CIEE Rome, Italy

Course title: Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci: The Story behind the Italian Renaissance
Course code: AHIS 3002 ROIT
Programs offering course: Rome Open Campus Block
Open Campus Track: Language, Literature, and Culture
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Spring Block II 2020

Course Description

While fifteenth century Florence is considered the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance, Rome also played a major role in reviving interest in classical values of harmony, balance and beauty, especially through its inspiring ancient wonders, such as the Pantheon. Among the droves of artists who gravitated toward the Eternal City, Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci embodied the ideal of the total artist, who aimed to achieve unity among all of the arts. By exploring artists biographies and their creative output in the fields of painting, sculpture and architecture, students gain a broad knowledge and understanding of this glorious period of Italian culture. Field trips and visits to the Sistine Chapel or the Villa Farnesina, for example, provide excellent learning environments where students experience directly what they acquire through class sessions.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Outline the relationship between the arts, society and politics in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Rome;
- Distinguish the theoretical and philosophical notions that led to the spreading of the Renaissance;
- Develop consistent arguments in observing, interpreting and evaluating the relationship between Rome and Renaissance artists;
• Integrate specific terminology from the field of art history into formal analyses and interpretations;
• Evaluate the cultural and social role of the Renaissance in Rome;
• Research, critically analyze, and interpret paintings, sculptures and buildings within their historical context;
• Research scholarly sources when analyzing and interpreting artworks;
• Critique the influence of artists’ biographies and personalities on their styles and poetics.

Course Prerequisites

None.

Methods of Instruction

This course will combine lectures, class debates, walking tours, film screenings, press reviews and conversations with guest speakers.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Weekly Written Assignments (2) 20%
2. Quizzes (2) 15%
3. Oral Presentation 20%
4. Final Exam 25%
5. Class Participation 20%
   TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Weekly Written Assignments (2)
Quizzes (2)

While there is no mid-term for this course, two quizzes and two written assignments serve as continual assessment of student progress and performance. On a weekly basis, students are thus expected to analyze, interpret and comment on specific readings and artists and patrons of artworks with references to the latter’s historical,
social, political and cultural contexts as discussed in class. The instructor will provide extensive and precise guidelines, and the assignments are to be submitted through Canvas.

Oral Presentation

Ordinarily, individual student oral presentations are delivered during on-site visits. Each student will hold a brief talk on a specific aspect of the arts in Rome. Topics will be individually discussed and agreed upon with the instructor by the second week of classes. The instructor will provide extensive and precise guidelines.

Final Exam

Students will take a final exam at the end of the course. The exam is cumulative and will therefore cover all topics discussed and analyzed in class. Question types include multiple choice, true/false, chronology and terminology together with picture identifications and short essays. Rubrics will be used to assess each assignment.

Class Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.
Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, and local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

**Class: 1.1 Introduction to the Course**

This class will introduce the Italian Renaissance, beyond Florence. Syllabus will be presented and reviewed, with emphasis on assessment methods and course requirements.

**Class: 1.2 History & Legend**
Political, social and economic contexts of 15th century Italy will be studied in order to understand the roots of the Rinascimento and differentiate the history of the movement from the fictional stories surrounding its origins and purposes.

The rebirth of classical values of harmony, precision and symmetry found its philosophical argument in Humanists such as Petrarch and Ariosto.


Week 2
Class:  2.1 Michelangelo in Rome: the Artist & His Time

Born in Caprese (Tuscany), Michelangelo spent many years in Rome, where he left his personal mark through architectural wonders such as the new St. Peter’s Basilica, the Capitoline Hill and the Porta Pia. Michelangelo’s pure style and poetics will be analyzed through direct references to his personal life and personality.


Patronage and Papal commissions

The role of the Pope in stimulating and economically supporting artistic production in Renaissance Rome will be analyzed in its political and social aspects.

