Early Renaissance Italian Art (Art History Seminar)

The two centuries between the birth of Dante Alighieri in 1265 and the death of Cosimo de’ Medici in 1464 witnessed one of the greatest artistic revolutions in the history of Western civilization. The unprecedented economic expansion in major Italian cities and concomitant spread of humanistic culture and philosophy gave rise to what has come to be called the Renaissance, a complex and multifaceted movement embracing a wide range of intellectual developments. This course will treat the artistic production of the Italian city-republics in the late Duecento, Trecento and early Quattrocento, with particular emphasis on panel and fresco painting in Siena, Florence, Rome and Venice. The Early Italian Renaissance will be considered within its historical, political and social context, beginning with the careers of Duccio di Buoninsegna and Giotto di Bondone, progressing through the generation of Gentile da Fabriano, Filippo Brunelleschi and Masaccio, and concluding with the era of Leon Battista Alberti and Piero della Francesca. This course satisfies the seminar requirement for the art history major, and it requires a longer and more challenging paper than that required for students enrolled at the 3000 level.

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Grossman earned his B.A. in Art History and English at the University of California-Berkeley, and his M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Art History at Columbia University. After seven years of residence in Tuscany, he completed his dissertation on the civic architecture, urbanism and iconography of the Sienese Republic in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance. He served on the faculty of the School of Art and Design at San Jose State University in 2006-2009, taught art history for Stanford University in 2007-2009, and joined the Department of Art at the University of Texas at El Paso as Assistant Professor of Art History in 2009. During summers he is Coordinator of the Roma Aeterna summer study abroad program while he conducts research in Italy for his publications. He has presented papers and chaired sessions at conferences throughout the United States, including at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, and in Europe, at the biennial meetings of the European Architectural History Network. In April 2014 he presented his paper, “Ghibellines, Guelphs and the Piazza San Cristoforo of Siena in the Duecento,” at the 67th Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians in Austin. The following June he presented another paper, “Sienese Fortifications in the Age of the Guelph Commune,” at the 3rd International Meeting of the European Architectural History Network in Turin, Italy. In May 2015, the Italian Art Society sponsored his triple session, “Civic Foundation Legends in Medieval Italian Art,” for the 50th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan. In October 2015 he will give a lecture at Humanities West in San
Francisco, “Italian Civic Palaces in the Age of the City Republics.” In the same month he will deliver a speech on the architecture of Henry C. Trost before the El Paso chapter of the American Institute of Architects. His book review of Fabio Gabbrielli, *Siena medievale: l’architettura civile* (Siena: Protagon, 2010) was published by *CAA Reviews* during fall 2012, and his article “A Case of Double Identity: The Public and Private Faces of the Palazzo Tolomei in Siena” was published in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* in March 2013. His conference paper, “Sienese Fortifications in the Age of the Guelph Commune,” was published in *Investigating and Writing Architectural History: Subjects, Methodologies and Frontiers* (Turin, Italy: Politecnico di Torino, 2014). His proposal for a co-edited volume entitled *Condottieri and Courtly Culture in Renaissance Latium: The Orsini of Bracciano* was submitted to Yale University Press for consideration in December 2014. He is currently preparing the main arguments of his doctoral thesis, the first synthetic treatment of the total architectural production of an Italian city-state, for submission to various journals. At present, his research focuses on the political iconography of the Sienese commune, as manifest in painting, sculpture, architecture, coinage, seals and manuscripts. In addition, he is studying the development of the Italian civic palace, from its origins in the twelfth century through its final transformations in the quattrocento, with the aim of challenging and revising accepted paradigms while forming a new critical apparatus for interpreting the architecture and urbanism of medieval and Renaissance city-states. Off campus, Dr. Grossman serves as Vice-Chair of the El Paso County Historical Commission, where he presides over the Architectural Preservation Committee, whose mission is to formulate and implement strategies for protecting the architectural heritage of El Paso while promoting the economic development of the historic districts of both the city and county.

**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. To acquire a deep appreciation of the artworks of the Early Italian Renaissance, and an understanding of the diverse historical, cultural and socio-political conditions of their creation.

2. To master the basic art historical terminology of the Renaissance period and attain the necessary analytical and critical skills for describing, dating and interpreting Renaissance artworks.

3. To understand how Renaissance artists developed innovative methods for communicating meaning and truth, and how their visions and aims evolved over time.

4. To analyze critically the conceptual meaning of the “Renaissance” in the period immediately following its invention in the fourteenth century.

5. To improve one’s ability to respond to works of art both analytically and affectively, and to write clearly, concisely, coherently, and with grammatical correctness.

6. To produce a substantial research paper that requires significant research and includes critical analysis of the available sources on the topic assigned.
COURSE PREREQUISITES

Students must be declared art history majors with at least junior status; they must have completed at least nine credit hours of ARTH 3300+; and they must have the permission of the instructor. Completion of Art History 1306 is recommended.

