

***The Skin I Live In: rappresentazioni del corpo nel Rinascimento italiano tra
letteratura, arte e scienza***

**ITAL 422
Spring 2017**

Pennsylvania State University

Prof. Michele Rossi

Contacts and Information

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 12:15pm-1:15pm, and by appointment

Class Schedule: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 11:15am-12:05pm, Hammond 217

Course Description

The Italian Renaissance is characterized by a new perspective on the human body. Writers, artists, and scientists propose a novel viewpoint, fascinating and different from the previous conceptions.

In this class, we will explore the human body representation through famous figures of the Italian Renaissance, in connection with issues such as politics, education, gender, sexuality and scientific ideas

– all placed in their historical, cultural, and social context. We will discuss different literary genres and authors: the treatise (Pier Paolo Vergerio, Leonardo Bruni, Leon Battista Alberti), the short story (Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*), the lyric poetry (Laura Battiferri, Veronica Franco, Gaspara Stampa), the comedy (Bibbiena's *Calandria*). We will also watch a movie (Pasolini's *Decameron*), and investigate the intersections among literature, art, and science, especially through the figures of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo Buonarroti. **The course will be taught in Italian.**
Prerequisite: any 300-level Italian course.

Major Readings:

1. Vergerio, *De ingenuis moribus* (estratti)
2. Bruni, *De studiis et litteris* (estratti)
3. Alberti, *Libri della famiglia* (estratti)
4. Boccaccio, *Decameron* (estratti)
5. Battiferri, *Il primo libro delle opere toscane* (estratti)
6. Franco, *Terze Rime e Lettere familiari a diversi* (estratti)
7. Stampa, *Rime* (estratti)
8. Bibbiena, *La Calandria* (integrale)
9. Michelangelo, *Rime* (estratti)
10. Leonardo, *Trattato della pittura* (estratti)

All the readings will be posted on Angel. You must read the assigned texts before class.

Movie:

1. *Decameron* di Pier Paolo Pasolini (1971)

Course Requirements

- **Class Participation (25%).** Class participation is vital in order to complete successfully this course. Highest grades are earned by students who come to class regularly (see the Attendance Policy), participate actively, and are well prepared every time, having read the materials for each class. In class you will also work and present in pairs / small groups: it is essential that you provide an effective contribution and collaborate in a positive way with your classmates. The language spoken in this class is Italian: speaking in English will lower your participation grade. Your spoken Italian is not supposed to be perfect, but you need to try to communicate in Italian in every class.
- **VoiceThread (15%).** Every two weeks you will post on VoiceThread about the readings and the topics covered in class. **In order to receive credit for your post, you need to complete it by Thursday at 9pm.** You will be required to video-record your oral answer (about 2'). Highest grades are earned by students who provide detailed and thoughtful answers, trying to practice vocabulary and grammar, and also providing original points of view regarding the topics discussed. Once again, your oral Italian is not supposed to be perfect, but you need to try your best in order to communicate effectively in Italian and improve your oral skills during the semester. You are encouraged to assert your opinions and support them with evidence from the text; if you disagree with other students' posts, please express your different point of view in a respectful and polite way.

- **Quizzes (10%).** There will be **two written quizzes** throughout the semester during class time. Guidelines will be provided.
- **Midterm Project (15%).** Midterm projects are **due on March 3** (before Spring Break). Detailed guidelines will be provided. You will have the possibility to decide your own project. Some options: a book review, a comment/description of art images connected to the topic of our class, a creative work (poem, short story), etc. Highest grades are earned by students who show originality and a deep analysis of the topics covered in the first part of our course.
- **In-class Oral Presentation (15%).** The last two weeks of our class will be dedicated to individual class presentations. You will decide a topic with the professor and present it in class. Detailed guidelines will be provided.
- **Final Paper / Final Project (20%).** Final papers/projects are **due on April 14 (first draft) and April 28 (final draft)**. You will write a research paper (about 4 pages, double space, in Italian). If you have different ideas about your final project (for example: film a video, create a graphic novel, etc.), you need to discuss it with me. Your final paper/project needs to be well connected with the readings and the topics we cover and discuss in class. Highest grades are earned by students who submit original, well-finished, and meaningful final papers/projects.

