



UNIVERSITY  
of VIRGINIA

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING  
AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

## **General Class Information**

**Instructor:** Prof. Christine Bhasin

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Subject Area and Catalog Number: ISIN 4520-101

Year and Term: Summer 2017 [5/30/17 - 8/4/17]

Class Title: Art & Society

Level: Undergraduate

Credit Type: 3

### **Class Description:**

Women Artists of the Italian Renaissance

In this course we will examine the lives and artistic works of women living in the independent city-states of Italy, particularly in Florence and Venice, during the time we now call the Renaissance. We will ask, as historian Joan Kelly did over 35 years ago: Did women have a Renaissance? What constraints did they face? What opportunities were available to them? In order to answer these questions, we will mine for evidence in historical sources including: literature, art, advice manuals, and letters, among others. Our analysis of these sources will be augmented by the reading of pertinent scholarly studies. The course will be divided into four units. Unit 1 lays the groundwork for the course by examining the broader social and cultural contexts of women's lives at the time. Unit 2 begins our focus on women in the arts through an exploration of women as writers. Unit 3 focuses on women painters and musicians, while Unit 4 concludes the course with a look at women actors and courtesans.

**Required Texts:** (available as e-books or in hard copy)

1. Cereta, Laura. *Collected Letters of a Renaissance Feminist* (15th c.) Chicago, U of Chicago Press, 1997. ISBN: 9780226100135

2. Fonte, Moderata. *The Worth of Women* (1592). Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1997. ISBN: 9780226256825
3. Franco, Veronica. *Poems and Selected Letters*. (16th c.) Chicago, U of Chicago Press, 1998. ISBN: 9780226259871
4. Marinella, Lucrezia. *The Nobility and Excellence of Women and the Defects and Vices of Men* (1600). Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1999. ISBN: 9780226505466
5. Tarabotti, Arcangela. *Paternal Tyranny* (1654). Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2004. ISBN: 9780226789668
6. Additional course materials (article pdf's, images, music, films) will be accessible through our Collab site

### **Learning Objectives:**

- To analyze primary historical sources, written (in translation) and visual, from the Italian Renaissance period
- To theorize how women artists are portrayed, and express themselves, in/by these historical texts
- To understand what role women artists played in the Renaissance, as well as what challenges they faced
- To synthesize and critique relevant secondary scholarship on this topic
- To employ and hone critical reading and writing skills
- To devise an original argument for a research paper based on analyses of primary and secondary literature

### **Assessment Components:**

#### **I. Weekly Discussion Posts & Responses: 20%**

10 pts each x 20 = 200 pts.

After completing the assigned reading each week, you will write a discussion post in response to a specific prompt and a section or topic that caught your attention and was especially interesting to you **by 11:59pm FRIDAY night each week**. Your first paragraph should address the prompt question (given on Collab each week), while your second paragraph should address your selected topic.

After reading your peers' posts, you will respond thoughtfully and in detail to *at least one* by **11:59pm SUNDAY night each week**. Responses should be more than simply "I agree," or "that's nice; I had not thought of that." Please begin each response with the name of the classmate to whom you are responding (for example, 'Dear Virginia'). While a lively discussion of opposing viewpoints is an excellent way to approach these discussions, remember to be respectful of your peers' opinions and courteous in your writing.

*Please see the "**Grading Rubric for Discussion Posts**" in Collab for an explanation of how these assignments will be graded. Note: Spelling and grammar count!*

## **II. (2) 3-5 page, Critical Response Papers: 40%** 200 pts. each x 2 = 400 pts.

Two times throughout the semester, you will choose a primary text and present your own critical analysis of it. Does it support or refute the notion that women had a Renaissance? These are "critical" in that they require you take a position and support it through close reading and the use of examples directly from the text. If possible, you should also engage the perspective(s) of the corresponding secondary reading(s) and insights gleaned from class lectures and discussions. Further instructions will be provided on Collab.

*Please see the "**Grading Rubric for Essay Writing**" in Collab for an explanation of how these papers will be graded.*

## **III. Final Research Project: 40%**

- (1) Topic & Annotated Bibliography: 100 pts
- (2) Wiki Page Presentation: 100 pts
- (3) Research Paper: 200 pts

For the final paper, you will devise your own research project on a Renaissance woman artist of your choosing. She may be a writer, painter, or composer (etc.) we touch upon in class or someone you find on your own. The project is composed of three, component parts. Early in the semester you will turn in your **topic and an annotated bibliography**. At the midpoint of the semester you will present your topic as a "work in progress" by creating a **wiki page** on our course wiki. And finally, at the end of the term you will submit an **8-10 page paper** on your topic, with proper Chicago-style footnotes and bibliography. Further instructions on this project will be provided on Collab.

### **Delivery Mode:**

This is an asynchronous, online course conducted entirely through Collab. It is not, however, a "self-paced" course. You are expected to log in to the course website a minimum of 3-4 times per week and to complete and submit work according to posted deadlines. This course follows a weekly schedule, with firm deadlines each week, to keep

everyone working on the same material and better able to participate in discussion.

**Required Technical Resources and Technical Components:**

a computer with internet access and word processing software