

**BLHS-106: THE RENAISSANCE**  
**RENAISSANCE HUMANISM AND RENAISSANCE ART**  
**SUMMER 2018**

Fridays: 5:30pm – 9:50pm

Class Location: MASS AVE Campus (Rm TBD)

Professor:

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917-275-5471 (cell)

**PLEASE NOTE: THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO REVISION/MODIFICATION**

**Course Description**

Deriving in part from a rediscovery of ancient writings and arts, and in part from a new interpretation of the human spirit, Renaissance humanism expressed itself in great works of literature and art. This course emphasizes key humanist writings that reassess the human condition. It also focuses on the glorious works of painting, sculpture, and architecture that express this new understanding of the human spirit.

*Humanism*

Leon Battista Alberti's reformulation of the pre-Socratic assertion that "a man can do all things if he will" is a keynote of Renaissance humanism. It exudes the fundamental mood of the age: confidence. Over time that initial confidence is modified and qualified, as humanists turn a secular and analytical eye on the unique practices and policies of their time and place. We will consider many facets of humanistic thought, from Petrarch's antiquarian enthusiasms to Pico's idealism to More's skepticism.

*Art*

The arts of the European Renaissance are one of the crowning glories of human achievement. The lasting images and structures of this era speak to the eternal question of what it means to be human, and suggest myriad possibilities for the individual spirit, and for the eternal verities of existence. We will analyze the transformation of medieval art into the humanist style in Italy, and see how northern Europe evolved its own visual language. We will also consider how art conventions and materials influence the individual artist's creative vision.

**Learning Objectives**

After completing this course a student should be able to:

1. Recognize and state the importance of the most important historical developments in Renaissance Italy
2. Distinguish among Classical humanism, Christian humanism, and Renaissance humanism
3. Identify the humanistic principles in the assigned readings for the class
4. Analyze and evaluate the principal arguments in literary and philosophical prose of the Renaissance era
5. Explain the influences of Renaissance humanism on European culture
6. Recognize and define the specific ideas and values of important Renaissance humanists
7. Recognize, define, and compare the styles and major works of Renaissance artists

8. Understand and analyze the structural and decorative characteristics of Renaissance architecture
9. Define and apply the social contexts of the arts in the Renaissance, including patronage, audience, religion, and business

In addition to these substantive goals, students will further develop their research, writing, oral communication, and analytical skills. Specifically, students will be expected to:

1. Conduct research on major Renaissance figures.
2. Present this research before the class in a clear, well-structured oral presentation.
3. Write clear, precise papers that develop rigorous arguments and provide solid evidence for their claims.
4. In writing and discussion, offer insightful and critically informed interpretations and observations about texts and/or artwork, connecting, whenever possible, interpretations to other thinkers, time periods, and courses taken in the BLS program at Georgetown SCS.

### **Required Texts**

*(TEXTS THAT ARE NOT LISTED HERE WILL BE AVAILABLE ON BLACKBOARD. YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PRINT THOSE TEXTS OUT AND BRING THEM TO CLASS IN HARD COPY. YOU MUST HAVE HARD COPY TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR CLASSROOM DISCUSSIONS.)*

Adams, Laurie Schneider. *Italian Renaissance Art*. ASIN: B00HTJN4FS

Matthews, Michael, ed. *The Scientific Background to Modern Philosophy* ISBN-13: 978-0872200746

Montaigne, *The Essays: A Selection*. Ed. and Trans. M. A. Screech. ISBN-13: 978-0140446029

*The Italian Renaissance Reader*. Ed. Julia Conway Bondanella and Mark Musa. ISBN-10: 0452010136 // ISBN-13: 978-0452010130 (listed as *Reader*)

### **Requirements and Grading:**

**Blackboard Postings:** Each student will post on Blackboard **five** times. Posts should appear 24 hours before the class to which they relate and should take up issues from the readings for that class. Please consider carefully your plans for posting so that you are able to post five times before the end of the semester. Late posts or multiple posts offered in a single week will not count towards this requirement. Posts should be between 400 and 500 words long and adhere to standard methods of composition. You must quote from the reading and engage in analysis. A failure to incorporate quotations will result in a 10-point deduction. An interdisciplinary approach is welcomed (connecting philosophical topics/ideas with artistic or literary works, for instance). I especially welcome posts that advance discussions in class and/or from the Blackboard posts of others. One of the posts can be of your class notes (see “Note Taking” below). **Each post is worth 40 points. 20 percent** of grade = 200 points.

**Exam on First Two Lessons:** There will be an exam on the first two lessons of the course, released on Blackboard in accordance with the guidance below for the week of 31 May 17, which is in the “Schedule of Lessons.” The exam will cover the readings and discussion for the overall introduction to the course, along with the assigned readings from Petrarch.

**10 percent** of grade = 100 points.

**Two Essays:** Two five-page papers. Prompts to be posted to Blackboard. Your paper may consist of a revision and expansion of a Blackboard posting. **Each paper** is worth **20 percent** of your grade = 400 total points.

