

## Graduate courses with a Renaissance / early modern focus offered in the spring of 2025

REN-R502 Topics in Renaissance Civilization (3 cr.) will be taught by Massimo Scalabrini and will meet with FRIT-M604 - Mondays at 4PM-6PM in Lindley Hall 112

Topic: Forms of Civility in the Renaissance

In seminal texts such as Giovanni Pontano's *De sermone* ("The Virtues and Vices of Speech") (1509), Baldassarre Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* (1528), Giovanni Della Casa's *Galateo* (1558), and Stefano Guazzo's *Civil Conversation* (1574), the Italian Renaissance created a new style of social conduct: the style of civility. This graduate seminar examines the classical genealogy, the social and historical milieu, and the rhetorical matrix of this new form of social interaction, which was governed by the values of moderation, convenience, conformity, adaptability, grace, and dissimulation, and which was to become the generative model of early modern European ethics. We will critically engage with how civility shaped notions of power, ethics, and identity in early modern Europe, in works by authors such as Erasmus, Antoine de Courtin, Lord Chesterfield, and Baltasar Gracián, among others. The course will be conducted in English. All readings will be available in English translation. No previous knowledge of Italian, French, or Spanish required.

### ENGLISH

English L760-29908 Research in Special Authors or Works: Milton and Some Contemporaries

Taught by Penelope Anderson

Tuesday and Thursdays at 11.10AM-12.25PM in Ballantine Hall 123

In "London, 1802," William Wordsworth famously invokes Milton: "Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour! / England hath need of thee" (1-2). This plea provokes our first question: what do we need of Milton? What in his work seems particularly relevant for our present moment (or for Wordsworth's)? Why have his writings proved particularly amenable to certain modes of critical inquiry, and particularly intransigent to others?

This semester we will be reading most of Milton's works together, but we will also be thinking about what it means to read Milton in our time -- the time of powerful movements for racial and gender equity, and in the aftermath of a global pandemic that reshapes our sense of how to live in the world and what our futures might be.

With those two emphases in mind, this course will complement our reading of Milton by doing the following:

1. Working to develop an inclusive pedagogy, in this classroom and your own, by foregrounding the writings of authors and critics from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives.
2. Integrating exploration of multiple career paths into traditional academic research and writing. Some of this will be mandatory, some will include options for course assignments.

### FRENCH AND ITALIAN

FRIT-M604 Seminar in Renaissance Italian Literature (3-4 cr), meets with REN-R502

Topic: Forms of Civility in the Renaissance

Taught by Massimo Scalabrini

Mondays at 4PM-6PM in Lindley Hall 112

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## MUSICOLOGY

MUS M601 Master's Seminar in Musicology: Renaissance Humanism in Music (3 cr)

Taught by Massimo Ossi

Fridays at 9:10AM-11:45AM in Simon Music Building, SM263

Seminar in music history open to MA students in musicology and to others with the instructor's permission.

MUS M602 Seminar in Musicology: Institutions and Music (3 cr)

Taught by Giovanni Zanovello

Wednesdays at 2:20PM-5:20PM in Simon Music Building, SM263

The Romantic idea of the divinely inspired musician working alone is alive and well in today's culture. In historical reality, however, civic and religious institutions recruited, trained, and employed most elite composers and performers. These included top-down organization like the Church, the courts of dynastic rulers, local governments, but also self-governing associations like guilds and confraternities. In this course we will explore how musicians in the early-modern world benefited from and provided essential support to these institutions and how this specific social context influenced their living conditions and artistic output. The seminar is open to Ph.D. students in Musicology and other graduate students with the instructor's permission.

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

REL R-664 Religion and History: Utopian Religion

Taught by Constance M. Furey

Wednesdays at 3:10PM-5:40PM in Cedar Hall C103

Utopia has a very precise starting point: the 1516 publication of Thomas More's *Utopia*, detailing an ideal society on an island off the coast of South America, narrated by an invented European traveler. More himself is the source not only of the work but the word, a witty neologism merging two Greek words into one, to connote both "good place" and "no place." This genre's paradoxical claim --a non-existent ideal community that can be located on a map--has inspired extraordinary theoretical work, most of it motivated by the conviction that utopia is a modern and, crucially, *secular* expression of human creativity. Utopia is also, however, a religious genre, invented by a man who would become a Catholic martyr; deeply informed by Christian monasticism as well as apocalypticism; and conceived as Christian corporations funded European exploration and conquest in the Americas. Are these simply contextual details, certainly well known to the modern theorists who insist on utopia's secular significance? Or does religion otherwise influence what utopia might mean for us today? These are the questions animating this course, which delves into the theoretical work of Fredric Jameson and Ernst Bloch, in particular, exploring their theories in light of what we learn from the work of More and his medieval predecessors, as well as late medieval and early modern female utopian authors including Aemilia Lanyer, Margaret Cavendish, and Christine de Pisan. The purpose of the course will be to better understand the relationship between religion and utopian imagination. Students will be encouraged to research utopian writings from their own areas of specialization, to expand our collaborative, comparative framework.