen Paula, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkeley 1994.
- Goldthwaite Richard, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy, 1300-1600*, Baltimore, 1993.
- Hay Denys and John E. Law, *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance, 1380-1530*, London and New York, 1989.
- Jardine Lisa, *Worldly Goods. A New History of the Renaissance*, London, Macmillan, 1996.
- Kent Dale, *Cosimo de Medici and the Florentine Renaissance*, New Haven 2000.
- Krayer Jill (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, Cambridge, 1996.
- Martines Lauro, *Power and Imagination: City States in Renaissance Italy*, New York. 1988.
- *Fire in the City: Savonarola and the Struggle for the Soul of Renaissance Florence*, Oxford 2006.

## **LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE**

The FUA-AUF library is located in Corso Tintori 21. Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

### **BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA**

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult

the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

#### **BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE**

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it)

#### **THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE**

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

### **6. FIELD LEARNING**

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

### **7. COURSE MATERIALS**

No additional course materials are necessary.

### **8. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

### **9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM**

10% Attendance

15% Class Participation, Assignments, and Reading

25% Midterm Exam

20% Final Paper Project and Presentation

30% Final Exam

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

### **10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION**

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the FUA-AUF academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**An absence as per the FUA-AUF Academic Catalog is equivalent to 3 academic hours.**

On the second absence the attendance and participation grade will be impacted. Please note that missing certain field learning activities may count for more than one absence.

On the third absence the instructor may lower the final grade by one letter grade. (Example: Final grade average of 93% or A will become a B).

**The fourth absence constitutes automatic failure of the course. Students with excessive absences will be asked to withdraw with a W (if before the deadline) or leave the course with a WF.**

## LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

## TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is always the student's responsibility to know how many absences he or she has in a course. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

## 11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

### Assignments

Home assignments aim at documenting your knowledge and understanding on specific aspects relating to the course topics. Instructions for each assignment will be posted on MyFUA on a regular basis.

For some assignments, the format may be a forum response to a question may be posted (MyFUA) relating to the lecture. Students are expected to contribute a short, thoughtful post as well as a response to another peer's response. All posting must occur before the start of the next lecture (all posts are time stamped, late postings (after 9 am) will not be accepted). Be creative, in addition to your short text you can post pictures and videos if you'd like.

### Reading and quizzes

Reading of the text book is mandatory for successful completion of the course, further reading is highly recommended. Regular reading quizzes have been designed to ensure that you are completing the reading and engaging in active learning and critical thinking about course concepts outside of class. They are also designed to help you prepare for the final exam in manageable increments. Quizzes may be open-note, which means you may use your notes to assist you in taking the quiz. Notes must be originals (not photocopied) and in your own handwriting. Quizzes will NOT be open book.

### Paper Project / Presentation

The instructor will provide you with specific information concerning the paper/presentation topic and length. Make sure your paper/presentation conforms to academic standards in terms of style and register. Your paper/presentation must include quotations and/or citations from scholarly books, journals, or articles. Your paper/presentation must be properly referenced and must include a bibliography. Evaluation will be based on the following criteria: Pertinence & Coverage; Analysis & Understanding; Organization & Structure; Language & Accuracy; References & Bibliography.

### Exams

The Midterm exam will take place on Lesson 7 while the Final Exam will take place on week 15. Note, **the date and time of the exams cannot be changed for any reason**, so please organize your personal activities accordingly.

Format (for both exams): the exam is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

Note, the instructor may select a different format. Please, refer to study guide.

## 12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Course overview, content, structure, assessment and expectations. The rise of the communes and Florence in the age of Dante. The crises of the fourteenth century: climatic, epidemic, demographic disasters.
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 1, pp. 1-18; Chapter 2, pp. 20-35. Assignment: Evolution of Florence Part I in the age of Dante.

Lesson 2	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Humanism and the recovery of the classical past. Rome and the papacy. Petrarch: a passionate humanist.
<b>Visit</b>	Museo Casa di Dante (first and second floor)
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 3, pp. 37-55; Chapter 4, pp.57-77. Assignment: Analysis of selected texts by Dante, Petrarch, and Bocaccio

Lesson 3	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Lords of the Renaissance: the Medici, Visconti, and Sforza Dynasties. Society, women, family and religion.
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 5, pp. 79-97; Chapter 6, pp. 99-117. Assignment: Research review of two generations of a Renaissance family, their accomplishments, and artistic patronage.

Lesson 4	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The <i>Mezzogiorno</i> : the “Other” Renaissance – Naples and Sicily. Antonello da Messina and Lorenzo Valla.
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 7, pp.118-136. Assignment: Review of a pre-Renaissance culture that dominated Southern Italy.

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	La <i>Serenissima</i> – The Republic of Venice. Venetian identity, Bellini and Carpaccio.
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 8, pp. 164-181. Assignment: Survey of selected Venetian Renaissance painters.

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Life in Florence under Lorenzo the Magnificent and Giovanni Rucellai. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.
<b>Visit</b>	Palazzo Rucellai (exterior façade), Museo Marino Marini (Santo Sepolcro), Chiesa di Santa Maria Novella (exterior façade).
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 9, pp.164-181 Assignment: Evolution of Florence Part 2 focus on a historic palazzo of the Rucellai (Giovanni) or Medici (Lorenzo il Magnifico) families. Review all reading assigned so far in view of the midterm exam.

<b>Lesson 7</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Midterm exam

<b>Lesson 8</b>	
<b>Lecture</b>	Academic Break

<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The 1500s in Italy: The first Italian war (1494-1498) - The beginning of the calamities of Italy. The Accademia Platonica, Niccolò Machiavelli and his <i>Il Principe</i> .
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 10, pp. 183-204. Assignment: Depictions of the war based on a selected angle (protagonists depicted in art, Machiavelli, or the Accademia Platonica).

<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Time of turmoil – Paradoxes of the High Renaissance. Da Vinci's inventions: Flying machines and weapons of war.

<b>Visit</b>	Museo di Leonardo Da Vinci, Via dei Servi, 66/r
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 11, pp. 205-221. Assignment: Leonardo depicted in the media, reflections on Leonardo's impact on contemporary society.

<b>Lesson 11</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The Sack of Rome and its Aftermath. Ludovico Ariosto's <i>Orlando Furioso</i> . Baldassare Castiglione's <i>The Book of the Courtier</i> and the changing role of women.
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 12, pp. 223-238. Assignment: Focus on the Roman Renaissance and its palaces and/or artworks, or elements of the court life in the 1500s.

<b>Lesson 12</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Reformations: political, religious and artistic upheaval. Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. Benvenuto Cellini.
<b>Visit</b>	Walk from Loggia dei Lanzi to Ponte Vecchio (Cellini)
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Chapter 13, pp. 240-258. Assignment: Evolution of Florence Part 3 focus on Vasari and Cellini.

<b>Lesson 13</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The "Imperial Renaissance" – Italy during the Pax Hispanica. Torquato Tasso and Veronica Franco.
<b>Reading/ Assignments</b>	Textbook, Assignment: Finalize project presentations for Lesson 14. Chapter 14, pp. 260-276.

<b>Lesson 14</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The church vs. the scientific revolution. Galileo and the Inquisition. In-class presentations of the final project.
<b>Reading</b>	Textbook, Chapter 15, pp. 278-298. Assignment: Final exam review

<b>Lesson 15</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Final exam