

Course Descriptions & Bios, Florence 2027

Nick Perrone

Santa Rosa Junior College

My journey into history has been circuitous and diverse. Growing up, I never imagined that I would be teaching at the college level. While taking classes at my local community college, I learned of a study abroad opportunity in Spain. This changed everything for me. I had spent the previous couple years at college without much direction and still unsure of what I wanted to major in. While studying in Spain I fell in love with travel, academia, and history. I returned intent on transferring to a UC to study History. I earned a B.A. in History with a Minor in Middle Eastern and North African Studies from UCLA, followed by an M.A. in Modern History from King's College London, and a Ph.D. in History from UC Davis. My goal was always to teach at the community college level with the hope of one day hosting my own students on a study abroad program.

Travel has been central to my education and my identity as a historian. It was in Spain where I discovered how deeply a place can shape your understanding of its people and its past. After transferring to UCLA, I had the opportunity to study in Rome, an experience that only reinforced my desire to study History. I also happen to be Italian, so I took the opportunity to learn about my ancestors and visit places that were part of my story. That experience convinced me that there is no better classroom than the world itself.

I have been teaching History at Santa Rosa Junior College since 2017, and I am thrilled to bring my courses to Florence in the spring of 2027. Florence is one of those rare cities where history is not something you have to search for, it meets you everywhere you go. Florence is over 2,000 years old, and walking through the city reveals layers of history in a way that is incomparable. I cannot think of a more inspiring place to study the past, and I look forward to exploring it together with you.

HIST 4.1: History of Western Civilization to 1648 C.E.

3 units, CSU/UC transferable (Social Science GE). Grade or P/NP.

How did “the West,” become what it is today? Why are North Africa and the Middle East part of “the West” at the beginning of the class but not at the end? This course traces the arc of Western civilization (while questioning the terms “western,” and “civilization”) from the ancient river valleys of Mesopotamia and Egypt through the classical worlds of Greece and Rome, the rise of Christianity and Islam, the medieval period, and the Renaissance and Reformation, concluding with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, one of the most consequential moments in the creation of European statehood. Studying history is not about memorizing names and dates, but about asking complex questions: How did ancient ideas shape the world we live in today? How have religious movements shaped western identity and how have those religions changed over time? How have ordinary people experienced extraordinary historical change?

There is no better place to explore these questions than Florence. As the cradle of the Renaissance, the city is a living museum of the very period we study. We will walk through the halls of the Uffizi to examine how Renaissance artists reimagined the classical world, visit the Duomo and Baptistery to understand the intersection of religion, politics, and patronage, and explore the legacy of the Medici family, whose influence shaped not just Florence but all of Western Europe. We will not only be reading this history, but physically exploring it in the places that important events occurred.

HIST 4.2: History of Western Civilization from 1648 C.E.

3 units, CSU/UC transferable (Social Science GE). Grade or P/NP.

After 1648 the world appears to change faster than previous time periods. This course picks up where HIST 4.1 leaves off, tracing the dramatic transformation of so-called “Western Civilization” from the age of absolutism and the Enlightenment through the Age of Revolutions and the reactionary responses, the rise of nationalism, industrialization, imperialism, and the catastrophic conflicts of the twentieth century. We will examine how ideas about liberty, equality, power and oppression continue to shape politics, culture, and society today.

Italy offers a uniquely powerful lens through which to study this period. Florence and the broader Italian peninsula were at the heart of the Risorgimento, the nineteenth-century movement for Italian unification, and Italy's twentieth-century experience of fascism, resistance, and post-war reconstruction is among the most significant and cautionary tales in modern history. We will visit sites in Florence connected to these movements, examine primary sources, and grapple with the question that historians always return to: how do we learn from the past?

HIST 20: History of the U.S. Since 1945

3 units, CSU/UC transferable (Social Science GE / US History). Grade or P/NP.

The United States emerged from World War II more powerful than ever in a world transformed. This course examines the history of the United States from 1945 to the present, tracing the Cold War and its global consequences, the Civil Rights Movement, the upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s, the rise of conservatism, the end of the Soviet Union, and the complex challenges of the twenty-first century. We will pay close attention to the voices of those who are often left out of traditional historical narratives: women, people of color, working-class Americans, and dissidents of all kinds.

You might wonder: why study American history in Florence? The answer is that distance gives us perspective. Viewing the United States from a country that was destroyed by fascism and transformed into a new global power allows us to see American history in a different light. Italy and the United States have been deeply intertwined since the nineteenth century through the millions of Italian Americans whose families carry both histories within them. We will use our adopted city of Florence to compare, contrast, and ultimately deepen our understanding of what it means to be American in the modern world.

