

Format revised 2025
Syllabus revised 2025

Florence University of the Arts (FUA) is an academic institution for study abroad in Florence, Italy. FUA collaborates with The American University of Florence (AUF), an international university offering US-style undergraduate and graduate degrees, in a cooperation to offer study abroad programs with a diverse breadth and depth of academic curriculum.

FUA study abroad programs may include AUF offerings, which are US-aligned in terms of higher education standards as per the university's institutional structure. Common courses offered by FUA and AUF have been jointly selected by both institutions as eligible for mutual recognition and delivery. As such, equal academic standards, credibility, and outcomes are vetted by the Academic Offices of the institutions for all courses and syllabi offered in the study abroad program.

SCHOOLS OF LIBERAL ARTS; INTERIOR DESIGN, ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHITECTURE & SUSTAINABILITY**DEPARTMENTS OF ART HISTORY; ARCHITECTURAL RESTORATION AND HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE****COURSE TITLE: ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN FLORENCE AND TUSCANY****COURSE CODES: LAAHAA355; IDRHAA355****3 semester credits****1. DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the principal architects and artists, monuments, and themes from the 1300s up to the 1500s in Italian art and architecture. Course topics include lectures and are supported by site visits in the city of Florence. A key emphasis will be on Renaissance architecture in Florence, and architectural developments in other Italian towns will also be analyzed. Special topics will include architectural theory, Medici and papal patronage, urban planning, and church and palace design. Architects such as Brunelleschi, Michelozzo, Alberti, and Michelangelo will provide important points of reflection and study while visiting a curated selection of Renaissance buildings and urban spaces in Florence.

2. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

- Consolidate their existing art competence and skills, and expand the language of art and architecture, including specific artistic terminology, iconography and symbolism related to the subject matter of the course.
- Have gained a broad historical knowledge of Florence and Italy from the 1200s to the late 1500s, and will have become especially familiar with specific Medieval and Renaissance masterpieces of art and architecture.
- Have gained an understanding of the historical developments in visual arts and urban studies, with a special focus on Florence and Tuscany. Become familiar with different techniques, practical problems in executing pieces of art and major achievements of Florentine Medieval and Renaissance architecture.
- Be able to describe and discuss, in written and oral forms, works of art particularly related to the artists and movements explored in the course. Have strengthened visual skills and be able to identify different architectural styles and periods.
- Develop a solid point of view, supported by academic readings and on-site visits, on the impact of Florentine and Tuscan art on Italy and the world.
- Become aware and critically reflect on day-to-day problems of conservation, restoration, and display of the rich cultural heritage of Florence.

3. REQUIREMENTS

Successful completion of one lower-level History, Art History, History of Architecture course, or equivalent, is required for this course.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and interaction with the local community.

Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, integrate relevant academic sources, may include multimedia references, propose creative problem-solving, and other appropriate forms of delivery as deemed appropriate to the course's purpose.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

- Goy, Richard J. *Florence: A Walking Guide to Its Architecture*, Yale University Press, 2015.

The textbook is mandatory for course participation and completion. Where applicable additional materials may be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

- Goy, Richard J. *Florence: The City and Its Architecture*, Phaidon, 2006.
- Hartt, Frederick. *History of the Italian Art: Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture*, Prentice Hall, 2011.
- Levey, Michael. *Florence: A Portrait*, Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Paoletti, John T. *Art in Renaissance Italy*, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2012.
- Trachtenberg, Marvin. *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art, and Power in Early Modern Florence*, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

LIBRARY

Course participants may access the campus library. Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times. Texts may be consulted on-site, and scanning/internet services available.

6. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

7. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. If this course requires a fee, the exact amount is communicated prior to enrollment.

8. GRADING AND EVALUATION & ATTENDANCE

10% Attendance
20% Class Participation, Home Assignments, and Readings
10% Response Papers
20% Midterm Assessment
20% Final Paper
20% Final Exam

The above grade breakdown percentages reflect the grading scale standards in the “Grading and Evaluation System” section of the catalog.

