

ARTH 342-001 -- High Renaissance Art in Italy, 1480-1570

Dr. Lisa Passaglia Bauman

Class times: MW 10:30-11:45

Office hours: Th 12-1:15 or by appointment

Spring 2013

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Class room: Robinson B113

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on painting, sculpture, and architecture in Italy from 1480 to 1570. Our focus at the beginning will be on three major artists: Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael, and two major cities, Florence and Rome. But we will watch their ideas spread to the courts of Northern Italy and Venice and be transformed by a younger generation of students. We will be interested in establishing art works within their social and historical context and so will be particularly interested in patronage and urbanism.

Course objectives include:

- achieving proficiency in the analysis of the **formal** (stylistic) qualities of works of art in their **historical contexts**.
- reading critically and commenting on primary sources and secondary interpretations
- identifying the contemporary social relationships in which artists, subjects, and patrons existed
- internalizing the complex geographical and chronological details which are integral to this study.

ARTH 342 **fulfills** the University General Education requirement.

This course is my responsibility; don't hesitate to come to me if you have a problem or complaint. I can't promise I'll fix things, but I will do my best.

TEXT: John Paoletti and Gary Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy*, fourth edition (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2012). Pearson Prentice Hall retails this book for \$140, but it is available used on Amazon for \$80. This text is a somewhat new approach to the teaching of Italian art, organized more by location and less by artist. I have organized this class around its framework. It also contains a helpful glossary as well as images of most of the works we discuss in class. You may find it helpful to have the book on hand when you study for your exams.

In addition, I have selected a group of readings for this course that are available to you via e-mail or are on reserve. These individual articles propose new paths of inquiry, elaborate on smaller ideas touched on in class, and provide an opportunity to read primary sources from the period we are covering.

TECH SKILLS REQUIRED: I can only communicate with you via Mason e-mail accounts, so please activate and check your GMU e-mail account regularly for any communication regarding the class. I will also make some material available in my Dropbox and you'll need email to access that link as well.

READINGS, ATTENDANCE, LECTURES: The schedule of lectures lists the reading in the text and/or from supplemental material for each class. You are expected to come into class prepared with that day's reading assignment completed so that discussion is possible. Lecture will both unpack the textbook, breaking it down into key works and terms for which you are responsible, and enlarge its scope so that the story of the 16th century is told. Tests derive from what we do in class, plus the reading. I will be using power point presentations, so all terms and objects for which you are responsible will be clearly labeled, spelled, dated, and emphasized in class. I will not be posting the powerpoints on Blackboard. Thus, regular attendance is necessary. If you miss a class, get the list of key works and notes from another class member. (The first class would be an opportune time to exchange some e-mail addresses with each other.) I will not answer e-mails that ask what we covered in class today. This class is a lecture format, but please do come prepared with questions or comments you would like to present. Again, this is more interesting and useful if you have done the reading.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Reading assignments: (20% of your final grade) The schedule of lectures lists all readings for each topic. Some are carefully selected art history articles, some are little collections of primary source documents. There are 5 question sets that go along with specific readings. Your answers must be meaty and thoughtful; one word answers will be graded accordingly. With one exception, the question sets are

listed on a Monday and are due two days later on Wednesday. Because the purpose of this assignment is to ensure the entire class is keeping up with the reading, late assignments will lose 50% of the possible points when one class period late. So if you turn in the Question set the following Monday, you can only get half the possible points. I will not accept reading assignments after that one class period.

2. Exams:

Quiz: (10% of your final grade) Wednesday, February 13 (40 minutes)

Midterm (20% of your final grade) Wednesday, March 27 (75 minutes)

Final (20% of your final grade) Wednesday, May 8, 10:30-1:15. The date is set by the registrar and published at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/2013SpringExam.html>; I cannot change it. The final exam will not be cumulative except for a few very important slides for the comparisons. I will let you know which slides you are responsible for well before the final exam.

The exams will consist of:

- definitions. Technical terms discussed in the readings and in class will be listed and you will be asked to define them clearly; give an example of their use in an appropriate work; and state the significance of the term to the history of 16th c art.
- slide identifications. Single slides will be shown for 5 minutes each. In each case, identify the work shown by naming the artist and providing the title, date, location (if still in its original place), and medium. Then, as succinctly as possible, state the significance of the work to the history of art. Do not describe it or explain its subject matter, but state WHY this work is important. How is this work demonstrative of important issues in 16th c art?
- slide comparison. A pair of slides will be shown for 10 minutes. After identifying them completely (as above), discuss the similarities and differences in the two works, keeping in mind their historical contexts. You must draw a conclusion stating what this particular comparison teaches us about the history of art of the period. QUIZ (1); MIDTERM (2); FINAL (3)
- essay. MIDTERM AND FINAL ONLY. This is a question that will allow you to discuss major themes and issues from the entire semester. This might be the history of a particular art form (the portrait, for instance), or the social function of art (art at court). You must refer to specific examples of works of art in your answer. I will distribute a list of possible questions, one of which I will choose for the exam, one week in advance of the exam.

These three examinations are scheduled. You should mark those dates on your personal calendar immediately. I won't give an exam earlier or later than the scheduled slot. Yes, this includes spring break, end of the semester, and weekend plans. Please do not request special favors that cannot be granted to all of your peers. Test make-ups are only given if you have a legitimate written medical excuse or police report, on printed letterhead stationery, with a phone number I can call for confirmation. I mean this seriously. Do not e-mail or call me with any excuses about car accidents or bad love affairs—even if it's true. **If you miss an exam without a legitimate written excuse, you will receive a 0 for that exam.** Better to take the exam and get an F than to receive a 0.

