

# GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: ENGL366: Love in the Renaissance  
Credits: 3 Credits  
Instructor: Gabriela Dragnea Horvath



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Study Abroad, 502 E. Boone Ave, Spokane, WA 99258-0085 • (800) 4405391 • [www.gonzaginflorence.org](http://www.gonzaginflorence.org) • [studyabroad@gonzaga.edu](mailto:studyabroad@gonzaga.edu)

## OFFICE HOURS

**THURSDAY, 9:30-10:30**

**SCHEDULE: MON, TU, TH, 8.30-9.30**

## PREREQUISITES

The course can also count for the A&S 200 level literature Core requirement, so a 100 level course is requested.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course addresses the centrality of love in the Renaissance literature in its conceptual and aesthetic complexity. The Christian theology and ethics of love, informed by Platonic ideas and ancient mythology build up the cultural background against which the aspiration to achieve happiness through love finds its multiple expressions. Topics like spiritual love, friendship, love crowned by marriage and romantic love will be examined in works by Edmund Spenser, Sir Phillip Sidney, William Shakespeare and in Italian forerunners like Petrarca, Boccaccio, Machiavelli. Four women poets Mary Wroth, Isabella Whitney, Vittoria Colonna and Gaspara Stampa, and characters like Juliet, Lady Capulet, the Nurse, Olivia, Viola, Boccaccio's and Machiavelli's women protagonists will illustrate the feminine approach to love.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course aims at completing the students' knowledge of the Renaissance with its literary dimension, pointing out the circulation of ideas and cultural models in Renaissance Italy and Tudor England. The students' comparative abilities will also be exercised in the analysis of gender diversity in expressing love and in distinguishing the various stylistic registers in the treatment of the same topic.

Last but not least, the course is meant to refine the students' sense of beauty and capacity to identify and appreciate it in cultures of the past. For this purpose two special lessons have been added: one on the portrayal of love in Renaissance painting and one on the expression of love in Renaissance music.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Every session consists in lecture and visual material (illustrations) aimed at providing the students with a cultural background regarding the English and the Italian Renaissance. At the same time, the students will be assigned guided home readings to present in class and will be stimulated to engage dialogues on the most intriguing issues. Understanding how ideas and beliefs contribute to our perception of cultural difference and our representations of the world is the main objective.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- have an in-depth knowledge of the concept of Renaissance culture and its literary expressions
- evaluate comparatively the Italian and the Elizabethan Renaissance literature, male and female attitudes to love, providing topical and genre connections.
- be familiar with the religious, philosophical and mythological sources that inform Renaissance literature
- master the theoretical instruments that allow them to make a good analysis of a sonnet, a novella, a tragedy, a comedy, a pamphlet.
- have an insight into the semantic richness of Renaissance texts

## GRADING AND OTHER POLICIES

The final grade takes into account the following requirements:

### Attendance and Participation – count 20%

Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory. Arriving late will lower your grade; two arrivals behind schedule will count as an absence. Absences are considered as such, excused or unexcused. It is the students' responsibility to make up for missed classes. More than six absences will result in an F for the course. More than five will result in an F for attendance and participation.

Participation means bringing the reading material to class and the written reports when required, presenting oral reports of readings, being active in debates and group work. Participation also refers to regular behaviour in class, thus the evaluation of attendance and participation includes deportment.

### Deportment

Mutual respect is essential for a good collaboration. Being physically present, but doing things that have nothing to do with the class (listening to music, checking emails, private conversation, etc) will have a negative effect on the grade. Disrupting behaviour will be followed by warning and/or dismissal from class and will result in a D or F for attendance and participation and/or dismissal from class. Food and beverages are not accepted in class. Cell phones must be off.

### Reading Assignments – count 10%

Due on the dates designated in the syllabus, the reading assignments will be checked by oral and/or written reports, group work in class and unannounced quizzes throughout the semester.

### Paper Assignments – count 40 %

**Two formal papers are required:** the first is due **on March, 3,** the second **on April 14.** Late papers will be lowered a grade for each class period late. Hard copies typed in standard format are to be handed in to the professor at the beginning of class and an electronic copy readable by Word-Windows or Microsoft Word is to be submitted by email.

The freely chosen topic paper topics regard the ideas discussed in class and the students' personal experience abroad. This will imply literary research and creative

writing in the same measure. **Every topic must be discussed with the professor** before you start writing.

The first paper counts 20% and refers to the readings discussed in class by March 2, the second counts 20 % and will be based on the readings analyzed between March 9-April 14.

The evaluation is done according to the following criteria:

- well formulated argument (rhetorical strategy)
- inquisitive approach and creative thinking.
- ability to transpose into mentalities of other times and countries.
- good use of bibliography: citing sources for paraphrases, quotations and summaries. Class notes can build the frame of your argumentation, but will not be cited as primary sources.
- clarity of expression including quality of style (grammar, spelling).

With the authors' accord excellent papers will be submitted to the director of The Florence Newspaper in view of publication.

**Plagiarism** (claiming credit for the work or efforts of another, downloading papers, presenting an older paper, copying from other students' work or library books without citing sources) will result in an **F grade** for the course. Internet plagiarism software and the professor's own knowledge of written sources in the library are instruments to check your work.