**Rock Stars of the Renaissance (Teachback):** A “teachback” which introduces us to a major Renaissance figure. The teachback should represent considerable research on the author/artist assigned and the **student should be prepared to present us with biographical details, a summary of major works and their content/form/import, and an appraisal of the figure’s impact on, and place within, the Renaissance, in addition to subsequent influence.** A bibliography should be included. The teachback should end with discussion questions that invite other students to interact with the presenter. Your teachback presentation should not be less than 20 minutes or more than 25 minutes, excluding discussion. Everything in your presentation should be cited as per the honor code. **10 percent** of grade = 100 points.

**Class Participation:** Students are expected to be prepared for and to participate fully in the class, demonstrating their engagement with the class materials and with the ongoing discussion. Half of your class participation grade (100 points) will consist of **four quizzes.** The other half will be based on your contributions in class. Discussion should advance and deepen our level of thought about the materials. Generally, discussion points should be drawn directly from the texts, artwork, or lectures. **20 percent** of grade = 200 points.

**Final Examination: There is no final exam for this summer course.**

**Total number of points for course: 1,000**

Grades will be calculated as follows:

93% – 100% = A	90% – 92% = A-	
87% – 89% = B+	83% – 86% = B	80% – 82% = B-
77% – 79% = C+	73% – 76% = C	70% – 72% = C-
67% – 69% = D+	60% – 66% = D	
Below 60% = F		

### **POLICY ON LATE PAPER SUBMISSIONS**

**One step of a letter grade will be deducted for each day a paper is late (e.g., from an A- to a B+, from a B+ to a B, etc.).**

## ATTENDANCE

Your attendance is vital to your learning and the learning of your classmates. You are expected to attend every class meeting. We understand that, on rare occasions, there are reasons beyond your control that might prevent you from attending a session (e.g., illness or a family emergency). If you know in advance that you must miss class for a valid reason, you **must** discuss it with me beforehand, or it will be considered an unexcused absence. If you miss class unexpectedly due to an emergency, you must obtain a note from a dean to excuse the absence.

Unexcused absences will result in a deduction of one step of a letter grade from your final grade (e.g., from a B to a B-). If you miss two classes for any reason, you may be dropped from the course involuntarily for failing to satisfy the requirements of the course.

## POLICY ON INCOMPLETES

Incompletes will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, such as a family or medical emergency. Students must contact me in advance regarding incompletes.

## ESSAY PREPARATION

Documentation for your essays must follow the **MLA guidelines**. Please note that the professor is not your personal editor and that this is not a remedial course. All writing submitted for review or posted online should be checked for grammatical and stylistic issues and written in standard English. Papers with notable errors will be given an F and returned for revision without further comment.

Students are encouraged to meet with the professor as needed, to meet with our TA (if assigned) at least once and otherwise as needed, and to make full use of the Writing Center.

## LAPTOP AND SMART PHONE POLICY:

No electronics should be used in class without the professor's approval. Phones should be silenced and put away; laptops should be closed. Although we may occasionally consult our laptops for information or use them in presentations, any unauthorized usage will be penalized in the form of point deductions. Additionally, laptops or phones used without prior approval will be banished from the class for the remainder of the semester.

## NOTE-TAKING POLICY

Learning to take class notes is an important college-level skill. Students should expect to take notes in every class and to keep their notes and other materials in a well-organized notebook. The best note-taking does not end in class, but occurs when students return to their notes, organize and review them. To encourage this, you may substitute your class notes for the relevant class for a blackboard posting **once** during the course of the semester.

## **Office Hours**

By appointment. I will typically arrive NLT 5:00pm and will be available for one-on-one discussion during the thirty minutes prior to class. I will always appreciate knowing beforehand if you'd like to meet during this timeframe.

## **Georgetown's Honor System**

All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. Plagiarism violates the purpose and undermines the integrity of intellectual inquiry and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. I assume you have read the honor code material located at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>, and in particular have read the following documents: *Honor Council Pamphlet*, "What Is Plagiarism?", "Sanctioning Guidelines", and "Expedited Sanctioning Process."

Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge:

*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

Any confirmed case of academic misconduct will, at minimum, result in failure on and zero credit for that assignment. Honor code violations will also be referred to the Honor Council and your dean.

## **Turnitin.com**

Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers can be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

## **Plagiarism**

In accord with university policy, all incidents of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail.

If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student will receive a grade of F for the course.

## **Policy Accommodating Students' Religious Observances**

The following is university policy:

Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided

with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

### **Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity**

During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university's Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online videoconferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Blackboard will not be changed due to campus closings.

The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

### **Accommodating Disabilities**

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

### **Title IX at Georgetown**

<https://titleix.georgetown.edu/>

### ***Sexual Misconduct***

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational programs, which includes sexual harassment or any acts of sexual misconduct. Title IX requires the University, upon becoming aware of any incident of sexual harassment and misconduct to respond appropriately to protect and maintain the safety of the University community, including students, faculty, and staff.