Final grades are distributed as follows:

A: 95.0-100.0 **A-:** 90.0-94.9 **B+:** 87.7-89.9 **B:** 83.3-87.6 **B-:** 80.0-83.2
C+: 75.0-79.9 **C:** 70.0-74.9 **D:** 60.0-69.9 **F:** 0.0-59.9

Attendance Policy – Class participation constitutes a substantial part of your final grade (see above), and you cannot participate in class unless you are present. With the exception of absences due to officially documented university-related activities or university-recognized religious observances, **you are permitted to miss three (3) classes**. These days will cover things such as illness, weddings, funerals, job interviews, etc. **These are not free days**; use them wisely. **Beginning with the fourth absence (regardless of the reasons for the first three), each absence will deduct 1 whole percentage point from your final grade.** Moreover, 2 late arrivals of 10 minutes or more are equivalent to one absence.

Be aware that there are no “excused” or “unexcused” absences. In case of absence, you are responsible for any work missed. If you do miss class, you should get in touch with your instructor or a classmate as soon as possible to find out what assignments you missed. Absence from class is NOT an excuse for the late submission of work. **If an evaluative event will be missed due to an unavoidable absence, you should contact your instructor as soon as the unavoidable absence is known to discuss ways to make up the work. An instructor *might not consider an unavoidable absence legitimate if you do not contact the instructor beforehand.*** Students will be held responsible for using only *legitimate, unavoidable reasons* for requesting a make-up in the event of a missed class or evaluative event ([Policy 42-27](#), see below). Requests for missing class or an evaluative event due to reasons that are based on false claims may be considered violations of the policy on Academic Integrity ([Policy 49-20](#)). [You are required to provide verification from University Health Services or outside clinicians for significant prolonged illnesses or injuries resulting in absences from classes.](#)

Faculty Senate Policy 42-27- Class Attendance

Academic Policies and Procedures for Undergraduate Students

(<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/welcome/illnessVerification/>)

The faculty, staff and other resources of the University are furnished for the education of students who attend the University. A class schedule is provided for students and faculty so that a reasonably orderly arrangement for instruction is facilitated. The fact that classes are scheduled is evidence that the faculty believes class instruction is important. Therefore, class attendance is important for the benefit of students.

A student should attend every class for which the student is scheduled and should be held responsible for all work covered in the courses taken. In each case, the instructor should decide when the class absence constitutes a danger to the student's scholastic attainment and should make this fact known to the student at once. A student whose irregular attendance causes him or her, in the judgment of the instructor, to become deficient scholastically, may run the risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower grade that the student might have secured had the student been in regular attendance.

Instructors shall provide, within reason, opportunity to make up work for students who miss class due to regularly scheduled, University-approved curricular and extracurricular activities. However, if such trips are considered by the instructor to be hurting the student's scholastic performance, the instructor should present such evidence for necessary action to the head of the department in which the course is offered and to the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled, or to the Division of Undergraduate Studies if the student is enrolled in that division.

Instructors should provide, within reason, opportunity to make up work for students who miss classes for other legitimate but unavoidable reasons. Legitimate, unavoidable reasons are those such as illness, injury, family emergency. If an evaluative event will be missed due to an unavoidable absence, the student should contact the instructor as soon as the unavoidable absence is known to discuss ways to make up the work. An instructor might not consider an unavoidable absence legitimate if the student does not contact the instructor before the evaluative event. Students will be held responsible for using only legitimate, unavoidable reasons for requesting a make-up in the event of a missed class or evaluative event. Requests for missing class or an evaluative event due to reasons that are based on false claims may be considered violations of the policy on Academic Integrity (Policy 49-20).

Late Work: Work that is handed in late automatically receives a lower grade.

