

HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES  
FLORENCE 2024 JANUARY INTERSESSION PROGRAM

**1. THE COURSE:**

ITAL 280 *INTRODUCTION TO THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE* (in English; 3 credits)

**Instructors:**

Prof. Monica Calabritto ([mcalabri@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:mcalabri@hunter.cuny.edu))

Prof. Julie Van Peteghem ([jv41@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:jv41@hunter.cuny.edu))

**Class Hours:**

Monday through Friday, from 10 AM to 12:30 PM

First day of class: Tuesday January 2, 2024

Last day of class: Friday January 19, 2024

This course will consider the major historical, social, cultural and artistic issues regarding Italy from the late Middle-Ages to the Renaissance, with particular emphasis on literature and the arts. Visits to museums and cultural sites are mandatory, and they are necessary not only to contextualize the program covered in class, but also for a better understanding of Italy's long and rich cultural history as a whole.

**Textbooks:**

1) *The Italian Renaissance Reader*, Eds. Julia C. Bondanella and Mark Musa. New York: Penguin Meridian, 1987. (This book can be found in major bookstores, or bought online).

2) Additional material provided by the instructors and posted on Blackboard.

The course consists of 45 in-class contact hours, as dictated by Hunter College regulations (1 hour equals 50 minutes of actual class-time). Mandatory instructor-led visits to museum and cultural site will be conducted after class, on weekdays.

In addition to group visits, students will be required to visit at least 2 other locations on their own and at their own convenience (see below, Part 2 B "Other Recommended Sites"). **Students are required to submit proof of their visit.**

For exams and assignments see below Part 3, "Course Requirements".

**2. VISITS AND TOURS.**

**A) FLORENCE TOURS WITH THE INSTRUCTOR:**

Since visiting hours vary by month or week at many sites (especially churches), a program for the guided visits can only be provided when in Florence. These are the sites we are going to visit as a group:

- 1) Church of Santa Croce and Pazzi Chapel (1 and a half hour)
- 2) Piazza della Signoria, Palazzo Vecchio (exterior only) and Loggia dell'Orcagna; Uffizi Gallery (3-4 hours)
- 3) Galleria dell'Accademia: Michelangelo's *David* and *Prisoners*; The Baptistery: Romanesque architecture; Andrea Pisano's (Gothic) and Lorenzo Ghiberti's (Renaissance) doors; Duomo (Santa Maria

del Fiore, exterior): Giotto's belltower, and Brunelleschi's dome; Ponte Vecchio; Church of Santa Felicita (Pontormo's *Deposition*, if open to the public) (3-4 hours)

**B) OTHER RECOMMENDED SITES (please visit at least 2):**

Brancacci Chapel (frescoes by Masolino, Masaccio, and Filippino Lippi)

Museo del Bargello (Medieval and Renaissance sculpture)

Convent of San Marco (Beato Angelico's frescoes)

Church of Santa Maria Novella (Masaccio's *Trinity*, Paolo Uccello's frescoes)

Church of Santa Maria del Fiore (Andrea del Castagno's and Paolo Uccello's frescoes, Vasari and Zuccari's frescoes in the dome)

Church of Ognissanti (Ghirlandaio's *Last Supper*)

Church of Santa Trinita (Ghirlandaio's *Adoration of the Magi*)

Church of Santo Spirito (Brunelleschi's architecture, Michelangelo's [?] wooden crucifix)

Church of San Miniato al Monte (A short but steep walk from the hotel; Beautiful view of Florence and great site to take postcard-like pictures)

Church of San Lorenzo, Laurentian Library (Michelangelo), Old (Brunelleschi) and New (Michelangelo) Sacristies

The Jewish Temple (one of Italy's most important Synagogues) (visits by appointment)

**N.B.: SOME SITES CHARGE AN ENTRANCE FEE FOR TOURISTS.**

**3. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

The course requires the following class-work:

- 1) Mid-term exam: essay questions: 40%
- 2) Final exam: essay questions: 40%
- 3) Active participation (lectures and guided tours): 20%

Exams may incorporate a multiple-choice section worth no more than 10%.