All exams begin on time, so please plan ahead and allow sufficient time for parking. **I will not repeat slides for latecomers.** (Why? You are going to need to concentrate in these exams and the flipping back and forth of slides while others are trying to write is badly distracting.)

Let me say a few things up front about my expectations regarding exams. Art history demands a certain degree of memorization of information about works of art. It is only one part of the work and learning required, but it is an area that demands discipline and regular practice. If you keep up-to-date (flashcards were always my preferred method), memorization of the works will be easy and will help your understanding of new material. If you wait until the exams, memorization will be a nightmare.

A few words about **dates**: Dating a work is essential to understanding its origins and background in a specific period and place. Why? What matters is not so much your ability to memorize a set of numbers, but that you come away from this class knowing that the nudity in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* was problematic only after 1545.

And finally, as in any discipline, a student is required to know the material. $2 + 2 = 5$ is not correct, and neither is Michelangelo spelled Michaelangelo.

3. Paper: (20% of your final grade) You will be writing a 4-5 page paper based on a grouping of objects

from the National Gallery of Art. You will need to read a foundational article, do some research, and you will not be able to use anything from the internet (except articles from JSTOR). I will provide the specifics the second week of class. It is due Wednesday, April 17, and will be returned in two weeks.

I will take this paper late but it will be penalized 5 points for every day it is late. Yes, the weekend counts. After one week, I will not take any late papers. Remember that we are in the computer age where Murphy's Law applies with a vengeance. Assume that your computer will break down, that your memory stick will be ruined, that every other student in the school will be trying to print a paper on the same night, and so forth. Plan accordingly! There are no excuses for turning in a late paper. You simply take the point deduction. Also, **I will NOT accept projects via e-mail.** Why? Too many problems with viruses, with formatting, with accidental deletions, with deadlines. In the end, it shifts the responsibility from you to me and in this course these assignments are your responsibility. And, **I will NOT accept projects turned into my office mail box.** Again, too many problems to recount—you've turned it in but it's not in my mailbox. Did you put it in the wrong mailbox? Did someone take it out of my mailbox? This kind of situation breeds suspicion and resentment. Let's break the cycle of abuse and dependency! Turn in your stuff in class on its due date. Make the time. It's your job.

4. Class participation/attendance: (10% of your grade) I happen to feel very strongly that a university is a community of learners. Poor attendance thus undermines the work of the whole classroom. Students who fail to attend regularly should not have unreasonable expectations about their final grade. I will circulate a sign-in sheet each class. There are 24 possible lecture days, starting Monday, January 28. I will not take attendance on the two "catch-up and review" days. You are allowed 2 absences. Thus, I will calculate your attendance grade by taking the total number of days you attended class and divide by 22. I'm not excusing any absences; that's why you have the two days.

5. Extra Credit Opportunity. There is one opportunity for extra credit in this class. To celebrate 2013—*The Year of Italian Culture*, the Bargello museum in Florence, Italy, has loaned a Michelangelo sculpture to the National Gallery of Art. This rare loan of *David-Apollo* is the only Michelangelo sculpture currently in America and offers us an opportunity to see a Renaissance master up close.

- You must visit the NGA to view the Michelangelo sculpture.
- You must take and print a photo showing you with the object and proving to me that you have in fact seen it.
- You must write 500 words on the topic: How can we justify admiring Michelangelo sculptures that are clearly "unfinished"?
- Due in class Wednesday, February 20. Absolutely no late papers accepted.
- This paper is worth up to 10 extra points added on to your quiz grade.

GRADING POLICY: In order to receive a grade in this course, students must complete all assigned work. There are often questions about grading and evaluation policies, especially for those who have never taken an art history class before and are concerned about how their work will be evaluated. Grade ranges and a description of the sort of work expected are as follows—please read them carefully.

A (90-92 is an A-; 93-96 is an A; 97-100 is an A+) Startlingly good, exceeding my expectations, and well-written. Must be imaginative; NOT given for simply following directions.

B (80-82 is a B-; 83-86 is a B; 87-89 is a B+) Good effort with a good result.

C (70-72 is a C-; 73-76 is a C; 77-79 is a C+) Perfunctory; or tried but missed the point; or did something well but it wasn't the assignment; or a good idea but careless or sloppy.

D (60-69) Warning: accepted under protest

F (Below 60) Unacceptable as college-level work. See me immediately if you find yourself in this situation.

CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE: Courtesy and common sense please. We're all adults; sometimes emergencies come up. However, talking to friends during lectures, wandering in and out, and cell phones

are all badly distracting to everyone else. Chronic chatters and latecomers are disruptive and will be asked to leave the classroom. If you know you will have to leave a few minutes early, please sit toward the back of the room on the aisle and let me know. Also, I am banning all electronics from my classroom. Obviously, this means cell phones, but it also includes laptops. If you need to use a laptop for note-taking, you must talk to me about it and then you will need to sit in the front row in class.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING: These are not fooling-around offences with me. Your writing assignments are to be the product of your own thinking. Ditto with tests. Be warned: **if you cheat, I will send you and your work on to the Dean of Students.** No excuses, no tears, no “I didn’t understand about footnotes/talking during an exam” stories.

If you are not sure how the University defines plagiarism, please see the Plagiarism Statement in the George Mason University Honor System and Code at <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>.

DISABILITIES: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the [Office of Disability Services](http://ods.gmu.edu) at 703.993.2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Important dates:

Last Day to Add: January 29, 2013

Last Day to Drop: February 22, 2013

Selective Withdrawal Period: February 25 - March 29, 2013

English as a second language: If English is not your first language, please discuss any concerns you might have about the writing assignment with me. Please, however, give me plenty of notice (at least a week) before any due dates. And don’t forget about the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>).