



**Course Syllabus: Renaissance and Reformation**  
**Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**History 5253**  
**Spring 2025 Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:50 PY 100**

**Contact Information**

Instructor: Tiffany A. Ziegler, PhD  
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**Instructor Response Policy**

The best way to contact me is via e-mail. I will respond to e-mails on business days within 24 hours. E-mails sent after hours will be responded to on the next business day (this means Friday e-mails sent after 5:00 pm will receive a response on Monday).

**Course Description**

This is a course on the history of Europe from roughly the fourteenth to the mid-eighteenth century. We will focus first on Italy where major social and political transformations were followed by a flowering of literary and artistic revolutions. It is the period that we call the Renaissance; it is the period of the great minds of Petrarch, Machiavelli, Michelangelo, Alberti, Medici and others. But the period is more than major movements and great works. We will look at what made these people great—we will look at the historical contexts and roots of their achievements. The class will also explore the development of cities and towns (“communes”) and the rise of merchant oligarchies, all of which led to the so-called great Italian city-states (Florence, Rome, Venice, Milan, etc.) where these men (and women!) spent their lives.

Following the Renaissance, and in some way coinciding with it, is the Reformation—a period of intense religious reform across the European continent. We will look at the Reformation as more, though, than just religion and religious change. We will examine the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of it. Most importantly, this class will show how the Reformation is really just an outgrowth of the Renaissance and changes that were already taking place in Europe: The Reformation began as part of humanist trends and from the Northern Renaissance.

Students will demonstrate the knowledge gained in this course by completing class readings, by attending and being attentive at lectures, by completing papers, and by taking exams. More importantly, in all these tasks students will exhibit critical thinking and analysis in regards to the study of Renaissance and Reformation Europe.

### **Textbooks & Instructional Materials**

#### Required

Alberti, Leon Battista. *On Painting*. New York: Penguin Books, 1991. ISBN: 9780140433319

Brucker, Gene A.. *Giovanni and Lusanna: Love and Marriage in Renaissance Florence*. University of California Press, 2004. (ISBN: 9780520244955)

Luther, Martin. *Three Treatises*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970. ISBN: 9780800616397

Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*. Translated and edited by Daniel Donno. Washington: Bantam Books, 2003. ISBN 0-553-21278-8

Ozment, Steven. *The Bürgermeister's Daughter: Scandal in a Sixteenth-Century German Town*. New York: Harper perennial Press, 1997. ISBN 9780060977214

Wunderli, Richard. *Peasant Fires: The Drummer of Niklashausen*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992. ISBN: 9780253207517

Other readings including primary sources, chapters, articles, etc. posted on D2L.

Graduate students will be responsible for two additional readings: one over the Renaissance and one over the Reformation. Readings must be approved by the professor.

#### Recommended

Turabian, K. L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Ninth Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-226-43057-7 [Quick Guide Website](#).

There are the six books for this course, and most are primary sources or contain a majority of primary source writing. There is no textbook for this course—lectures will serve this purpose. Each book will be paired with another for a paper topic: Alberti with Machiavelli; Luther with *Peasant Fires*; *The Bürgermeister's Daughter* with *Giovanni and Lusanna*. Each pairing provides insight into the two different periods of study on a variety of topics: the 'Renaissance man'; love, marriage, and family life; and angry peasants.

Please purchase or rent these books. If you would like to get a different edition or digital copy, you are welcome to do so. Please be warned, however, that if I refer to a page number, I will denote the page of the edition listed in the syllabus. Be ready to cite all appropriately regardless of format (Turabian—recommended but not required).

### **Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance**

Located in Moffett Library, the Office of Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) offers a variety of resources designed to help students meet the demands of the college classroom, including both on campus and distance education tutoring. For more information go [here](#).