**Attendance of all classes and scheduled tours is, of course, mandatory: missing one class equals missing one whole week during a regular semester**

**4. SYLLABUS:**

HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE CUNY  
DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES  
WINTER PROGRAM IN FLORENCE, ITALY, JANUARY 2024

**ITAL 28000: INTRODUCTION TO THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE**

This course offers a survey of the literature of the Italian Renaissance and a study of the contribution in the fields of literature, art, politics, and philosophy by such writers, artists and thinkers as Boccaccio, Petrarch, Alberti, Pico, Valla, Leonardo, Machiavelli, Guicciardini, Michelangelo, Colonna, Castiglione, Cellini and Vasari.

**Expected Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the course, students will become familiar with the major intellectual and artistic movements at the core of the Italian and European Renaissance. They will be able to assess the historical, cultural, political, philosophical and literary background of works by different authors belonging to different literary genres (Prose narrative, lyric poetry, history and political science, art theory and history, theory of comportment, the autobiographical genre, etc.) Students will be required to engage in text analysis and in provided contextualized historical appraisal of works read in class, or assigned for reading, and of visual artworks examined during museum and site visits. Students will be able to identify and discuss the main themes of Italian Renaissance—construction of one’s individual identity, the notion of the “Other”, gender and sexuality issues, religious and ethical debates—in a variety of primary and secondary sources

**Course Objectives and Content:** The course offers an overview of Italian Renaissance through a choice of primary and secondary sources that analyze this period from various angles—political, economic, social and cultural. The goal of the course is to provide the student with a general overview of Italian Renaissance and its complexity through the reading of selections from canonical literary texts such as Petrarch’s *Canzoniere*, Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, Machiavelli’s *Prince*, Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier* and Guicciardini’s *Ricordi*, literary works by Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Cellini and Vasari, and less known primary sources—letters, memoirs, autobiographies.

**Hours:** M-F 10:00AM-12:30PM NOT INCLUDING VISITS TO MUSEUMS AND FIELD TRIPS

**Please note: the dates of the afternoon visits are subject to change**

#### **Tentative schedule of readings**

- T 1/2 INTRODUCTION. History and historiography of the Italian Renaissance
- W 1/3 Petrarch and the birth of Humanism
- R 1/4 Boccaccio
- F 1/5 Boccaccio. Early masters in Italian art: Giotto, Simone Martini
- M 1/8 Latin and Italian Humanism. Salutati. Alberti. Art from Masaccio to Brunelleschi. **VISIT TO SANTA CROCE**
- T 1/9 Machiavelli and Guicciardini
- W 1/10 Valla and Women Humanists and their male colleagues **MIDTERM EXAM**
- R 1/11 Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino **VISIT TO THE PIAZZA DELLA SIGNORIA HISTORICAL DISTRICT AND THE UFFIZI GALLERIA**
- F 1/12 Leonardo: writer, 'proto-scientist' and artist
- M 1/15 Michelangelo, the artist and his poetry.
- T 1/16 Michelangelo, the artist and his poetry. Bembo and Castiglione: on rules and behavior. **VISIT TO ACCADEMIA MUSEUM**
- W 1/17 Petrarchism and women writers: V. Colonna, V. Franco, G. Stampa, I. Di Morra.
- R 1/18 Benvenuto Cellini. Giorgio Vasari and the canonization of the Renaissance
- F 1/19 Conclusions. **FINAL EXAM**

#### **Textbooks:**

- 1) *The Italian Renaissance Reader*. Edited by Julia C. Bondanella and Mark Musa. New York: Penguin Meridian, 1987.
- 2) Materials provided by the instructor.

**Hunter College Policy on Academic Integrity**

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

**ADA Policy**

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772- 4857 or (212) 650-3230.

**Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct**

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

1. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).
2. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link: <http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf>