 COURSE DESCRIPTION

While the origins of the Italian Renaissance (end of 13th c. to about 1600 CE) can be traced to the unique economic, social and political situation of Italy in the Late Middle Ages, the inspiration for nearly all of the artistic, literary and scholarly achievements during this period rests squarely in the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. This “classicizing” inflection of the intellectual and artistic movement now known as Humanism—very often explicitly proclaimed (but not always fully realized) by its adherents—is easily recognizable in, for example, the subjects of sculpture and painting, in the forms of verse and prose literature, in the cultivation of ancient forms of grammar and rhetoric, not to mention in theatrical performance, architecture, philosophy and music. At the same time, the forms of classical culture inherited (or consciously adopted) by the Italian Humanists did not shape their creative imagination in any kind of deterministic way, but served as a framework for new and original thought.

In this course, students will explore, through a series of paired readings, both what is old and what is new in the art and literature of Renaissance Italy as a means of understanding Humanism as an innovative historical movement. Beginning from Burckhardt’s indispensable *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, which provides an introduction to the historical development of and philosophical inspiration for Humanism, students will then look at the reception and imitation of classical works of all kinds by Renaissance authors.

REQUIRED TEXTS


*Additional texts will be provided by the instructor and available on BlackBoard.*

ASSESSMENT & GRADING

Reading assignments will be given twice weekly. You will be expected to have completed the assignment for the day on which it is listed. Discussion questions keyed to the reading will also be assigned. These questions will be posted on BlackBoard and are due in conjunction with the reading assignment. Answers to the questions must be no less than one-half page in length (double-spaced, 12pt. font, 1-in. margins) or the equivalent.
In addition to homework, grades will be determined on the basis of class participation, three field research exercises, an in-class presentation and a final written research paper. Regular attendance, punctuality and engagement are required. Repeated tardiness will adversely affect your grade. You will be permitted two unexcused absences, but any further unexcused absence will result in a one-third drop in your grade (i.e., from an A to an A-). If you must miss class for a legitimate reason, let the instructor know beforehand. In cases of emergency, inform the instructor as soon as possible of the reason for the absence and in all cases be prepared to submit documentation (doctor’s notes, etc.).

Your course grade will be calculated according to the following percentages:

20% Class participation and attendance
20% Reading & discussion questions
20% Field research exercises
20% In-class presentation
20% Final research paper

All components of the course must be completed to receive a passing grade.

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

A. Preamble
The University of Texas at San Antonio community of past, present and future students, faculty, staff, and administrators share a commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge. We honor the traditions of our university by conducting ourselves with a steadfast duty to honor, courage, and virtue in all matters both public and private. By choosing integrity and responsibility, we promote personal growth, success, and lifelong learning for the advancement of ourselves, our university, and our community.

B. Honor Pledge
In support of the ideals of integrity, the students of the University of Texas at San Antonio pledge: “As a UTSA Roadrunner I live with honor and integrity.”

C. Shared Responsibility
The University of Texas at San Antonio community shares the responsibility and commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge and adheres to the UTSA Honor Code.