

## The Renaissance

History 333 (Lec 002, 35424), University of Wisconsin-Madison, Fall 2012

Humanities 1101, MWF, 1:20 – 2:10 pm

Professor: Richard Keyser; email: rkeyser@wisc.edu  
Office Hours: Social Sciences 7131, MWF, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., and by appointment.

TA: Erin Wilson; office: Mosse Humanities 4266; office hours: Tues., 1-2 pm, & Fri., 3-4 pm.  
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This course surveys the history and culture of the Renaissance in Europe, focusing on Italy between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. We will explore a fascinating period of rapid and far-reaching change, while seeking to integrate social, political, and cultural perspectives. A key theme will be the role of social and political power in shaping systems of authority in government, family, and cultural expression. In addition to gaining familiarity with a formative period in western civilization, students will have the opportunity to hone their critical thinking and writing skills through the analysis of primary sources.

**Attendance:** You are allowed THREE ‘free’ absences, which will not impact your grade (but only one of these may be applied to your discussion section). You do not earn points just for attending class, as this is expected, but after the three allowed absences, each additional absence will reduce your grade by 3%, up to a maximum of five additional absences, or the full 15% of your grade represented by attendance and participation. With a total of nine absences (six in addition to the allowed three), you will receive a failing grade for the course. Valid excuses are limited to absences for university-recognized religious observances (concerning which you should inform your TA within the first two weeks of class) and for well-documented major illnesses or emergencies in the immediate family.

**Participation:** Everyone should try to speak in class, especially in your discussion section. The quality of contribution counts more than quantity. Quality contributions are clear and precise, while showing that you have understood the readings and that you are asking critical questions about them (see the writing guide by Patrick Rael linked from the History Department’s “Writing History” page, available at: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/>, sections 3c and 3d, on “How to Ask Good Questions,” and “What makes a Question Good?”). Good class participation also means that you listen to others and try to engage seriously but respectfully in the lively conversation that we hope to generate.

**Computers and Electronic Devices:** Due to the potential for distraction, these devices may not be used in either the lecture or the discussion section. The only exceptions are for students who have a medical need to take notes by computer; in these cases computers and other devices must be used only for taking notes, while leaving the internet and all browsers turned off during class.

<b>Grades:</b>	Attendance and Participation:	15%
	Midterm Exam	15%
	Two Essays	20% each
	Final Exam	30%

**Two Essays:** The essays are 5-7 pages each and will focus on the assigned readings. Topics and guidelines will be given later, about two weeks before the paper due dates. Essays must be turned in both as paper copies in class, and as electronic copies on the course website (learn@uw). Late papers will be heavily penalized: they will be marked down one grade per day late.

**Midterm and Final Exams:** These will be comprehensive, covering everything studied in the course up to the time of each exam, including both factual material and the broader ideas and themes of the course. The format will include some short identification essays and one or two longer essays. Additional small weekly quizzes or brief writing assignments may also be used in the discussion section to aid in your learning and the TA's assessment of your participation.

**Academic Honesty:** Your written work must reflect your own ideas, and where you draw on others' words or ideas you need to indicate this clearly with proper quotations and citations. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and all appropriate penalties, including failing the course, will be strictly enforced. As the UW website explains, "plagiarism means presenting the words or ideas of others without giving credit. You should know the principles of plagiarism and the correct rules for citing sources..." For this quotation and more information, see: <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#overview> . As this website notes, if you are unsure about the proper ways to give credit to sources, ask your instructor or consult the Writing Center, at 6171 Helen C. White Hall (phone: 608/263-1992, e-mail: [writing@wisc.edu](mailto:writing@wisc.edu)). For a copy of their handout 'Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources,' please download: [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging\\_Sources.pdf](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf) .

**Accommodations:** If you need accommodations due to any disability, please let me or the TA know within the first two weeks of class, i.e. by Sept. 14. In order to maintain confidentiality, you may do so by coming to one of our office hours or by emailing to arrange a meeting. You will need to provide documentation from the McBurney Disability Resource Center, 702 West Johnson St., Suite 2104, tel. 608-263-2741, email: [mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu](mailto:mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu).

**Reading Assignments and Responses:** Unless otherwise announced in class, all reading assignments for each week should be completed by Wednesday's class: you should finish all of the assigned secondary sources by Monday, and then all of the primary sources by Wednesday (or by your Tuesday discussion section, for those you with this schedule). You should read each weekly assignment carefully, take notes, and prepare a short summary of, response to, and critical questions provoked by the readings as a basis for class discussion (1-2 pages, handwritten or typed). The TA may collect your responses when she thinks this might be helpful.

**Required Books:** You need to purchase the six books listed below, and bring them to class on the days when they are assigned. You must get the precise editions specified here, which are available through, among other places, the UW Bookstore; see: [www.uwbookstore.com](http://www.uwbookstore.com). They are also on reserve at College Library. These books are listed here in the order they will be assigned. Three of them are secondary sources: Martines, Jardine, and Freedman. The other three are primary sources: Kohl (a collection of sources), Machiavelli, and More.