Carrie Marks

Los Rios Community College District

Other than a year spent in Mexico, I didn't have too many chances to travel during my childhood, but I've spent the rest of my life making up for that! After earning an English degree at Harvard, I did the classic backpack-around-Europe trip for a summer before beginning my first job teaching middle school. A few years later, I became a Peace Corps Volunteer in Uganda, where I trained young teachers. After that I returned to the US to teach high school and earn my Master's in English Literature from Middlebury College, which included two semesters abroad at Oxford University in England. As a high school teacher and later a community college professor, I've always taken advantage of the long school breaks to explore the world with my family, traveling to places like New Zealand, Japan, Costa Rica, and France. As much as we enjoyed these adventures, Italy is the one country we kept coming back to. I've been excited to participate in this study abroad program in Florence ever since I began teaching at Sacramento City College in 2008. I just had to wait for my kids to grow up so that I could have my big solo adventure! When I'm not in the classroom, you might spot me on the streets of Florence stuffing myself with gelato, taking an evening passeggiata, and practicing my italiano.

As a lover of literature and art, I'm thrilled to be teaching in Florence, the birthplace of the Renaissance. So much of the way that we view human nature today can be traced to the grand palaces and humble artist's studios that we'll explore in Florence. All of my classes will offer an introduction to the literary and artistic works of Italian history, a chance to develop observational and analytical skills, and plenty of interactive fun.

ENGLT 345: Mythologies of the World

3 units, CSU/UC transferable.

This class will focus on two guiding quests for the semester: (1) gaining a strong foundational knowledge of the Greek, Roman, and Christian stories of creation, gods, and heroes, and (2) understanding the role these stories played in the Italian Renaissance and how they were interwoven with the political and cultural life of Florence. Our lessons will frequently take us out of the classroom and into the piazzas, gardens, churches, and museums around the city where we can encounter artwork related to mythology. As the semester comes to a close, you will research mythology from a culture of your choice (including our own contemporary culture) and will compare how this culture's stories relate to the gods, heroes, monsters, and creation stories of the Greek and Roman traditions.

ENGLT 380: Introduction to Shakespeare

3 units, CSU/UC transferable.

Although there is no evidence that Shakespeare ever visited Italy, he used it as the setting for some of his greatest plays. We'll begin the semester by exploring how Renaissance ideas born in Florence influenced Elizabethan England. From here we'll transition into a study of Shakespeare's Italian plays. Through the lens of Othello, we'll investigate Venetian politics and history, focusing on the relationship between Venetians and outsiders like Othello. Next we'll imagine the world of Romeo and Juliet in

nearby Verona and reflect on the legacy of a play that still brings throngs of tourists each year to La Casa di Giulietta. Finally, we'll turn our attention to a love story with a happier ending—Much Ado about Nothing—and we'll analyze how the 1993 film adaptation portrays rural Italian life. We'll end the semester with a final project in which you will collaborate on staging a scene from one of the plays in our local setting. Even if you don't have any experience with Shakespeare and feel a little intimidated by his language, this class is still for you!

ENGL 301: College Composition and Literature

*3 units, CSU/UC transferable. **PREREQUISITE: ENGL C1000***

This second-semester composition class focuses on how to analyze and write about literary and artistic texts, including fiction, poetry, film, and visual art. We will approach all of these assignments through the lens of Florentine and Italian history and culture, examining a selected canto from Dante's *Inferno*, paintings by Renaissance artist Artemisia Gentileschi, E.M. Forster's novel *A Room with a View*, and Vittorio De Sica's film "The Bicycle Thieves." The skills you will learn in this class—slowing down, carefully observing, questioning, and making connections—are exactly the tools you need to make the most of your study abroad experience in a city so rich with culture, history, and art.

Paul Roscelli

San Mateo County Community College District

Paul received his JD in Law from Santa Clara University, his AB in Economics from the University of California at Berkeley, and his BA in Accounting from San Francisco State University. He has taught Introduction to Macroeconomics, Introduction to Microeconomics, Business Law, Financial Accounting, and ESL content-based courses at Cañada College. Paul's academic interests run the gamut from game theory to the role of prices as signaling devices to confirmation bias to the various schools of macroeconomic thought.

