

# GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: VART 294 FLORENCE OF THE MEDICI

3 Credits

Instructor: Professor M. Carrara



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## OFFICE HOURS

9:30-10:30 MTR by appointment or simply open door policy

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

It satisfies the Arts and Sciences Fine Arts core requirement.

A survey of Florentine art and culture, starting with Florence as a Roman colony, founded by Caesar's war veterans after 59 BC, and ending with Florence as second capital of the Kingdom of Italy from 1865 to 1871.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will be introduced to the most important moments in Florentine art, history, and culture from its origins, its attempts at democracy, the emergence of the Medici family as rulers of Florence for 303 years, and the Austrian rulers after the Medici family died out.

In-class lectures will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays. Every Tuesday and Thursday the class will have guided tours to see the sites studied in class. In this way, the events covered in the classroom will come alive.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To give students a full immersion in Florentine history, culture, and art through two in-class lectures and two weekly field trips with the professor and her assistant, who rotate for every tour. Classroom material, reinforced with media presentations linking Florence to the rest of Europe, will allow students to experience "living history" through both weekly tours.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course students will be exposed to a full immersion in Florentine and European art, history, culture, banking, and their intertwining. They will acquire this knowledge by visiting the major museums, and historical sites in Florence with the professor as guide. They will realize how Florence of the Medici was a major shaping force of European culture through the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its legacy still lives on, even into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## GRADING AND OTHER POLICIES

Students are graded on two exams, a weekly journal or a final paper. There will be two examinations. The first one will be on **Wednesday, June 13** and the final will be on **Thursday, June 28**. A review session of the material covered for the test and the exam format will be given during the in-class lecture before each test. The final paper is due on **Thursday, June 20**. There will be a two point penalty for every class day of late consignment.

A student can only miss **two in-class lectures**. A missed tour will lower the final letter grade from A to A-, B+ to B, B to B-, C+ to C, and so on. If a student has missed **both a tour and two-in-class lectures**, the letter grade will go down one full letter (A to B, B to C, etc.)

**Tours are mandatory.** A missed tour must be made up. If the student is writing a journal he/she will insert the missed tour into the journal and there will be no grade change. If the student is doing a final paper he/she must write a two page report of the things that impressed them the most using the missed tour handout. He/she must show the ticket stub of the tour missed. Each ticket has the entrance hour so it is impossible to use the ticket stub of a student who was present in the official tour.

Grades:

A	.....	100	.....	94
A-	.....	93.5	.....	89
B+	.....	88.5	.....	85.5
B	.....	85	.....	84
B-	.....	83.5	.....	79
C+	.....	78.5	.....	75.5
C	.....	75	.....	74
C-	.....	73.5	.....	69
D+	.....	68.5	.....	65.5
D	.....	65	.....	64
D-	.....	63.5	.....	59
F	.....	58	.....	0

**REQUIRED READING**

1. Students will be given two packets, one for each part of the course and handouts for the weekly tours prepared by the instructor. The handouts are based on the didactic material used by every museum in Florence for Art History professors, translated into English by the instructor.

**REFERENCE BOOKS ON RESERVE IN THE LIBRARY**

1. Ferdinand Schevill, *Medieval and Renaissance Florence*. It will complement the packets for a more detailed description of the events.
2. Gene Brucker, *Florence: the Golden Age, 1138 – 1737*. University of California Press, 1998. It is a wonderful source for the students who decide to do journals on the weekly tours.
3. John Rigby Hale, *Florence and the Medici: the Pattern of Control*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1977.
4. Eric Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries*. University of Chicago Press, 1976 The book covers until 1800.
5. Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art*. 7<sup>th</sup> edition, 2010. It has wonderful explanations of the art works seen in the weekly tours.

Christopher Hibbert's *Rise and Fall of the House of Medici* is **warmly recommended** for a better grasp of the subject. There are many copies available in the library. The book is written in a very entertaining style and should be read as a story. The instructor will always refer to the book when lecturing on the Medici family. A study guide on the book will be distributed at the end of the second week. It works much better if the students have read the chapters before using the work sheet.

**COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE**

May

- 21 Introduction to the course, Roman Florence, division of the Roman empire between East and West.
- 22 **Tour: Archaeological Museum**
- 23 From the Barbarian invasions to the rise of feudalism. Struggles between Guelphs and Ghibellines. Florence’s first attempt at democracy or “Primo Popolo”

- 24 **Walking Tour of Florence: the center of Roman Florence, the religious center, Florence's two city halls, Orsanmichele, Dante's area.**
- 28 The Second Democracy, civil war in Florence, Dante's exile and his *Comedy*
- 29 No morning class **2:30 Tour: The Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella with Giotto's *Crucifix*, Masaccio's *Trinity* and other masterpieces.**
- 30 The Third Democracy, Florence from 1382 to 1400, death of the duke of Milan, Great Schism of Avignon, beginnings of Early Renaissance art. Hibbert's chapter 1  
**2:30 Tour: The Franciscan church of Santa Croce with Giotto's frescoes and Michelangelo's tomb**
- 31 The rise of the Medici family, Giovanni di Bicci as papal banker. Cosimo il Vecchio as head of the Medici family, his exile and return to Florence.

#### June

- 4 Cosimo's local and foreign policy. Piero the Gouty Hibbert's chapters 2-8
- 5 **Tour: Cathedral museum, Donatello's *Magdalen* and Michelangelo's *Pietà*.**
- 6 Lorenzo the Magnificent, the Pazzi conspiracy, art in his time: Botticelli and the young Michelangelo in the sculpture garden. Hibbert's chapters 9-13:
- 7 **Tour: The Bargello or National Museum of Sculpture (Competition panels, Donatello's sculpture, Michelangelo's *Bacchus*, Cellini's *Cosimo I*),**
- 11 Midterm review with students as presenters
- 12 **Tuesday afternoon tour (hour to be confirmed) Uffizi Gallery with Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, da Vinci's *Annunciation*, Michelangelo's *Holy Family*.**
- 13 **Midterm examination during regular class hour**
- 14 **Tour: convent of San Marco with frescoes by Fra Angelico and Savonarola's cell**
- 18 Piero di Lorenzo aka Piero the Unfortunate, his exile, Savonarola and the Florentine Republic, Savonarola's death, Julius II and the Medici return. Hibbert's chapters 14-17
- 19 **Tuesday afternoon tour (hour to be confirmed) to Accademia (Michelangelo's *David and Four Prisoners***
- 20 Pope Leo X, the protestant Reformation, Clement VII until the Sack of Rome, the last Florentine republic, Medici return, Alessandro's murder. Hibbert, 18-19.
- 21 **Tour: Michelangelo's New Sacristy Tombs in San Lorenzo** Final project deadline
- 25 Cosimo I and his descendants Hibbert, chapters 20-24. Francis III of Lorraine as Grand Duke of Tuscany and his descendants.  
Hapsburg-Lorraine, Ferdinand III Hapsburg-Lorraine. Napoleon Bonaparte
- 26 Congress of Vienna, Ferdinand III Hapsburg-Lorraine, Leopold II, the Risorgimento or fight for the unification of Italy, Florence as capital of the Kingdom of Italy.  
**Tuesday afternoon tour (2:30) to the Palatine Gallery, Pitti Palace.**
- 27 Review with students as presenters
- 28 Final examination

#### **FINAL PROJECT**

The project is due on **Thursday, June 21**. Students have a choice of writing a **weekly journal** or a **five to ten page final paper**. **Students can present their journal entries weekly and will be graded each time with suggestions on how to improve them to get a perfect score.** They will write a two to three page entry each time with their impressions on the site or sites visited and will research the pieces that impressed them the most during their visit. It is important to illustrate the pieces, through postcards, pictures, or drawings to explain them better. Each entry should have its bibliography which should **include books, not just websites**.

The final paper can be from a minimum of five to a maximum of ten pages, including the bibliography. It can be handed in before, if you want the professor to go over it to make sure it is A material. Students are free to choose the topic that interests them the most from fashion to banking or a favorite artist but **they need the professor's approval**.

They can also write on other sites that were covered in class but not visited on the weekly tours. Five sources must be consulted for the bibliography The ticket stub should be attached to the project.

Suggested sites: handouts are available on request.

1. A late afternoon visit to the church of *San Miniato* to admire the sacristy frescoes by Spinello Aretino, the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal, and to hear the friars sing Vespers.
2. A visit to the Florence Baptistery (12:00-7:00, 3 euro) **and** the Duomo 10:00-5:00 free. This visit is warmly recommended to admire the beautiful dome mosaics and other masterpieces. The Baptistery ticket stub must be included.
3. Brunelleschi's Dome for a breathtaking view of Florence after climbing 463 steps, ticket stub must be attached.
4. Pitti Palace's *Boboli Gardens*, *Silverworks Museum*, *China Museum*, *Costume Museum* with only one ticket, stub must be attached.