

Summer in Rome 2013 Course Offerings & Descriptions

All courses are worth a total of 4.5 credits

ENGL 325: THE ROMAN WORLD IN LITERATURE AND FILM

Recently--and not so recently--the viewing public has been bombarded with cinematic renderings of the classical world. Whereas films such as *Gladiator* set records at the box office, regrettably few viewers go to the trouble of familiarizing themselves with the rich store of literature that serves as inspiration for these blockbusters and to a large extent as the basis for the study of Western civilization itself. This course sets out to fill the gap between celluloid depictions of antiquity and the literary heritage of the Roman world. We will examine how contemporary film understands and presents the past, to what extent films based in antiquity are disconnected from the stories and historical issues that inspired them, and what connections might exist and how those connections might help us better understand both classical literature and modern film. In order to achieve these objectives, students will develop an understanding of Roman literature and culture which will in turn serve as the basis for understanding how modern culture has re-visioned the ancient world. This will be accomplished through close reading of classical epic, history, and poetry with emphasis on historical context; study of select critical materials on the subject of antiquity in film; the viewing of modern cinematic re-visions; and class discussion of all these materials.

ENGL 310: A LITERARY HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

This course will examine the literature of the church in late antiquity in an effort to understand how and why the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages and beyond developed as it did. Often students (and people in general) assume that the Christian church of the first centuries *anno domini* was united, especially in the face of Roman oppression, but in fact Christianity was by no means monolithic and took myriad forms; the vast number of apocryphal gospels and acts, forged epistles, and treatises against heresy testifies to such Christian diversity. This course will scrutinize the documents of early Christianity, both canonical and heretical. Close reading of heretical texts, such as *The Gospel of Judas*, and orthodox response to them, such as Tertullian's *On the Flesh of Christ*, illustrate early struggles over the nature of Christianity which in turn helps us understand where orthodox doctrines come from. We will also read non-canonical works, such as *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas* and *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, that attempt to fill in biblical gaps, in this case Jesus' childhood and Paul's evangelical efforts respectively; such fictions are valuable for their insight into early Christians' anxieties about and attitudes towards biblical figures. And finally we will examine the writings of some of the church fathers to see how they interpreted biblical text and reflect upon the influence their interpretations had, and continue to have, on Christianity.

ARTH 465: ART APPRECIATION

An introduction to the key principles of talking and thinking about visual art, designed to enrich class trips to Rome's museums, churches, and historical sites. We will look at works considered "major" from the history of Western art and discuss the formal and social circumstances that have elevated them to this status. The course will cover ancient through contemporary art and is intended to make art accessible and to help students become comfortable looking at and talking about it.

HIST 163: World Civilization, 1500 to Present

This course surveys the historical causes for the rise of modern globalization, through a comparative study of political cultures after 1600. We will examine the reasons why Europe, Japan, and the United States rose to control world trade and advanced to global dominance after 1600, while other countries did not (often larger countries like China and Russia). We will cover important topics, including the conquest of the Americas, the consolidation of European states and empires, the industrial revolution, economic globalization, imperialism, and the search for alternatives to Western dominance. This course includes a special focus on Italian history and art after 1500, as we explore the interplay between the creation of art and its financial support from the Catholic Church and other institutions.

HIST 298: World War II and Italian Cinema

This course explores the tension between history and memory, by focusing on how World War II is remembered in Italy, particularly in the two decades after the war. We'll look at the masters of Italian cinema, such as Rossellini, Antonioni, Fellini, as well as a few younger directors, all in the attempt to reconcile Italy's role as a fascist country and Axis member on one hand and its pioneering vision in cinematic arts on the other

hand. This course includes a historical overview of European history from World War I through the 1930s, for the purpose of context and grounding. Part of the course will examine the politics of memory, and we will consider memory is generated in museums, memorials, graphic novels, and, of course, film. We will also address the issue of self-representation in the wake of a world cataclysm.

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to the 2 courses taken on the Summer in Rome program, ALL Drexel student participants MUST either take an online section of a Drexel summer course OR conduct an independent study research project with a Drexel faculty member in order to maintain fulltime student status of 12 credits. Failure to do so can result in billing and financial aid consequences.