





History (HIST) 373

The Renaissance (Revision 3)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode:

Individualized study online 

Credits:

3

Areas of study:

Arts or Humanities

Prerequisites:

None. HIST or HUMN course(s) at the 200-level recommended.

Precluded:

HIST 300 and HIST 303 (HIST 373 may not be taken for credit if credit has already been obtained for HIST 300 and HIST 303.)

Challenge:

HIST 373 has a challenge for credit option.

Faculty:

[Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Overview

HIST 373 surveys one of the most important periods of history, the Italian Renaissance, from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Out of the late medieval catastrophes of plague, incessant warfare, and religious controversy, Italian artists, writers, and statesmen sought to revive the high culture of ancient Greece and Rome and share it with the rest of Europe. It is often considered the beginning of the modern age. Students will read a sample of writings, in translation, of Renaissance authors, artists, and cut-throat politicians. They'll encounter famous figures such as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, as well as less familiar writers. Assigned readings from leading modern historians will help students gain an understanding of this important period. The illustrated Study Guide helps students through their assigned readings. Students will hone their research and writing skills by studying an aspect or person from the Renaissance in more detail through one short essay assignment (2,000 to 3,000 words) and one research essay (3,000 to 4,000 words). A final exam tests their knowledge. This course was written by Dr. E. David Gregory, Professor Emeritus of History. An AU tutor is assigned to each HIST 373 student to provide assistance and grade their assignments and exam.

Outline

- Unit 1. Interpreting the Renaissance: Ideas and Issues
- Unit 2. Italian Renaissance Society: Continuity and Change
- Unit 3. The Italian States I: Florence and Rome
- Unit 4. The Italian States II: The Maritime States and the Principalities
- Unit 5. Petrarch, Humanism, and Liberal Studies
- Unit 6. World Views and Philosophy: Neo-Platonism and the Ideal of the Universal Man
- Unit 7. Invasion and Religion: The Florentine Crisis and the Challenge of the Reformation
- Unit 8. Responses to Crisis: Political Thought and Historiography
- Unit 9. The Visual Arts: Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture



- Unit 10. Artists, Writers, Patrons, and Clients
- Unit 11. Types and Uses of Art, Taste, and Iconography
- Unit 12. Case Studies: Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Raphael

Learning outcomes

When you have completed the course, you should be able to:

1. discuss the debates among historians about the nature of the Italian Renaissance since Jacob Burckhardt's pioneering and seminal interpretation of the subject
2. describe the political geography of the Italian states between 1350 and 1600
3. outline the key events in the history of Italy during the Renaissance era
4. explain the intellectual life of Renaissance Italy, including the Humanist and neo-Platonist movements
5. discuss the artistic advances made by painters, sculptors, and architects in Italy during the Renaissance era
6. analyze the social and economic underpinning of cultural life in Italy during the Renaissance, including the patronage system and the impact of printing technology
7. examine the religious, political, and domestic uses of art, changes in popular taste, and the communication of ideas and values through iconography and allegory
8. outline the lives and artistic careers of key Italian artists, and identify their most celebrated works

Evaluation

To **receive credit**  for HIST 373, you must achieve a course composite grade of at least **D (50 percent)**  and a grade of at least 50 percent on the final examination. The weighting of the course assignments is as follows:

| Activity | Weight |
|----------|--------|
|----------|--------|

| Activity | Weight |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Assignment 1: Short Essay | 25% |
| Assignment 2: Research Essay | 35% |
| Final Exam | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the [Exams and grades](#) section of the Calendar.

To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to Athabasca University's [online Calendar](#).


Materials

Bartlett, Kenneth R. *A Short History of the Italian Renaissance*.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013.  (Print)

Burke, Peter. *The Italian Renaissance: Culture & Society in Italy*. 3rd ed.

Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2014.  (eBook)

Martin, Sean. *The Black Death*. Harpenden, UK: Pocket Essentials, 2007. 
(eBook)

Other Materials

All other materials, including a Course Information manual, a 12-unit Study Guide, and other assigned readings, are available online through the course home page.

Challenge for credit

Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about [challenge for credit](#) can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Evaluation

To **receive credit** for the HIST 373 challenge registration, you must achieve a grade of at least **D (50 percent)** on the entire challenge examination.

| Activity | Weight |
|---------------|-------------|
| Part I: Exam | 50% |
| Part II: Exam | 50% |
| Total | 100% |

 [Challenge for credit course registration form](#)

Important links

- > [Academic advising](#)
- > [Program planning](#)
- > [Request assistance](#)
- > [Support services](#)

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 3, August 8, 2022

Updated June 5, 2024

View **previous revision** 