### **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

### **Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Furthermore, writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are all part of the learning outcomes of this course, and thus all assignments should be prepared by the student. AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

### **Moffett Library**

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student’s studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

### **Grading**

Course Grade - The grade for this course will be based on attendance and participation, two book reviews, a primary source analysis, and two take-home exams.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Attendance and Participation	150
Review One	150
Review Two	150

Assignments	Points
Primary Source Analysis	150
Exam One	200
Exam Two	200
Total Points	1000

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

### **Assignments**

All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class time on the day due. All assignments should be submitted electronically on D2L.

### **Quizzes**

I will not give quizzes as long as there is regular class participation.

### **Exams**

There are two 'take-home exams' in the class over the first and second half of material covered. Each is worth 200 points, or 20% of the grade. More detailed information will be provided later.

### **Reviews**

Graduate students will read two additional books: one over the Renaissance and one over the Reformation. They will then write a review over each worth 150 points, or 15% of the grade. An example of a review is provided at the end of the syllabus.

### **Primary Source Analysis**

Graduate students will do a primary source analysis of Reformation woodcuts. They will then write a review of their analysis worth 150 points, or 15% of the grade. More information will be provided later.

### **Extra Credit**

No extra credit assignments are provided.

### **Late Work**

Late work is not permitted.

### **Make-up Work/Tests**

All assignments are due the to D2L on the due date indicated. This includes 'take-home exams'. Because you will know of all assignments beforehand, and because tests are take-home, there will be no make-up work or tests.

Please plan accordingly; get your assignment in before you know you will miss. If you are ill, let me know and I will work with you on when/how to submit.

### **Important Dates**

Last day for term schedule changes: 24 January 2025

Deadline to file for graduation: 17 February 2025

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" 30 April 2025

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

### **Attendance**

I am assuming that you are an adult and that you can make your own decisions about coming to class. This is, however, an upper-division history course in which most information will be conveyed in person and in class. Your attendance grade is worth 150 points, or 15% of your grade. You will be given one unexcused absence; the total points allocated for attendance will drop by ten points for every additional time missed. You will also be counted as absent if you show up more than fifteen minutes late for class without an appropriate excuse or if you are consistently unprepared for class, fail to pay attention during class, and/or fail to participate in class discussion.

INCLEMENT WEATHER STATEMENT: If the university closes due to weather during our assigned class time, we will not meet. Assignments/meetings will be shifted accordingly.

### **Computer Requirements**

While this is not an online class, we do rely rather extensively on D2L, which requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ***\*Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ***\*Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student

computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

### **Instructor Class Policies**

Please refrain from behavior disruptive to the conduct of class, including but not limited to arriving late, leaving early, making trips to the vending machines, talking with other students, and viewing videos on TikTok. Do not bring work unrelated to class. Do not watch soccer (or other games) in class. Think carefully about how you are spending your tuition money. If you sleep in class and if you snore, people are likely to laugh at you.

### **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.

### **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans, and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make an application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

### **College Policies**

#### *Smoking/Tobacco Policy*

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas at each location.

#### *Alcohol and Drug Policy*

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

*Campus Carry Rules/Policies*

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License-to-carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

