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 then joined the Department of Art at The University of Texas at El Paso, where he is Associate Professor of Art History. During summers he is Coordinator of the Roma Aeterna 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 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 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The following October, he gave a lecture at Humanities West in San Francisco, “Italian Civic Palaces in the Age of the City Republics.” In April 2016, at the 62nd Annual Conference of the Renaissance Society of America in Boston, he presented his paper, “The Castle of Bracciano and the Advent of Artillery: Francesco di Giorgio Martini in Latium”; and in November, he chaired a session on medieval Florentine architecture at the Ladis Trecento Conference in New Orleans. In
March 2017, he served as a discussant on a panel at the annual meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Santa Fe. 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 article “Saving Downtown: An Architectural Survey and National Register Nomination for El Paso, Texas” will appeared in The Alliance Review in February 2017. His proposal for a co-edited volume entitled Condottieri and Courtly Culture in Renaissance Latium: The Orsini of Bracciano was submitted to Peter Lang Publishers in May 2016 and is now under contract. His book, El Paso Architecture, which treats the architectural history of El Paso and the surrounding region from 1659 through 1945 is under contract with Arcadia Publishing. He has recently submitted a book proposal stemming from his doctoral thesis, the first synthetic treatment of the total architectural production of an Italian city-state, to Brepols Publishers and it is currently under review. At present, his research focuses on the political iconography of the Siene 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 served for many years as Vice-Chair of the El Paso County Historical Commission. He currently serves on the Executive Board of the non-profit Texas Trost Society, the only institution in West Texas focusing on historic preservation. He presides over the group’s 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. Finally, he is Coordinator of the El Paso History Alliance, a virtual cultural community with nearly 43,000 followers.

**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:

- Midterm #1: 20%
- Midterm #2: 20%
- Term paper: 30%
- Final examination: 20%
- Attendance/Participation: 10%

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:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>94-100%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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Those students earning a post-curve grade of below 50% on both midterm examinations will be assigned a failing grade (F) and dropped from the course. Those students who will earn a failing grade (F) in the course no matter how well they perform on the final examination will not be permitted to take the final examination and will be assigned a failing grade (F) and dropped from the course.

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 1) 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 dropped from the course and 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. Students are responsible for understanding that March 29 is the last day to drop the course. See [http://catalog.utepl.edu/undergrad/welcome-to-utepl/academic-calendar/](http://catalog.utepl.edu/undergrad/welcome-to-utepl/academic-calendar/). An incomplete grade (I) can be assigned at the discretion of the instructor and approval of the department chair; but 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.

**LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND NOTE-TAKING**

The use of computers and other electronic devices (including recording devices) is 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 Cynthia Renteria. She will assist the instructor in grading exams and will grade the papers toward the end of the term. She will also be responsible for administering make-up exams for those students who have permission to take them. She may be reached at crrenteria@utep.edu and her office is located at 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. 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. 18)
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 16</td>
<td>The Legacy of Rome</td>
<td>Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 2 (41-57).</td>
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<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>Duecento Art in Tuscany and Rome</td>
<td>Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 2 (57-71).</td>
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<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>Duccio di Buoninsegna</td>
<td>Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 3 (86-101).</td>
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<td>Florentine Art of the Early Trecento</td>
<td>Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 4 (110-18).</td>
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Feb. 20  Sienese Art of the Early Trecento  
Feb. 22  MIDTERM #1  

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

   Randolph Starn, “Introduction”, Ambrogio Lorenzetti: The Palazzo  

Feb. 27  Sienese Art of the Early Trecento  
Mar.  1  Sienese Art of the Early Trecento (PAPER ASSIGNED)  

   Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 5.

   Larner, “Italy in Crisis, 1340-1380,” in Culture and society, op. cit., 121-  
   57.

Mar.  6  Later Gothic Art in Tuscany and Northern Italy  
Mar.  8  Later Gothic Art in Tuscany and Northern Italy  

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

   Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social  
   History (Baltimore, 1980), 67-90, 102-12.

Mar. 20  Filippo Brunelleschi  
Mar. 22  Filippo Brunelleschi  

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


Mar. 27  Early Quattrocento Architecture in Florence  
Mar. 29  (Writing Training)  

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


Apr.  3  Early Quattrocento Sculpture, Gentile da Fabriano  
Apr.  5  MIDTERM #2  

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

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<tr>
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<td>Masaccio</td>
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<td>Masaccio</td>
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Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 9.


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<td>Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi</td>
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Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 10 (239-49).


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<tr>
<td>Apr. 24</td>
<td>Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi</td>
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<td>Apr. 26</td>
<td>Leon Battista Alberti</td>
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Hartt and Wilkins, chap. 10 (249-61).


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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Leon Battista Alberti (PAPER DUE)</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>Florentine Sculpture in the Middle Quattrocento</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
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