

HIST 3138  
History of Medieval Italy, 1300-1500  
MWF 9:30 -10:20  
Prof. Roisin Cossar  
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204-474-8885  
September 4-Dec 6, 2019

Welcome to this course on the history of Italy in the later Middle Ages. We will examine the politics, social structures, religious life, and artistic production of the peninsula in that particularly dynamic and fertile period. The course is organized around close readings of two sources created in Tuscany during the fourteenth century. One is a set of letters written by Margherita Datini, wife of the prominent merchant Francesco Datini. The other is a series of bawdy stories, *The Decameron*, written by the prolific Giovanni Boccaccio. Both provide historians with a wealth of information about the period. Since this is a 3000-level class, you can expect to hear fewer lectures and participate in more discussions than you did in introductory-level courses. Please don't hesitate to communicate with me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Required Course Texts (available for purchase at the bookstore)

Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*. I'd recommend you buy the Wayne Rebhorn translation (Norton, 2013).

Margherita Datini, *Letters to Francesco Datini*, Carolyn James and Antonio Pagliario, trans. (CRRS, 2012)

I will also make other readings and links available on our UMLearn site when needed.

Assignments and Evaluation

1. 5 brief analytical papers examining 3-5 selected readings from the primary source texts completed during each two week period of the class. Each paper should be max 500 words long. Upload these to our UMLearn portal every second Friday by 11:59 pm, starting Sept 27. 20%
2. EITHER a 2500-3000 word research essay based on one of our primary sources and 6-8 historical studies (essays, articles, monographs) on a topic in late medieval Italian history of your choice, OR an alternative project (also based on research on one of the primary sources and 6-8 secondary sources) such as: a board game, a piece of historical fiction, a graphic novel version of some aspect of medieval Italian history. If you have another idea please speak to me about it before embarking on the work. I will allow collaborative projects (2 collaborators only) but bibliographies for those projects must be twice as long as individual projects and as well as the finished work, each collaborator must write a 500-word description of the collaborative process and their specific contributions. Due November 18. 30%

3. Presentation of a poster version of your final project during class symposium in the final week of term. 10%
4. Participation in class discussions. Strong discussion skills involve both active intervention into the group conversation and active listening while others speak. 10%
5. Final exam in the December exam period. 30%

#### Late submissions

If you can't meet a due date for any reason, please contact me in advance and we will work out a solution.

#### Attendance

You will be aware by now that you are required to attend classes at university. I hope you will want to attend class, but I recognize that sometimes things happen (illness, snowstorms) that make it impossible to be here. Keep in mind that unexcused absences have consequences. In this class, if you have more than 3 unexcused absences in either term, you risk "debarment" from the class, meaning that you would be expelled from the class and not allowed to complete it. To avoid this, please contact me whenever you cannot come to class.

#### Civility in the classroom

Respectful critical engagement is the foundation of interactions in any classroom. That can mean that students might disagree with each other's interpretations, but they must always do so respectfully. My job as course instructor is to ensure that the exchange of ideas does not result in the denigration of individuals or groups, whether that is intentional or unintentional. That sometimes means intervening in discussions to redirect them and/or speaking to students outside class. If you have any concerns about the tenor of discussions in the class, please speak to me.

#### Academic Integrity

Doing your own work is essential to your success at university and beyond, and as you likely know by this point in your academic career, there are real penalties for not doing so. We will discuss academic integrity in more depth during our first class meetings. In the meantime, please take note of the penalties for plagiarism in the Faculty of Arts:

*The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism on a written assignment is a grade of F on the paper and a final grade of F (DISC) (for Disciplinary Action) for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as purchase of an essay and repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five (5) years from registration in courses taught in a particular department/program in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty.*

*The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism or to other experts for authentication.*

*The common penalty in Arts for academic dishonesty on a test or examination is F for the paper, F (DISC) for the course, and a one-year suspension from courses acceptable for credit in the Faculty. For more serious acts of academic dishonesty on a test or examination, such as*

*repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five years from registration in courses taught in a particular department or program in Arts or from all courses taught in or accepted for credit by this Faculty.*

Evaluative feedback will be provided by the Voluntary Withdrawal date November 18, 2019.

Numerical range of letter grades in this class

A+: 88-100 %

A: 80-87 %

B+: 75-79 %

B: 70-74 %

C+: 65-69 %

C: 60-64 %

D: 50-59 %

F: Below 50%

Uncollected term work will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and will be subject to confidential destruction.

Students who wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the grade for the term work has been made available to them.

