

**Format revised 2023**
Syllabus created 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.

SAS – SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

SQUOLA – CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN STUDIES

**SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS, LIFE STUDIES AND HUMAN SCIENCES, GLOBAL STUDIES,
ITALIAN STUDIES AND LINGUISTICS**

**DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY, HISTORY, SOCIOLOGY, URBAN STUDIES, ANTHROPOLOGY,
ITALIAN CULTURAL STUDIES**

COURSE TITLE: ART AND COMMUNITY: SECRET FLORENCE WALKS

COURSE CODE: LAAHAC240, LAHSAC240, LSSOAC240, GSUSAC240, GSANAC240, ISISAC240

3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

This course explores the secret facets of Florence from an artistic, historical, and social perspective through thematic walks and visits. Embracing the city as an unrestricted classroom, the course unveils artworks, parks, streets, and spaces such as workshops and laboratories that keep the earliest Florentine traditions alive. These traditions include carpentry, music, marble carving, papermaking, and gastronomy. Furthermore, walks and visits will investigate the changing aspects of the city from an architectural and socio-ethnic point of view. Course sessions start in the city center and transition to the areas beyond the ancient walls. This progression allows students to visualize, assess, and comprehend hidden spatial narratives of Florence from the well-known to less-frequented areas. As a result, students discover the significance of the city in its entirety, explore the relationship between the Florentine community and the arts, and develop a new way of “city-gazing” that generates knowledge through walking.

2. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Identify a variety of hidden artworks and narratives in the city.
- Understand key secret stories about Florentine spaces and objects.
- Retrace the history of Florence through traditional workshops.
- Recognize the new architectural and socio-ethnic developments in Florence.
- Engage in a binary analysis of past and present local configurations of the city.

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Students cannot enroll in this course if they have taken LAAHAC242 Art and Community: Secret Florence Walks.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, discussions, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable. As described in point 1, lessons are not held in traditional classroom settings but are based on the city of Florence as the academic space for learning and engagement. Please review the course

description for the structural approach and method of coursework.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

Rinaldi, Niccolò. *Secret Florence*. Jonglez Publishing, 2019.

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

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

Headphones (any kind) are necessary for the successful completion of the course.

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% Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm Assessment

25% Final Visual Project

25% 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

The **Final Visual Project** accounts for 25% of the final course grade. This is a portfolio containing at least 10 photos or personal sketches, and circa 1000 words, where you will be analyzing the secret facets of any neighborhood outside of the city center.

These include: Campo di Marte, Gavinana, Le Cure, Careggi, Novoli, Galluzzo, Soffiano, Arcetri, San Niccolò.

You may also go to a surrounding *comune*: Impruneta, Fiesole, Bagno a Ripoli, Pratolino, Lastra a Signa, Borgo San Lorenzo.

Ask the instructor for help if you would like to know more areas. Use Google Maps to track your route (by foot, bicycle, tram, bus) and incorporate the screenshot/image of your route in the Project.

Additionally, you will need to:

- Find a compelling title.
- Focus on a specific narrative or concept, e.g. sculpture, architecture, religion, sociology, gastronomy, music etc.
- Refer to photographs or sketches in your discussion, i.e. create a dialogue between written and visual components.

It is important for you to go here in safe conditions, which means:

- Day time is more preferable. Rides past 10 pm are not recommended.
- Check times of public transportations in advance if you are using them.
- Wear a helmet if you are going by bicycle.

The **Midterm Assessment** accounts for 20% of the final course grade. This consists of a 500-words short essay detailing a secret of your own hometown using the techniques and lenses studies in class.

The **Final Exam** accounts for 25% of the final course grade. The content of the exam will be based on the walks, visits, discussions, and textbook pages.

The exam will be uploaded on the course website Course website and are to be completed by the student at home under exam conditions. This means that:

- The exam must be taken completely alone. Showing it or discussing it with anybody is forbidden, including (but not limited to) the other students in the course in current or previous years.
- You may use any publicly available material you want, including books, the internet, etc. However, you are NOT allowed to submit questions to internet discussion groups.
- Use your own words. If you find a solution of a question in a book or online, cite it in your submission and do not copy it as-is. Make changes which demonstrate you understand what you are writing. Plagiarism will be severely penalized.
- You may take as much time as you need to complete the exam. You may start the exam and return to it at a later stage. Note, you will no longer have access to the exam once the deadline has passed.

The solved exam must be uploaded on Course website before the deadline. Late submission will be penalized; technical problems will not be accepted as an excuse for late submissions. It is your responsibility to make sure that your computer and internet connection work properly and that the solved exam is uploaded on time.

The exam contains 10 open-ended questions, each worth 10 points, for a total of 100 points.

The Final Exam is cumulative.

10. COURSE OUTLINE

Lesson 1	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	Secrets of Florence, part 1 Walk to discover hidden artworks, stories, and spaces of the city center. Participant observation and ethnographic methods.
Objectives	Identify secret artworks and stories within the ancient gates.