Academic Integrity - We support active collaboration with classmates. You may share notes and ideas with other students, however, you may not ask tutors, more proficient speakers or classmates to complete your own work, and **you may not use electronic translation programs**. In accordance with *PSU Senate Policy 49-20*, plagiarism, cheating, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor may lead to lowered course grades, a failing in the course, or more severe measures, depending on the gravity of the individual case according to the judgment of the Academic Integrity Committee. Visit <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html> for further information. For other general university policies regarding Academic Code of Conduct, please read <http://www.sa.psu.edu/ja/conduct.shtml>.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are to be turned off and stored before class begins. The professor reserves the right to penalize a student's final grade for continued cell phone interruptions (including sending and receiving text messages).

Laptops/Tablet Computers: Any use of laptops or tablet computers unrelated to coursework is prohibited and the professor reserves the right to penalize a student's final grade for disregarding this policy.

University Policy on Disabilities – Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments, contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 814-863-1807(V/TTY). For further information regarding ODS, please visit the Office for Disability Services website at <http://equity.psu.edu/ods/>. In order to receive consideration for course accommodations, you must contact ODS and provide documentation (see the documentation guidelines at <http://equity.psu.edu/ods/guidelines/documentation-guidelines>). If the documentation supports the need for academic adjustments, ODS will provide a letter identifying appropriate academic adjustments. Please share this letter and discuss the adjustments with your instructor as early in the course as possible. You must contact ODS and request academic adjustment letters at the beginning of each semester.

CLASS SCHEDULE

(note: this is a tentative schedule. You will find updated versions of this syllabus on Angel)

Il corpo nei trattati del Quattrocento: educazione fisica ed educazione femminile

SETTIMANA 1

Lunedì 9 gennaio: Introduzione al corso

Mercoledì 11 gennaio: Che cos'è il Rinascimento? Rappresentazioni artistiche del corpo umano

Venerdì 13 gennaio: Vergerio e l'educazione del principe. **Lettura: Vergerio 1** (da Pier Paolo Vergerio, *De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus studiis adolescentiae liber*, "Libro sui nobili costumi e gli studi liberali convenienti ai giovani", 1400-1402)

SETTIMANA 2

Lunedì 16 gennaio: Martin Luther King Day, no class

Mercoledì 18 gennaio: Vergerio e l'educazione fisica. **Lettura: Vergerio 2**

Venerdì 20 gennaio: Bruni e l'educazione femminile (1). **Lettura: Bruni 1** (da Leonardo Bruni, *De studiis et litteris liber*, "Sugli studi e sulle lettere", 1422-1429). **VOICETHREAD 1 DUE.**

SETTIMANA 3

Lunedì 23 gennaio: Bruni e l'educazione femminile (2). **Lettura: Bruni 2**

Mercoledì 25 gennaio: Bruni e l'educazione femminile (3). **Lettura: Bruni 3**

Venerdì 26 gennaio: Educazione fisica ed educazione femminile nei *Libri della famiglia* di Leon Battista Alberti (1). **Lettura: Alberti 1** (da Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, 1433-1437)

SETTIMANA 4

Lunedì 30 gennaio: Educazione fisica ed educazione femminile nei *Libri della famiglia* di Leon Battista Alberti (2). **Letture:** Alberti 2

Mercoledì 1 febbraio: Educazione fisica ed educazione femminile nei *Libri della famiglia* di Leon Battista Alberti (3). **Letture:** Alberti 3

Venerdì 3 febbraio: Educazione fisica ed educazione femminile tra Vergerio, Brunini e Alberti: un confronto. **VOICETHREAD 2 DUE.**

Il corpo e i corpi nel Decameron di Boccaccio e Pasolini

SETTIMANA 5

Lunedì 6 febbraio: **QUIZ 1**

Mercoledì 8 febbraio: Boccaccio, *Decameron*. Giornata prima, novella prima (ser Ciappelletto). **Letture:** Boccaccio 1

Venerdì 10 febbraio: Boccaccio, *Decameron*. Giornata terza, novella prima (Masetto da Lamporecchio). **Letture:** Boccaccio 2

SETTIMANA 6

Lunedì 13 febbraio: Boccaccio, *Decameron*. Giornata quarta, novella quinta (Lisabetta da Messina). **Letture:** Boccaccio 3

Martedì 15 febbraio: Boccaccio, *Decameron*. Giornata settima, novella 2 (Peronella). **Letture:** Boccaccio 4

Venerdì 17 febbraio: Pasolini, *Decameron*: Introduzione e visione prima parte.