## **Student Resources**

### Academic Resources

You have access to several important resources to help you navigate your classes and university life more generally. There are writing tutors available to help you with your essays through the Academic Learning Centre (ALC): <http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/>. The ALC page also has resources to help you with study skills, organization, as well as assistance for students using English as an Additional Language (EAL). Other issues, including accessibility services, workshops, and tips about academic integrity are addressed at the Student Advocacy Services webpage ([http://umanitoba.ca/student/resource/student\\_advocacy/](http://umanitoba.ca/student/resource/student_advocacy/)).

The History department will also make a writing tutor available exclusively to History students in the department on two days of the week. I'll give you more information about that in class.

History students can also take advantage of the huge range of academic materials (including primary and secondary sources, as well as pages to help with writing and referencing) made available by the History subject librarian and tailored just for you. They are available on the Libraries page at this link: <http://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/content.php?pid=219304>

### Student Counseling Centre

Contact SCC if you are concerned about any aspect of your mental health, including anxiety, stress, or depression, or for help with relationships or other life concerns. SCC offers crisis services as well as counseling. <http://umanitoba.ca/student/counselling/index.html>

### Student Support Case Management

Contact the Student Support Case Management team if you are concerned about yourself or another student and don't know where to turn. SSCM helps connect students with on and off campus resources, provides safety planning, and offers other supports, including consultation, educational workshops, and referral to the STATIS threat assessment team. <http://umanitoba.ca/student/case-manager/index.html>

### University Health Service

Contact UHS for any medical concerns, including mental health problems. UHS offers a full range of medical services to students, including psychiatric consultation. <http://umanitoba.ca/student/health/>

### Student Advocacy

Contact Student Advocacy if you want to know more about your rights and responsibilities as a student, have questions about policies and procedures, and/or want support in dealing with academic or discipline concerns. <http://umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy>

### UM History Student Association (UMHiSA)

UMHiSA is a history undergraduate student run organization that seeks to establish a sense of community for students studying all facets of history, and provide support for them in their academic career. Students interested in fun times, spirited debate, new opportunities, a community of like-minded students, or all of the above, check out UMHiSA on our instagram account [www.instagram.com/umhisa\\_undergrad/](http://www.instagram.com/umhisa_undergrad/) or emailing [umhisau@gmail.com](mailto:umhisau@gmail.com).

Class schedule (subject to change before Sept 4 and with class consent afterwards)

Abbreviations: *Dec* = *Decameron*; *LtFD*= *Letters to Francesco Datini*.

NB: References for the *Decameron* are to Day/Story # and to the *Letters* as Letter #.

Week of	Class Topic	Readings/Due dates
Sept 4 and 6	Introductions	
Sept 9	Political history	Lectures only this week
Sept 16 and 23 <b>NB no class Sept 20</b>	Marriage and sex	<i>Dec</i> Day 3 Story 10; Day 5, Stories 8, 9, 10; Day 9, Story 3; Day 10 Story 10 <i>LtFD</i> : #1; 5:10;12; 90; 227 <b>First analysis due 11:59 pm Fri Sept 27</b>
Sept 30	Religious cultures	<i>Dec</i> Day 1, Stories 1, 2, 3; Day 4, Story 2; Day 10 Story 9
Oct 7	Business and merchants	<i>LtFD</i> : #5; 10, 11, 26, 27, 36, 37, 87, 190 <i>Dec</i> Day 2, Story 5; Day 8, Story 10; <b>Analysis due 11:59 pm Fri Oct 4</b>
Oct 16	Criminality and courts	<i>Dec</i> Day 4 Story 6; Day 6 Story 7; Day 8 Story 5
Oct 21	Servants and slaves	<i>LtFD</i> # 1; 27; 28; 50; 51; 53; 65; 88; 121, 169-178 <b>Analysis due 11:59 pm Fri Oct 18</b>
Oct 28	Literature and art	<i>Dec</i> Preface; compare Day 1, Story 1 and Day 10, Story 10
Nov 4	The Black Death	<i>Dec</i> : Introduction <i>LtFD</i> : #18; 182; 215; 216 <b>Analysis due 11:59 pm Fri Nov 1</b>
Nov 11	<b>November break</b>	<b>No analysis due this week</b>
Nov 18	Plague, Famine, War	<i>LtFD</i> : #82; 111; 113; 115 <b>Final analysis due 11:59 pm Fri Nov 21</b>
Nov 25	Modern views of medieval Italy	
Dec 2	Class poster sessions and review (Dec 6)	