Martines, Lauro. *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

Kohl, Benjamin, and Ronald Witt, ed., *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978.

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince*. Transl. George Bull. New York: Penguin, 2003.

Jardine, Lisa. *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance*. New York: Norton, 1996.

Freedman, Paul. *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

More, Thomas. *Utopia*. Transl. Paul Turner. New York: Penguin, 2003.

**Course Pack:** additional readings are included in a photocopied course reader, which is available at the UW Bookstore (TBA).

## SCHEDULE

### I. Introduction

Week 1, Sept. 5-7. The Idea of the Renaissance: The Ghost of Rome.  
Course Pack Week 1: Originality and Continuity in the Renaissance (ed. Schiffman, pp. 7-41).

### II. The Social and Political Context: A World of City-States

Week 2, Sept. 10, 12, 14. The High Middle Ages (1000-1300): Rise of the Urban Commune.  
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, ch. 1-5, pp. 7-71.  
Course Pack Week 2: Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos 1-5, 11, & 27.

Week 3, Sept. 17, 19, 21. Late Medieval Crises & the Transition to Republic or Signory.  
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, ch. 6-9, pp. 72-161.  
Course Pack Week 3: Boccaccio, *Decameron*: introduction and stories 1.1-3; 1.7-8; & 8.5.

### III. Renaissance States and Humanism

Week 4, Sept. 24, 26, 28. Humanism and its Social Context.  
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, ch. 10-12, pp. 162-240.  
Kohl, *Earthly Republic*: intro, pp. 3-9; & Petrarch, "How a Ruler Ought to Govern," pp. 25-78.

Week 5, Oct. 1, 3, 5. Civic Humanism and Political Crises.  
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, ch. 14, pp. 277-96.  
Kohl, *Earthly Republic*: pp. 14-22; & Bruni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," pp. 121-75.  
**Midterm Exam, Oct. 5.**

Week 6, Oct. 8, 10, 12. Renaissance Political Thought.  
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, ch. 15-16, pp. 297-337.  
Kohl, *Earthly Republic*: Poliziano, "The Pazzi Conspiracy," pp. 293-322.  
Begin Machiavelli, *The Prince*, to p. 39.

### IV. Renaissance Art and Material Culture

Week 7, Oct. 15, 17, 19. From Medieval to Early Renaissance Art.  
Martines, *Power and Imagination*, ch. 13, pp. 241-76.  
Finish Machiavelli, *The Prince*, pp. 40-85.  
**First Essay Due, Oct. 19.**

Week 8, Oct. 22, 24, 26. Trade & Cultural Exchange: Conspicuous Consumption.  
Jardine, *Wordly Goods*, Prologue and ch. 1-2, pp. 3-132.  
Kohl, *Earthly Republic*: Bracciolini, "On Avarice," pp. 231-89.

Week 9, Oct. 29, 31; Nov. 2. High Renaissance Art, Commerce, and Cultural Exchange.

Jardine, *Wordly Goods*, ch. 3-4, pp. 135-228.

Course Pack Week 9: Vasari, *Lives of the Artists*: Preface, “Cimabue,” & “Giotto,” pp. 3-36.

Week 10, Nov. 5, 7, 9. Science, Technology, and the Northern Renaissance.

Jardine, *Wordly Goods*, ch. 5-6, pp. 231-330.

Course Pack Week 10: Vasari, *Lives of the Artists*: “Leonardo da Vinci,” pp. 284-98; and Pico della Mirandola, “Oration on the Dignity of Man,” pp. 104-8.

## V. A Renaissance for Women?

Week 11, Nov. 12, 14, 16. Gender Relations in a Changing World.

Jardine, *Wordly Goods*, ch. 7-8 and Epilogue, pp. 333-436.

Course Pack Week 11: Joan Kelly, “Did Women Have a Renaissance?,” pp. 21-47.

Kohl, *Earthly Republic*: Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties,” pp. 179-228.

Week 12, Nov. 19. Households, Courts, and Consumption.

Freedman, *Out of the East*, introduction and ch. 1, pp. 1-49.

Course Pack Week 12: Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*, pp. 210-78.

### Thanksgiving Break, Nov. 22-25.

Week 13, Nov. 26, 28, 30. The Renaissance Dispute about Women.

Freedman, *Out of the East*, ch. 2-3, pp. 50-103.

Course Pack Week 13: Christine de Pizan, *Book of the City of Ladies*, pp. 5-43.

More, *Utopia*, part 1.

## VI. Imagining Other Worlds

Week 14, Dec. 3, 5, 7. Utopian Thought and Renaissance Exploration.

Freedman, *Out of the East*, ch. 4-6, pp. 104-63.

More, *Utopia*, part 2.

**Second Essay Due: Dec. 7.**

Week 15, Dec. 10, 12, 14. Globalization and the Early Modern World.

Freedman, *Out of the East*, ch. 7-8 and conclusion, pp. 164-226.

Course Pack: Mandeville, preface, ch. 15-18, & ch. 30-32; and letters from Columbus & Vespucci.

**Final Exam: Friday, Dec. 21, from 5:05-7:05 p.m.**