### **Exams – count 30 %**

Three exams are scheduled: **February 10, March 7 and April 18**

#### **First exam: counts 10% and is a written text consisting in:**

- two questions out of four on the cultural context of the works discussed in class (40 points)
- the analysis of the content and stylistic devices of a text (60 points)

#### **Second exam:**

- two questions out of four on the cultural context of the works discussed in class (40 points)
- the analysis of the content and stylistic devices of a text (60 points)

#### **Third exam**

- an essay on a large topic addressed in an Italian and an English literary work

### **Special Accommodation**

Requirements of special accommodation due to specific problems are to be notified on the first day of class.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

### Classical sources:

1. **Ovid:** Metamorphoses: (The Heritage Press, New York, 1961,
  1. Book I, The Transformation of Daphne into a Laurel (transl by John Dryden), pp.20-24
  2. Book III, The Transformation of Echo, pp.83-85
  3. Book IV: The Story of Pyramus and Thisbe, pp. 101-106.
  4. Book X: The Story of Orpheus and Euridice, pp. 315-8

RECOMMENDED: PLATO SYMPOSIUM

## **2. The Renaissance Philosophy of Love**

**Marsilio Ficino:** DELL'AMORE

### **English authors:**

1. **Sir Phillip Sidney:** ten sonnets from *Astrophel and Stella*
2. **Edmund Spenser:** *Epithalamion*
3. **William Shakespeare:**
  - Sonnets: 3, 18, 26, 62, 105, 116, 124, 130.
  - *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
  - *Romeo and Juliet*
4. **Isabella Whitney:** *The Copy of a Letter, Lately Written in Meter by a Young Gentlewoman: to her Unconstant Lover*
5. **Mary Wroth** 10 sonnets from *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* and *A Crown of Sonnets dedicated to Love*.

### **Italian authors:**

1. **Petrarch:** *Canzoniere*: .During the Life of Laura: 1,3, 13, 35, 140  
After the death of Laura,: 267, 282. 292, 351, 364, 365
2. **Boccaccio:** *The Decameron*.
  - Fourth Day, Novel I , pp.226-233
  - Fifth Day, novel IX, pp.240-244
  - Seventh Day, novel VII, pp.250-254.
3. **Machiavelli :**
  1. *The Marriage of Belfagor*
  2. *Mandragola*
4. **Vittoria Colonna:** 10 love and spiritual poems.
5. **Gaspara Stampa** 10 Love poems

**The photocopies of the poems are bound in a reader to be purchased at Gonzaga in Florence.**

**Each student is also expected to bring his/her own copy of the following books:**

**N. Machiavelli, *Mandragola*, transl. by Mera J. Flaumenhaft, Waveland Press Inc, Illinois, 1981**

ISBN-10: 0917974573

ISBN-13: 978-0917974571

**W. Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Signet Classics, Paperback, 1998**

ISBN-10: 0451526864

ISBN-13: 978-0451526861

**W. Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Signet Classics, Paperback, 1998**

ISBN-10: 0451526961

ISBN-13: 978-0451526960

## **COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE**

JAN    MO,10- INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE  
TU, 11 - OVID, METAMORPHOSES  
TH, 13 – OVID, METAMORPHOSES  
MO, 17- MARSILIO FICINO: DELL'AMORE  
TU, 18 - MARSILIO FICINO: DELL'AMORE  
TH, 20 -PETRARCA: DURING THE LIFE OF LAURA: 1, 3, 13, 35, 140  
MO, 24-PETRARCA: CANZONIERE: 267, 282, 292, 351, 364, 365  
TU, 25 – SIR PHILIP SIDNEY ASTROPHEL AND STELLA. TEN SONNETS  
TH, 27 - SIR PHILIP SIDNEY ASTROPHEL AND STELLA  
MO, 31 -EDMUND SPENSER EPITHALAMION

FEB    TU, 1 -EDMUND SPENSER EPITHALAMION  
TH, 3 -W. SHAKESPEARE: SONNETS 3, 18, 26, 62  
MO, 7- W. SHAKESPEARE: SONNETS 105, 116, 124, 130

**TU, 8 -REVIEW MEN IN LOVE**  
**TH, 10- EXAM 1**

MO, 14 -VITTORIA COLONNA  
TU, 15 -VITTORIA COLONNA  
TH, 17 -GASPARA STAMPA  
MO, 21- GASPARA STAMPA  
TU, 22 -MARY WROTH  
TH, 24 - MARY WROTH  
MO, 28 -ISABELLA WHITNEY

MAR    TU, 1- ISABELLA WHITNEY

**TH, 3 REVIEW: WOMEN IN LOVE + FIRST PAPER DELIVERY**

**MO, 7 EXAM 2**

TU, 8 BOCCACCIO FOURTH DAY, NOVEL 1  
TH, 10 BOCCACCIO FIFTH DAY, NOVEL IX

### **SPRING BREAK MARCH 11-20**

MO, 21 BOCCACCIO SEVENTH DAY, NOVEL VII  
TU, 22 MACHIAVELLI THE MARRIAGE OF BELFAGOR  
TH, 24 MACHIAVELLI: MANDRAGOLA  
MO, 28 MACHIAVELLI: MANDRAGOLA  
**TU, 29 REVIEW ITALIAN PROSE AND THEATRE ON LOVE**  
TH, 31 ROMEO AND JULIET

APR    MO, 4- ROMEO AND JULIET  
TU, 5 -ROMEO AND JULIET  
TH, 7 - A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM  
MO, 11 – A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM  
TU, 12- A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM  
**TH, 14 - EXAM REVIEW +SECOND PAPER DELIVERY**  
**MO, 18 - FINAL EXAM**