*Active Shooter*

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

**Grade Appeal Process**

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

**\*Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

**Course Schedule:**

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 1/21-1/24	<b>Introductions/Defining Renaissance</b>	READINGS: Alberti, Machiavelli, and <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>
Week 2 1/27-1/31	<b>The Formation of the Italian Communes</b>	READINGS: Alberti, Machiavelli, and <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 3 2/3-2/7	<b>From Communes to Signories</b>	READINGS: Alberti, Machiavelli, and <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>
Week 4 2/10-2/14	<b>The Republican Myth: Renaissance Oligarchies</b>	READINGS: Alberti, Machiavelli, and <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>
Week 5 2/17-2/21	<b>The Renaissance Economy Culture</b>	READINGS: Alberti, Machiavelli, and <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>  Review One Due
Week 6 2/24-2/28	<b>Politics and State Building/Renaissance Society</b>	READINGS: Alberti, Machiavelli, and <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>
Week 7 3/3-3/7  Spring Break: 9-15 March	<b>Renaissance Intellectual History: Humanism</b>	READINGS: Alberti, Machiavelli, and <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>
Week 8 3/17-3/21	<b>Twilight &amp; Crisis: The Italian Peninsula after 1494</b>	READINGS: "Did Women Have a Renaissance?", <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i>  Exam One Due
Week 9 3/24-3/28	<b>The Northern Renaissance: From Humanism to Reformation/Defining Reformation</b>	READINGS: "Did Women Have a Renaissance?", <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i> , <i>Start Bürgermeister's Daughter</i>
Week 10 3/31-4/4	<b>Religious Mentalities and Practices</b>	READINGS: "Did Women Have a Renaissance?", <i>Giovanni and Lusanna</i> , <i>Start Bürgermeister's Daughter</i> and Luther  Review Two Due
Week 11 4/7-4/11	<b>Luther</b>	READINGS: <i>Bürgermeister's Daughter</i> , and Luther



Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 12 4/14-4/16  Holiday Break 17-20 April	<b>Luther</b>	READINGS: Luther and <i>Peasant Fires</i>
Week 13 4/21-4/25	<b>The Peasants' War and Other Radical Movements</b>	READINGS: Luther, <i>Peasant Fires</i> , "Twelve Articles of the Peasants"
Week 14 4/28-5/2  Last day to drop for a "W": 4/30	<b>Calvin and Geneva</b>	Readings: Calvin Handout  Primary Source Analysis Due
Week 15 5/5-5/9  Last Day of Classes 5/9	<b>Council of Trent and the Counter Reformation</b>	Readings: Council of Trent Handout
Finals Week 5/12-5/16	Final Exam Time: Thursday 13 May 8:00 am – 10:00 am	READINGS: None  Final Exam Due

## Sample Review

**Name: Tiffany A. Ziegler**  
**Review One**

Davis, Adam J. *The Medieval Economy of Salvation: Charity, Commerce, and the Rise of the Hospital*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2019.<sup>1</sup>

The principle aim<sup>2</sup> of Adam J. Davis' *The Medieval Economy of Salvation: Charity: Commerce, and the Rise of the Hospital* is to "cast new light on the nature of religious charity during Europe's first great age of commerce" (5).<sup>3</sup> Throughout the twelfth and thirteenth century, hospitals and leper houses appeared all over Europe during the 'hospital revolution'; their intention was to care for the poor, sick, and vulnerable. Townspeople, merchants, aristocrats, and ecclesiastics supported these institutions by making donations—in the form of money, lands, rents, and more. Such transactions did not, however, change the nature of the medieval gift; in fact, Davis argues that "far from eroding the power of the gift, the new commercial economy infused charitable giving and service with new social and religious meaning and a heightened expectation of reward" (5). Hospitals, in short, provide a window into the all-encompassing lives of medieval urban society, and Davis' study shows how—through the lens of the hospital, its donors, its personnel, and its inmates—relationships in religion, economics, and society evolved in twelfth and thirteenth century France.

Davis situates his study of the hospital movement within medieval Champagne in order to better understand the transactional efforts that entwined charity and the

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<sup>1</sup> Book reviews should start with a full bibliographic citation at the beginning.

<sup>2</sup> In the first paragraph, be sure to include what the book is trying to prove—what is the argument? What is the thesis?

<sup>3</sup> This is the one time when I will allow you to use parenthetical citations. As long as you only use the book you are reviewing, cite with the page number in parentheses. If you bring in outside sources, you will need to use footnotes. It might be wise to bring in sources as comparisons!

commercial economy.<sup>4</sup> Champagne, an epicenter of European trade, was a hub for international trade fairs and local markets. The fairs generated capital and attracted people, many of whom required accommodations. Hospitals, which catered to the travelers, as well as the sick and the poor, quickly appeared in the region. These hospitals were later subsidized through the funds generated by the markets and fairs: direct revenues were often sent to the hospital, while indirectly, “commercial prosperity [...] made pious bequests possible” (7). Although Davis has produced a case study on the hospitals of Champagne, he also makes it clear that the “hospital movement in Champagne was clearly connected to a broader pan-European religious culture of charity” (4).