On-site class at the Capitoline Hill, San Pietro in Vincoli, Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri


Class:  2.2 Michelangelo the Painter: the Sistine Chapel
Symbols, colors and narrative of the ceiling and the Last Judgment will be deeply analyzed, in order to identify specific elements of Michelangelo’s painting style. Famous ancient statuary housed in the Pius-Clementine Museum will be discussed as inspirational sources for Michelangelo’s and other Renaissance artists’ works.

On-site class at the Vatican Museums


Week 3
Class: 3.1 Building in Rome / Architectural Theory: Alberti & Palladio

By reading excerpts from Alberti’s “On the art of building” and from Palladio’s “The four books of architecture”, students will reflect on the theoretical framework under which Renaissance architecture prospered in Rome.

Quiz 1

On-site class at St. Peter’s Basilica, the Cupola, and wooden models (to be confirmed)

Readings: Alberti’s On the Art of Building in Ten Books

Class: 3.2 Bramante in Rome

Selected and encouraged by the discerning Pope Julius II, Bramante introduced in Rome his characteristic style. Drawing inspiration from the ancient Roman temples, he designed the plans for St. Peter’s Basilica, the famous Tempietto, and the cloister for Santa Maria della Pace.

On-site class at the Chiostro del Bramante

Week 4

Class: 4.1 Painting in Rome / Raphael & His Team of Artists

Raphael was appointed papal architect and overseer of antiquities. Analyses of Raphael's work will include a discussion of his frescoes for the Vatican rooms, and his large-scale altarpieces housed in the Pinacoteca Vaticana.

On-site class in the Pinacoteca Vaticana and Le Stanze di Raffaello


Due date for Submission of Written Assignment 1

Class: 4.2 Leonardo & Painting

Painter, sculptor, architect, musician, scientist, mathematician, astronomer and writer: Leonardo embodied the ideal of the Renaissance man. Through his paintings, students will be able to identify and recognize the reasons for their universal appreciation.

Class: 4.3 Secular & Sacred Building Projects

The history of Agostino Chigi's suburban villa, known today as the Villa Farnesina, will illustrate a further aspect of Raphael's oeuvre in a non-religious Roman context. The main focus will be the artist's fresco cycle for the villa's lavish decorative program. By contrast, a religious architectural typology will be introduced – the martyrium – through the study of Bramante's shrine to the crucifixion of St. Peter.

On-site class at Villa Farnesina and Bramante's Tempietto

THIRD WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE

Week 5  
Class:  5.1  Leonardo da Vinci: the Renaissance Man

Painter, sculptor, architect, musician, scientist, mathematician, astronomer and writer: Leonardo embodied the ideal of the Renaissance man. Through references to select paintings, students will be able to identify and recognize the reasons for their universal appreciation. Furthermore, students will explore Leonardo’s keen interest in the sciences, chief among which engineering, botany, geology, cartography and human anatomy. Through his journals and drawings such as that of the famous Vitruvian Man, students will better grasp the complexity and lasting impact of this artist’s influential pursuits.

Quiz 2

On-site class: Leonardo Da Vinci Museum housed in the Palazzo della Cancelleria


Class:  5.2  Fresco Workshop

This lesson introduces students to the history and practice of fresco painting. Not only will significant economic and geographical factors be discussed in relation to the materials used during the Renaissance, but students will also receive training in sixteenth-century fresco techniques, employing the appropriate tools to produce their own, individual, small scale examples.

Readings: Fuga (2006) 99-111 on the history and technique of fresco painting
Week 6
Class: 6.1 Review for Final

Due date for Submission of Written Assignment 2

Class: 6.2 Final Exam

Course Materials
Readings


Further reading materials will be assigned on a week-by-week basis.

Online Resources
Carving marble with traditional tools:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWUuGDovHEI

Rulers of Europe, including the Papacy during the Renaissance:
http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/euru/hd_euru.htm

Timeline for Rome and Southern Italy, 1400–1600 A.D.:
http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/08/eusts.html

The Classical Influence on Renaissance Architecture:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ek1SI1oAwU

Media Resources

The Agony and the Ecstasy, a film adaptation of Irving Stone’s novel with the same title.

Looking for Renaissance Rome, a film conceived by renown architectural historian James Ackerman and shot by John Terry