Attendance

Class participation is mandatory. Based on the hours defined in the Academic Catalog's attendance policy, students may miss up to 2 class encounters delivered as lecture hours. A third absence constitutes a course failure.

Please note that absence hours may vary according to the learning methodology, as per the academic catalog policy on credit hours:

https://catalog.fua.it/standard_regulation

9. EXAMS / PROJECTS / ASSIGNMENTS

Midterm Assessment: The instructor will provide students with a task based on topics and reading materials of the first half of the course. The work must include quotations from scholarly books, journals, or articles. It must be properly referenced and must include a bibliography. Evaluation will be based on the following criteria: Pertinence & Coverage; Analysis & Understanding; Organization & Structure; Language & Accuracy; References & Bibliography. Via submission

Final Exam: Format: the exam is divided into two sections:

- Part I: 13 short-answer questions
- Part II: three essay questions

The final exam is cumulative. Taken in class

Final Project: You are required to submit your Final Paper by Lesson 15. Your Final Paper will be centered on one Florentine church, museum, bridge, garden or palace that is not covered in this course. You will have the opportunity to delve deeper into one Florentine site of your interest in consultation with the instructor, who will help you orient your research. This course will give you the tools to best understand the cultural and historical background of the selected site. The Final Paper should be an 8-10-page research paper. Please type your work using Times New Roman 12-point font, double-space the text, and leave a one-inch margin on all sides. Make sure your paper conforms to academic standards in terms of style and register. Your paper must include quotations from scholarly books, journals, or articles. It must be properly referenced and must include a bibliography. Evaluation will be based on the following criteria: Pertinence & Coverage; Analysis & Understanding; Organization & Structure; Language & Accuracy; References & Bibliography. Via submission

Response Papers: You are required to submit three 500-word response papers by Lesson 4, Lesson 10, and Lesson 14. Your papers must be centered on your previous autonomous visits to Florentine places. They should contain your comments and observations and include quotations and/or citations from scholarly books, journals, or articles. The most interesting papers may be selected for publication on *Blending Magazine*.

Assignments: This course requires at least 3 assignments as per the course outline in the syllabus. Further details are provided in the course portal.

10. COURSE OUTLINE

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Course overview, content, structure, assessment and expectations. <i>The origins of the city</i> Introduction to the history and history of art of the city of Florence from its foundation in Roman times to the early 1100s.
Objectives	Explore the evolution of art in Florence Identify significant historical milestones that shaped Florence Gain an understanding of Florence origins Familiarize with the early medieval history of Florence
Visit/Lab	Santi Apostoli (outside) and Santo Stefano al Ponte Suggested homework: go visit the inside of Santi Apostoli (opening times: Tuesday-Friday 16:00-19:00)
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Textbook, pp.1-29. Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp.7-21. Read: Srgo, "Invisible City: Roman Florentia," in <i>The Florentine</i> , 2009. Available online. Assignment #1 assigned, due by next class meet: The instructor will provide students with a task based on the reading materials and the topics of the lesson.

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>The Maturing Medieval City</i> First monumental buildings: Baptistery of San Giovanni and San Miniato al Monte. City administration, <i>quartieri</i> and <i>sestieri</i> . The Arno and its bridges.
Objectives	Trace the evolution of artistic styles and techniques demonstrated in the construction of these monumental buildings Understand the historical importance of the Baptistery and the cultural context in which it was constructed Understand the role of the Arno river in the development of Florence
Visit/Lab	San Salvatore al Vescovo
Readings/Assignments	Read: Textbook, pp. 41-45, 300-307. Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp. 22-36. Assignment: The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>The Trecento: Crises and Triumphs</i> The 1304 fire, the Guelfi vrs Ghibellines, Neri vrs Bianchi, the famine. The gold florin, the rise of the bourgeoisie, and the common people. Most significant urban interventions.
Objectives	Gain knowledge of the 1304 fire in Florence Understand the political dynamics and consequences of the Guelfi vs. Ghibellines conflict in Florence during the Trecento Learn about the Guelfi Bianchi and Guelfi Neri conflict Explore the role of the Gold Florin as an international currency Identify and analyze the most significant urban interventions in Florence during the Trecento
Visit/Lab	Palagio di Parte Guelfa
Readings/Assignments	Assignment: The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class. Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp. 37-47. Read: Contrada, "In a Dark Wood: Palagio di Parte Guelfa," in <i>The Florentine</i> , 2019. Available online. Assignment #2 assigned, due by next class meet: The instructor will provide students with a task based on the reading materials and the topics of the lesson.