COURSE FORMAT AND GRADING

All lectures will be accompanied by digitally projected images of artworks. In addition to regular readings, students will be required to take two scheduled midterms, write a paper of at least twelve pages on a topic to be assigned in class, and take a final examination. Moreover, students will be required to meet with the instructor at least twice per month in order to monitor progress on the research paper. The final grade will be determined as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm #1</td>
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<td>Midterm #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Make-up examinations will only be permitted following a documented emergency or illness. Papers must be submitted at the start of class on the due date or will not be accepted. Unexcused failure to submit the paper on time or to show up for an exam will automatically result in a grade of 0% (F). There will be no extra-credit assignments. All grades will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<td>84-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<td>74-76%</td>
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<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-63%</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>F</td>
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Those students who will earn a failing grade (F) for the course no matter how well they perform on the final examination will not be permitted to take the final examination.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR

Attendance at all class meetings is absolutely mandatory as well as essential for success in this course since a substantial portion of the material on the midterms and final examination will be discussed only in lectures and will not be available in the assigned readings. Students who do not plan to attend every single lecture (and punctually) are advised to drop the course immediately and re-register in the future, when perfect attendance will not be an issue. Role will be taken at the start of every class. Students are required to arrive on time, refrain from talking, eating, sleeping, kicking up their feet, and using electronic devices; and they must remain for the duration of the class. The following rules are expected to be observed:

1. Students who arrive late must see the instructor after class in order to be marked as present. Arrival in class 30 minutes late or more will be counted as an absence.
2. If a student must leave early and has a documented excuse, the instructor must be informed before the start of class; otherwise the student will be marked as absent. Only serious illness or an actual emergency is a legitimate excuse.

3. In the event of an excusable absence, the instructor must be notified by email within 24 hours and written documentation of the absence must be presented to him within one week.

Each unexcused absence will result in a 2% reduction of the final grade. Each late arrival will be counted as half an unexcused absence and thus result in a 1% reduction of the final grade. Five unexcused absences will automatically result in a failing grade (F) for the course. Two unexcused absences between the first class and Census Day (February 3) will result in an automatic and permanent drop from the course.

Any student who engages in disrespectful behavior may be expelled from the classroom and marked as absent. In the event of a second offense, that student may be permanently expelled from the course and, if the drop deadline has passed, assigned a final course grade of “F”.

**ADDING, DROPPING, WITHDRAWALS, PASS/FAIL, INCOMPLETES**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about adding and dropping, and for withdrawing from the course in a timely manner if it becomes necessary. February 12 is the last day to select the Pass/Fail option and April 1 is the last day to drop the course. See [http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=75507](http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=75507). An incomplete grade (I) can be assigned at the discretion of the instructor and approval of the department chair; in order to be granted an “Incomplete”, the student must be passing the course and encountering a legitimate emergency beyond his/her control that requires extra time to complete the coursework.

**LATOP COMPUTERS AND NOTE-TAKING**

The use of computers and other electronic devices (including recording devices) are prohibited during class. It is important that students focus their attention on the lectures and projected images without distractions and that they take careful and detailed notes. Students should write down and memorize key terms, phrases and dates. Any student caught using an electronic device during class may be marked as absent and expelled from the classroom.
BLACKBOARD

All files posted on Blackboard are the intellectual property of the instructor and may only be used for Art History 3315, except with his written consent. These include but are not limited to:

1) The course syllabus.

2) Supplementary reading assignments.

3) A study sheet listing key artworks in the order in which they appear in the course and textbook. This should be brought to class so that lectures may be followed easily.

4) PowerPoint lecture files corresponding to each section of the course. These include all key artworks from the lectures, as well as dates, terms, and other information.

5) PowerPoint flashcard files that contain all the study sheet images that must be memorized for exams.

PREPARATION FOR EXAMS

Attendance at all lectures, punctual completion of all assignments, and regular review and memorization of key artworks are essential for earning a passing grade on examinations. The two midterms and final will each consist of four sections:

1) Image identifications
2) Multiple choice questions
3) Fill-in-the-blanks
4) Essays

To prepare for the exams, students should use the PowerPoint lectures files along with their notes and textbooks to review all the course material very thoroughly. The major artistic periods and themes should be well understood, as well as all chronological sequences and vocabulary terms (in yellow in the PowerPoint lecture files), and other important facts discussed in lectures.

Furthermore, the artworks on the study sheet must be completely memorized: the names of artists (when listed), the titles of artworks or buildings, locations (when listed), dates of execution (within a margin of error of 10 years), and mediums (when listed). The PowerPoint flashcard files are designed to help with memorization.

OFFICE HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

The instructor will be available during office hours (T 12:00-1:30pm, Th 10:30am-12:00pm) or by appointment, and can best be reached via his email address: megrossman@utep.edu.
TEACHING ASSISTANT

The teaching assistant for this course is Melanie Rodriguez. She will assist the instructor in grading exams. She will also be responsible for administering make-up exams for those students who have special permission to take them. She may be reached at mlrodriguez3@utep.edu and her office is located in Fox Fine Arts A461.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK


Recommended History Texts:

Martines, Lauro, Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1988).