SETTIMANA 7

Lunedì 20 febbraio: Pasolini, *Decameron*: Discussione e visione seconda parte.

Mercoledì 22 febbraio: Pasolini, *Decameron*: Discussione e visione terza parte.

Venerdì 24 febbraio: Pasolini, *Decameron*: Visione quarta parte e conclusioni. **VOICETHREAD 3 DUE.**

Rappresentazioni del corpo nelle poetesse italiane del Cinquecento: Laura Battiferri, Veronica Franco e Gaspara Stampa

SETTIMANA 8

Lunedì 27 febbraio: Laura Battiferri (1). **Letture:** Battiferri 1

Mercoledì 1 marzo: Laura Battiferri (2). **Letture:** Battiferri 2

Venerdì 3 marzo: Veronica Franco (1). **Letture:** Franco 1. MIDTERM PROJECT DUE.

Lunedì 6 marzo – venerdì 10 marzo: Spring Break. No classes.

SETTIMANA 9

Lunedì 13 marzo: Veronica Franco (2). **Letture:** Franco 2

Mercoledì 15 marzo: Gaspara Stampa (1). **Letture:** Stampa 1

Venerdì 17 marzo: Gaspara Stampa (2). **Letture:** Stampa 2

Il corpo in scena: la Calandria di Bibbiena

SETTIMANA 10

Lunedì 20 marzo: **QUIZ 2**

Mercoledì 22 marzo: Bibbiena, *Calandria*, Atto primo. Lettura: **Bibbiena 1**

Venerdì 24 marzo: Bibbiena, *Calandria*, Atto secondo. Lettura: **Bibbiena 2. VOICETHREAD 4 DUE**

SETTIMANA 11

Lunedì 27 marzo: Bibbiena, *Calandria*, Atto terzo. Lettura: **Bibbiena 3. Start to think about your final project: discuss your ideas with me!**

Mercoledì 29 marzo: Bibbiena, *Calandria*, Atto quarto. Lettura: **Bibbiena 4**

Venerdì 31 marzo: Bibbiena, *Calandria*, Atto quinto. Conclusioni: la *Calandria* di Bibbiena tra corpi, travestimenti e *gender troubles*. Lettura: **Bibbiena 5**

*Tra arte, scienza e letteratura:
visioni del corpo in Leonardo da Vinci e Michelangelo Buonarroti*

SETTIMANA 12

Lunedì 3 aprile: Leonardo da Vinci (1). Lettura: **Leonardo 1**

Mercoledì 5 aprile: Leonardo da Vinci (2). Lettura: **Leonardo 2**

Venerdì 7 aprile: Leonardo da Vinci (3). Lettura: **Leonardo 3. VOICETHREAD 5 DUE**

SETTIMANA 13

Lunedì 10 aprile: Michelangelo Buonarroti (1). Lettura: **Michelangelo 1**

Mercoledì 12 aprile: Michelangelo Buonarroti (2). Lettura: **Michelangelo 2**

Venerdì 14 aprile: Michelangelo Buonarroti (3). Lettura: **Michelangelo 3. FINAL PAPER/PROJECT (FIRST DRAFT) DUE**

Conclusioni del corso e presentazioni finali

SETTIMANA 14

Lunedì 17 aprile: Presentazioni finali

Martedì 19 aprile: Presentazioni finali

Venerdì 21 aprile: Presentazioni finali

SETTIMANA 15

Lunedì 24 aprile: Presentazioni finali

Mercoledì 26 aprile: Presentazioni finali

Venerdì 28 aprile: Presentazioni finali. **FINAL PAPER/PROJECT (FINAL DRAFT) DUE**