	<p>Identify the bearings of the narratives for the community.</p> <p>Develop a new detail-oriented gaze to look at the city.</p> <p>Understand how to conduct enthography and participant observation.</p>
Visit	<p>SS. Annunziata, focus on the uncountable bees, the Innocenti wheel, and the open window in Palazzo Grifoni.</p> <p>Museo Casa di Dante (outside), focus on Dante's hidden face.</p> <p>Via de' Cerchi, focus on Braccio Fiorentino and the formation of the expression "avere il braccino corto".</p> <p>Palazzo Vecchio (outside), focus on Michelangelo's hidden face (<i>L'importuno</i>).</p> <p>Corridoio Vasariano, focus on its story as a perfect hidden passage.</p> <p>Vicolo del Panico, focus on the rivalry of Cerchi and Donati family.</p>
Readings/ Assignments	<p>Read: Rinaldi, <i>Bothering Michelangelo</i> pp. 22-23, <i>Antico Vicolo del Panico or dello Scandalo</i>, pp. 45-46, <i>The First Certified Portrait of Dante</i>, pp. 46-47, <i>The Bees on the Equestrian Monument of Ferdinando I</i>, pp. 178-179, <i>The Baby Hatch</i>, pp. 180-181, <i>The Open Window in Palazzo Grifoni</i>, p. 182.</p> <p>*Pages may change according to edition.</p>

Lesson 2	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	<p>Secrets of Florence, part 2</p> <p>Walk to discover hidden artworks, stories, and spaces of the city center.</p>
Objectives	<p>Identify secret artworks and stories within the ancient gates.</p> <p>Recognize the impacts of ancient traditions such as salt-selling, calcio storico, wine gates on today's reality.</p> <p>Gain knowledge on the critique to the strictness of signage through the case study of CLET.</p> <p>Understand the role of Rodolfo Siviero in recovering artworks stolen by the Nazis.</p> <p>Further develop a new detail-oriented gaze to look at the city.</p>
Visit	<p>Via Micheli, focus on the UniFi.</p> <p>Via dei Pilastri, focus on the expression Sali e Tabacchi.</p> <p>Via de' Macci, focus on Teatro del Sale.</p> <p>Santa Croce, focus on flood markers and calcio storico fiorentino.</p> <p>Corso dei Tintori, focus on wine gates.</p> <p>Ponte alle Grazie, focus on Uomo Comune and CLET.</p> <p>Via dell'Olmo, CLET Studio.</p> <p>Museo Casa Rodolfo Siviero (outside), the 007 of the arts.</p>
Readings/ Assignments	<p>Read: Rinaldi, <i>Wine Bars in the Street</i>, pp. 138-139, <i>Flood Markers</i>, p. 190, <i>Marking for a "Florentine Football" Pitch</i>, pp. 204-205.</p> <p>Read: <i>Rodolfo Siviero: The 007 of Italian Art</i>.</p>

Lesson 3	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	<p>Books and Literature, part 1</p> <p>Archiving history and the rise of alternative libraries.</p>
Objectives	<p>Gain knowledge about archiving documents as a form of historical preservation.</p> <p>Recognize the role of alternative libraries.</p> <p>Gain knowledge on the significance of literature in the Florentine context.</p> <p>Identify the role of the patronage of the Medici for the production of literature and art.</p>
Visit	<p>Via dei Fossi, Todo Modo.</p> <p>Piazza San Lorenzo, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (outside).</p> <p>Via San Gallo, Libri Liberi.</p>

Readings/ Assignments	Read: Rinaldi, 3 secrets of choice. Analyze: Berretti, <i>Hand Decorated Paper Catalogue</i> . Assignment: visit an additional literary library and submit a report of the experience with 3 photos you took.
----------------------------------	---

Lesson 4	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	Books and Literature, part 2 Literary café: mixing literature, art, sociality, and gastronomy.
Objectives	Understand the polyhedral role of literary cafés as social and cultural spaces. Recognize new literary cafés as extension of the past tradition of cultural institution, such as Gabinetto Vieusseux. Explore literary cafés in relation to urban regeneration.
Visit	Piazza della Repubblica, focus on ancient literary cafés like Giubbe Rosse and new one like La Feltrinelli Red. Borgo San Frediano, La Cité. Le Murate Caffé Letterario.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Rinaldi, <i>Library Archive</i> , pp. 64-65, <i>Casa Guidi</i> , pp. 226-227, <i>Cimitero Allori</i> , p. 282. FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW.