Lesson 4	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>The Spiritual Heart of the City</i> The Baptistery of San Giovanni, the Campanile, Santa Reparata and the New Cathedral.
Objectives	Understand the historical context of the Baptistery, tracing its origins and evolution over time Explore the liturgical and religious significance of the Baptistery Examine the artistical features of the Campanile di Giotto
Visit/Lab	Loggia della Misericordia e del Bigallo & Museo del Bigallo
Readings/Assignments	Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp. 88-121. Read: Textbook, pp.46-59. FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW.

Lesson 5	
Meet	In class

Lecture	<i>The Dominicans, the Franciscans and Their Churches</i> From Romanesque to early Renaissance churches: Brunelleschi, Michelozzo and Alberti.
Objectives	Understand the social role of the Dominican and Franciscan orders Trace the evolution of architectural styles from Romanesque to Early Renaissance Examine the architectural contributions of Brunelleschi, Michelozzo and Alberti to the city of Florence
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp.186-238. MIDTERM ASSESSMENT ASSIGNED, due prior to next class meet.

Lesson 6	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>Architecture of Domestic Spaces</i> Building typologies – From the noble and the merchant's palazzo, to the more modest Florentine house. Explore how merchant and aristocratic families lived, household and daily-life objects.
Objectives	Identify the architectural features of different houses in Florence Understand the family dynamics of merchant and aristocratic families in the city of Florence Analyze household objects in merchant and aristocratic houses
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp. 248-267.

Lesson 7	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>The Defense of the City</i> The city's walls, doors, and fortified towers: Porta San Niccolò, Fortezza da Basso and Fortezza Belvedere.
Objectives	Understand the evolution of the city walls in the city of Florence Analyze the architectural features of the fortified structures of the city Explore the military functionality of Fortezza da Basso
Visit/Lab	Walk in San Niccolò neighborhood (walls, tower, city gate, fortino di San Miniato)
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp. 172-175. Assignment #3 assigned, due by next class meet: The instructor will provide students with a task based on the reading materials and the topics of the lesson.

Lesson 8	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>The governments of Florence</i> The political axis – From Piazza della Signoria to Palazzo Pitti. Florentine political power structure, key buildings and their function.
Objectives	Gain an understanding of the historical development of political structures and forms of governance in Florence Understand the historical and political significance of Piazza della Signoria as the focal point of Florentine political life Understand the role of civic institutions and guilds in Florentine politics
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Textbook, pp. 81-106. Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp. 122-148.

Lesson 9	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>The Men Who Built the City</i>

	Florentine masons' workshops and building guilds. Brunelleschi and Alberti – New perception of design processes and the role of the architect.
Objectives	Gain an understanding of Florentine workshops and building guilds Understand the idea of the architect as an artisan Analyze Brunelleschi's and Alberti's architectural principles and innovations in architectural design
Readings/ Assignments	Read: The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class. Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp. 162-171. FINAL PROJECT DUE

Lesson 10	
Meet	In class
Lecture	<i>Cosimo I: Duchy and Grand Duchy</i> The image of the city in the Cinquecento The city's urban development by hand of Bartolomeo Ammanati and Giorgio Vasari.
Objectives	Gain an historical awareness of the city hospitals in Florence Analyze the impact of charitable initiatives on the city life Explore the dynamics of markets in Florence and their role in fostering the social activity
Visit/Lab	Cappella di San Luca (Convento e Basilica della Santissima Annunziata)
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Goy R. <i>Florence: The City and Its Architecture</i> . Phaidon, 2002, pp.63-74. Assignment: The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.

Lesson 11 Final Exam	
Meet	In class
Lecture	FINAL EXAM