The rise of the hospital movement was tied to more than simple economics, though. In fact, hospitals arose because people made *pious* donations to the institutions. Davis asks the question of why—why did people choose to give to regional urban hospitals? Several reasons are posited throughout the book, including but not limited to, a rise in Eucharistic piety, preoccupation with Purgatory, and the increase of a confessional society. The most obvious reason was tied to the increased fairs and markets: the greater the economic activity in an area, the greater the need for repositories of charity, like hospitals, which could provide an “antidote to the vice of avarice” (9). Through charity and alms, one often found salvation (chapter one), and in return, this created a ‘charitable landscape’ (chapter two) where hospital patrons, protectors, and founders contributed to the new spiritual economy, where hospital workers “lived a life of self-renunciation and service,” and where hospitals became involved in the “larger pattern of social and economic exchange” (114). Part of what made the charitable landscape so fruitful was a democratization of charity that lend itself to involvement by a variety of social classes (chapter three). By giving a donation

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<sup>4</sup>The main body paragraphs should be used to **describe** the book, not make judgments, comments, or criticisms. Save those for the end.

to a hospital, a donor participated in redemptive almsgiving, while the alms in turn had the potential to produce spiritual and soteriological benefits (139). Other benefits also emerged from the mixing of charity and economy. For example, relationships formed between the hospital and the donors, and donors often thanked the hospital for the “kindness and courtesies” (151).

Through the generous donations and institutionalized charity, hospitals grew into businesses that needed to manage properties carefully. The institutions were dependent on good relations with local inhabitants to do so (186), which meant a careful navigation of the social and economic landscape (chapter four) and expert service on the part of hospital personnel (chapter five). As a result, a “hospital’s social and religious roles were inextricably tied to its economic power” (186). All efforts on behalf of the hospital donors and personnel, however, were done in service to the poor, the recipients of charity (chapter six). Finally, Davis argues that, despite what one might presume, the sick poor were not passive recipients of charity and the economy of salvation. Although the medieval sick poor had few options available to them, they were in no way forced into a hospital; they made a conscience choice to enter the institution, and in doing so, completed the “triangular system of exchange involving hospital workers, benefactors, and God” (242).

*The Medieval Economy of Salvation* is not only a great book but an important one.<sup>5</sup> Building on the works and ideas of Lester Little, Sharon Farmer, and Miri Rubins to name a few, Davis’ manuscript brings to light a neglected topic of medieval hospitals to show not only how important the institutions were but also how embedded they were within the medieval social system. With the hospital revolution, medieval hospitals emerged and soon

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<sup>5</sup> In your final paragraph (or paragraphs) you **should** make clear statements about the book—did it achieve what it said it would? Did the author prove his/her/their points? Was it easy to read? Was it accessible? If it was problematic, what was problematic about it? Did you learn something? What did it contribute to the greater field of study?

after became pillars of culture. Medieval hospitals represent the best of society via humanitarian efforts, as well as embody the underlying elements of what makes us human: a need to make a profit in an ever-growing profit economy and then make recompense for the soul for doing. These actions, as Davis has shown, nurtured the economy of salvation through religious and charitable exchange. The exchange system in turn bound all levels of society together in a “social and spiritual web of mutual need, dependency, and assistance” (275). The result was that hospitals, especially in Champagne and presumably throughout all of Europe, were a microcosm of medieval society. The notion is simple yet profound, and it is weighted in the evidence. Hopefully this study opens the scholarly world to the merit of medieval hospitals as microcosms of society.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Aim for 3-4 pages total, with about half being descriptive—what the book is about—and half being analysis: what the book did well/did not do well.