Georgetown University prohibits sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, and stalking.

Discrimination based on sex, including sexual misconduct and discrimination based on pregnancy or parenting status, subverts the University's mission and threatens permanent damage to the educational experience, careers, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

Please know that as a faculty member I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault. However, University policy also requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct.

Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:

**Jen Schweer, MA, LPC**

Associate Director of Health Education  
Services for Sexual Assault Response and  
Prevention

[\(202\) 687-0323](tel:(202)687-0323)

[jls242@georgetown.edu](mailto:jls242@georgetown.edu)

**Erica Shirley**

Trauma Specialist  
Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

[\(202\) 687-6985](tel:(202)687-6985)

[els54@georgetown.edu](mailto:els54@georgetown.edu)

More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at:  
<https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/get-help>.

***Pregnancy Adjustments and Accommodations***

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students. Students may request adjustments based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. Specific adjustments will be handled on a case by case basis and will depend on medical need and academic requirements. Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out at: <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/student-pregnancy>.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Fri. May 25: Class One: Course Introduction.** Read: (1) Introduction to *The Portable Renaissance Reader* (pp. 1-45, [posted on Blackboard](#)); (2) *Reader*, Introduction (ix-xviii); (3) Pater, “Preface” and “Sandro Botticelli” (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2398/2398-h/2398-h.htm>); (4) Leon Battista Alberti, from “On Painting”

**Fri. Jun 1: Class Two (no meeting) - Distance Learning Graded Requirement.** Read: (1) Nicholas Mann, “The Origins of Humanism” and (2) *Reader*, Petrarch (pp. 1-21), and *Canzoniere* Nos. 1, 3, 16, 23, 90, 134, 189, 298. **Listen to online lecture (posted to Blackboard) and take exam on the material of the first two lessons (to be released on Blackboard).**

**Fri. June 8: Class Three: Boccaccio and Pico.** Read: (1) *Reader*, Boccaccio, 60- 61, and Preface, Introduction, 1st day 1st story; 1st day 4th story; 3rd day 9th story; 6th day 7th story. (2) *Reader*, Pico (pp. 178-183). (3) “Artists and Humanists” from *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (on Blackboard)

**Fri. June 15: Class Four: Giotto and Cimabue; Florence and the Medici; Brunelleschi**  
Read: (1) Adams, 2-14, 23-40; 60-64; 58-75; (2) Vasari, *Life of Cimabue, Life of Giotto*; available on Blackboard; (4) Hibbert, “Florence and the Florentines,” 19-29 (on Blackboard).

**Fri. June 22: Class Five: Masaccio; Sculpture in Florence; Botticelli and Neo-Platonism**  
Read (1) Adams, 229-237, 65-66, 75-81, 202-206, 87-103. (2) Pico, “Oration on the Dignity of Man” – complete text (Blackboard).

**Sat. Jun 23: Museum Visit (Tentative): National Gallery of Art**

**Fri. June 29: Class Six: Ghirlandaio; Piero; The High Renaissance; Leonardo da Vinci; Michelangelo.** Read (1) Adams, 312-320, 332-344, 291-311, 184-201; 240-246. (2) Other readings TBA

**Fri. July 6: Class Seven: The Northern Renaissance** Readings TBA. Explore The Royal Collection Trust website: <https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/the-northern-renaissance/the-queens-gallery-buckingham-palace>

**Sunday. July 8: PAPER #1 DUE BY 11:59pm: Submit via Blackboard.**

**Fri. July 13: Class Eight: Machiavelli and Political Thought.** Read (1) “Humanism and the Origins of Modern Political Thought” (Blackboard); (2) *Reader*: Selections from *The Prince* (pp. 258-294).

**Fri. July 20: Class Nine: Shakespeare’s *Richard III*.** Read full play. Read companion notes to the play from *Asimov’s Guide to Shakespeare* (on Blackboard).

**Fri. July 27: Class Ten: Scientific Foundations of Modern Philosophy** Read (1) Matthews, Copernicus, Bacon, Galileo, Newton: 133-58; 53-86; 45-52; 33-44. (2) *De Revolutionibus*, Book I, Chapters 1-10; available from: <http://www.webexhibits.org/calendars/year-text-Copernicus.html>.

**Fri. Aug 3: Class Eleven: Freedom of the Will.** Read (1) Erasmus, “On Free Will”; (2) Martin Luther, “The Bondage of the Will; (3) John Calvin, “Free Will and Predestination (all on Blackboard). Other reading(s) TBA.

**WEDNESDAY, AUG 8: (PAPER #2 DUE NLT 11:59pm – Post to Blackboard)**

**Fri. Aug 10: Class Twelve: Montaigne and The Study of Man.** Read (1) Selections from *The Essays*; (2) Selections TBD on “The Study of Man” from *The Portable Renaissance Reader*.

**Fri. Aug 17: Class Thirteen: Montaigne and the Foundations of Modern Philosophy.** Selections TBA from *The Essays*.