Recommended Writing Aids:

THE UTEP LIBRARY AND COURSE RESERVE SHELF

The university’s main library is an invaluable resource and contains many relevant books and periodicals. Some of these may be placed on the course reserve shelf, located at ground level. Students are welcome to contact the library staff for assistance with research.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

Cheating, plagiarism or collusion on any assignment or test will be reported to the Dean of Students and may result in a failing grade for the course and/or other disciplinary action. All papers must be original to the course (with no recycling of work from another class), meet all the requirements of the assignment, and properly cite all sources, including from the internet. Most importantly, all direct citations must be set in quotations and footnoted. See the UTEP policy on academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty: http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with limitations due to disabilities provided that they contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) and procure the proper documentation: http://sa.utep.edu/cass (tel: 747-5148). Students with documented disabilities must meet with the instructor within the first two weeks of class, with CASS documentation in hand, in order to inform him of any special needs. If particular accommodations are required for the midterms and final examination, the instructor must be informed and presented with the appropriate CASS documentation at least ten days before each scheduled test or no accommodations will be permitted.

SEMINAR/GRADUATE CREDIT

Students who are taking this course as ARTH 4383 in order to satisfy the art history seminar requirement, or as ARTH 5390 or ARTH 5399 in order to earn graduate-level credit, will be assigned additional readings, additional assignments, and a longer research paper (10-15 pages for ARTH 4383 and 12-17 pages for ARTH 5390 or ARTH 5399). These students are expected to visit the instructor during his office hours a minimum of twice per calendar month.

COURSE SYLLABUS

The textbook and supplemental readings are intended to complement the lectures. The instructor may announce modifications to the syllabus during the semester, with fair notice. It is expected that the reading assignments will be completed each week in a timely manner (by the Tuesday after they are assigned) in order that students are adequately prepared for the corresponding lectures as well as the examinations.
Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 1. (to be read by Jan. 21)

Jan. 19

The Legacy of Rome

Jan. 21

The Age of the City-Republi

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 2 (41-57).

John Larner, “Cultural Change: 1290-1340” and “Government and
Patronage: I”, Culture and Society in Italy, 1290-1420 (New York,
1971), 7-34, 62-96.

Cennino Cennini, “The Craftsman’s Handbook,” A Documentary History
of Art, vol. 1, The Middle Ages and the Renaissance, ed. Elizabeth

Jan. 26

Duecento Art in Tuscany and Rome

Jan. 28

Duecento Art in Tuscany and Rome

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 2 (57-71).

Giorgio Vasari, “Preface to the Lives”, “Cimabue”, in Lives of the Most
Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects (1550-1568).

Colin Cunningham, “For the honour and beauty of the city: the design of
town halls,” in Diana Norman, ed., Siena, Padua and Florence:
Art, Religion and Society 1280-1400, vol. II (New Haven/London,

Feb. 2

Duecento Art in Tuscany and Rome

Feb. 4

Duecento Art in Tuscany and Rome

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 4 (103-09), chap. 3 (73-86)

Diana Norman, “‘A Noble Panel’: Duccio’s Maestà,” in Diana Norman,

Feb. 9

Duccio di Buoninsegna

Feb. 11

Giotto di Bondone

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 3 (86-101).


Feb. 16

Giotto di Bondone

Feb. 18

Florentine Art of the Early Trecento
Feb. 23  Sienese Art of the Early Trecento
Feb. 25  MIDTERM #1

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 4 (110-18).

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 4 (119-35).


Mar. 1  Sienese Art of the Early Trecento
Mar. 3  Sienese Art of the Early Trecento (PAPER ASSIGNED)

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 5.


Mar. 15  Later Gothic Art in Tuscany and Northern Italy
Mar. 17  Later Gothic Art in Tuscany and Northern Italy

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 6 (159-74).


Mar. 22  Filippo Brunelleschi
Mar. 24  Filippo Brunelleschi

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 6 (174-79), chap. 7.


Mar. 29  Early Quattrocento Architecture in Florence
Mar. 31  Early Quattrocento Sculpture

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 8 (203-15).


Apr. 5  Gentile da Fabriano and Masaccio
Apr. 7  MIDTERM #2

Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 8 (215-20).

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 12</td>
<td>Masaccio</td>
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<td>Apr. 14</td>
<td>Masaccio</td>
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<td>Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 9.</td>
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<td>Apr. 19</td>
<td>Fra Angelico</td>
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<td>Apr. 21</td>
<td>Fra Filippo Lippi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 10 (239-49).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 26</td>
<td>Leon Battista Alberti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 28</td>
<td>Leon Battista Alberti</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 10 (249-61), chap. 11 (278-93).</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Florentine Sculpture in the Middle Quattrocento (PAPER DUE)</td>
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<td>May 5</td>
<td>Florentine Painting in the Middle Quattrocento and Piero della Francesca</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 12</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM: 4:00 – 6:45pm</td>
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