Lesson 5	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	Music of Florence Walking and listening: the music of the city, from the Renaissance to Contemporary Florence. <i>For this class, you must bring a phone with data and headphones.</i>
Objectives	Identify the main historical events related to or celebrated through music in Florence. Recognize memorialization techniques to preserve ancient music. Understand the role of ancient music, <i>canzone popolare</i> , and contemporary music to support Florence and its events.
Visit	Via Ricasoli, Conservatorio Luigi Cherubini, focus on Luigi Cherubini and the role of the conservatory. Piazza del Duomo, focus on the piece Nuper Rosarum Flores, composed for the inauguration of the Cathedral in 1432. Via de' Benci, Palazzo Bardi, focus on Camerata dei Bardi, and the first opera, <i>Euridice</i> by Jacopo Peri. Further focus on the creation of the piano by Bartolomeo Cristofori. Via de' Bardi, focus on Litfiba (where they had their rehearsal space). Via Santo Spirito 39, focus on Odoardo Spadaro (plate) and the significance of <i>canzone popolare</i> . Piazza dell'Olio, focus on Mozart (plate) and his relationship with Italy. Via de' Ginori, Ceccherini Strumenti Musicali.
Readings/ Assignments	Concert halls or clubs with active seasons: Teatro della Pergola, Teatro Verdi, Teatro Niccolini, Nuovo Teatro dell'Opera, Jazz Club, Paszkowski Café, Combo Social Club, NOF, Glue. Surf through TicketOne or to the following link for additional concerts: https://www.gogofirenze.it/eventi/musica-e-concerti.html MIDTERM ASSIGNED, DUE PRIOR TO NEXT CLASS MEET.

Lesson 6

Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	Theatres of Florence The theatre as one of the most long-lasting traditions of the city.
Objectives	Identify the significance of the theatre in Florence, and Italy at large. Acquire knowledge of the main theatrical representations of the city. Become familiar with the architectural structure of the theatre, and the so-called <i>teatro all'italiana</i> in particular
Visit	Via Verdi, Filistrucchi, focus on stage clothes. Piazza Strozzi, Cinema Odeon, focus on conversion from theatre to cinema and the relationship between these two arts.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Rinaldi, <i>Accademia Bartolomeo Cristofori</i> , p. 242 and 2 additional secrets of choice.

Lesson 7	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	Art and Artisanry: Marble, Bronze, and Stone The heritage of materials: past techniques and contemporary attitudes.
Objectives	Identify the role of Carrara marble in Italy, with a focus on Tuscany. Gain knowledge on the main stones and materials used to create art and architecture in Renaissance Florence. Gain knowledge about the role of Benvenuto Cellini in art history.
Visit	Piazza di S. Pier Maggiore, focus on Loggiato in pietra serena and the materials used in the square. Borgo Pinti, Chiesa di Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, built in pietra serena, yellow marble, and wood. Via Cavour, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, focus on Cosimo I de' Medici as the patron of Benvenuto Cellini. Piazza della Signoria, Loggia de' Lanzi, focus on the bronze sculpture <i>Perseus with the Head of Medusa</i> (and the secret head behind it). Piazza San Firenze, focus on the dialogue of clay and marble.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Rinaldi, <i>Self-Portrait by Benvenuto Cellini</i> , pp. 26-29, and 2 additional secrets of choice.

Lesson 8	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	Different Religions Walking in the sacred spaces of non-Catholic community members.
Objectives	Gain knowledge on the main sacred spaces of non-Catholic individuals in Florence. Understand the significance of providing accessible sacred spaces to all citizens. Recognize the role of the different religious communities in Florence.
Visit	Borgo Allegri, Moschea Masjid Al-Taqwa. Piazzale Donatello, Cimitero degli Inglesi. Via Micheli, Chiesa Evangelica Valdese.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Rinaldi, <i>Museo di Simbologia Massonica</i> , pp. 238-241, <i>Historic Jewish Cemetery</i> , p. 243, <i>Mausoleum of the Maharajah of Koblapur</i> , pp. 258-260.

Lesson 9	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	The Open City Focus on the impacts of Piano Poggi.

Objectives	Identify the crucial work of architect Giuseppe Poggi in enlarging the city. Recognize the changes triggered by Piano Poggi. Develop an understanding of Florentine life outside of the ancient gates.
Visit	Piazza Indipendenza, focus on annexation of Granducato di Toscana to Regno di Sardegna. Giardino della Fortezza, made by Giuseppe Poggi, focus on the architect. Via XX Settembre, the city outside the gates. Ponte Rosso. Via Bolognese. Orti del Parnaso, view of Florence as a new open city. Piazza Libertà, the gate as a landmark within viali di circonvallazione.
Readings/ Assignments	FINAL PROJECT DUE

Lesson 10	
Meet	Piazza San Pier Maggiore
Lecture	The Residential City Where and how Florentine individuals live outside of the city center.
Objectives	Gain knowledge on the life of community members outside of the city center. Identify the key shops offered in a trafficked residential street. Recognize the role of the square as a place to create social ties.
Visit	Piazza Savonarola, focus on the role of the square for the community. Via Masaccio, focus on the shops and on Esselunga, a classic residential supermarket. Viale Don Minzoni, focus on Liceo Statale and Scuola dell'Infanzia Pascoli. Piazza delle Cure, focus on the role of the square for the community.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Rinaldi, conclude the final chapter, "Outskirts of Florence", pp. 258-283.

Lesson 11 Final Exam	
Meet	MyFUA
Lecture	FINAL EXAM