Over the years Paul has been advisor to several clubs such as the Environmental Club and the Christian Club. Currently he serves as the lead advisor to the Beta Zeta Nu (BZN) chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the two-year honor society for community colleges. Paul has been blessed with numerous award-winning chapters; in recent years BZN has been recognized as the outstanding chapter in California while also being ranked 4th out of 1,300 chapters internationally. Paul is also a member of Cañada's Honors Transfer Program faculty and has had students present at the Bay Area Honors Consortium at UC Berkeley and Stanford each year.

This is Paul's second time teaching in the Study Abroad Program in Florence. In this iteration, he hopes to integrate a focused study of Italy's Slow Food Movement. This movement has its origins in Italy in the 1980s as a reaction to fast food and the loss of local culinary traditions. (see: Stanley Tucci: Searching for Italy," Season 2, Episode 2). Paul hopes to use Florence and Tuscany as a living laboratory.

Travel is a way Paul collects examples for his courses; he has travelled across Europe as well as much of Egypt, Cyprus, and Lebanon, and has also studied marble factories in Muscat, Oman, and the tourist industries in Costa Rica.

ECON 100 (Common Course # 2002): Principles of Macro Economics

3 Units; Grade or Pass/No Pass; CSU/UC transferable Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences

Macroeconomics courses look at big-picture variables such as GDP, employment, the money supply, and government policies, topics at the core of Tyler Cowen's *Modern Principles of Macroeconomics* (6th ed.) The Slow Food movement started in Italy in the 1980s as a reaction against fast food and the loss of local food traditions, and it gives us a helpful way to see how culture, markets, and policy interact. In Italy, Slow Food's focus on local production and regional specialties raises questions about how GDP measures value along the food supply chain, from small farms to big export brands. Jobs in agriculture, restaurants, and food-related tourism can be linked to macro topics such as structural unemployment, labor market rules, and how globalization affects domestic industries. Italian efforts to protect regional food systems and resist standardized global fast food connect to macroeconomic debates about trade policy, cultural goods, and the role of institutions in long-run growth. The movement's ideas demonstrate how government policies can be shaped by (and also reflect) changes in consumer tastes and preferences.

ECON 102 (Common Course # 2001): Principles of Microeconomics

3 Units; Grade or Pass/No Pass; CSU/UC transferable Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences

Microeconomics courses look at how individuals, firms, and markets make decisions about prices, quantities, and the allocation of scarce resources, topics at the core of Tyler Cowen's *Modern Principles of Microeconomics* (6th ed.). The Slow Food movement, which started in Italy in the 1980s as a reaction against fast food and the loss of local food traditions, offers a helpful way to see how preferences, incentives, and market institutions work in practice. In Italy, Slow Food's focus on local production and regional specialties raises questions about how market structure, pricing, and product differentiation affect outcomes for small farms, restaurants, and larger food brands. Choices about jobs and wages in agriculture, restaurants, and food-related tourism connect to micro topics such as labor supply and demand, monopsony power, minimum wage laws, and the effects of globalization on workers and firms. Italian efforts to protect regional food systems and resist standardized global fast-food link to debates about trade, market power, regulation, and the protection of cultural goods. The movement's idea of "good, clean, and fair" food also relates to externalities, public goods, revenues, costs, profits and long-run entry and exit in food-related industries.

BUS 201: Business Law

3 Units; Grade or Pass/No Pass; CSU/UC elective

Business law is a survey of many aspects of law and the legal system, and Florence gives us a unique opportunity to see how civil-law traditions rooted in Roman law structure can influence contemporary rules for business organization, contracts, and liability. In this course we will use the city as a laboratory, examining how entrepreneurs, artisans, and food businesses navigate zoning, licensing, and regulatory frameworks in a dense historic center. Drawing on Italy's Slow Food movement and its emphasis on "good, clean and fair" food, we will analyze concrete issues such as local-sourcing requirements, product labeling, and protections for traditional foods, and consider how public policy and private law shape sustainable, place-based business models in Florence today.

Jeffrey Smith

Contra Costa Community College District

Great design was invented in Italy. We will use this rare opportunity while studying in Florence to explore the many facets of design. Think Ferrari and Prada!

I am passionate about design and manufacturing, but I try not to take things too seriously. We will have a lot of fun while also learning the foundations of great design. As Chair and founder of Diablo Valley College's Industrial Design department, I have experience working in the field of product design. Upon graduating from Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), I worked at prominent firms including Warner Bros. and Lunar Design, eventually running my own design & manufacturing company, Brighteyes Design, serving clients including Yahoo!, Porsche dealerships, and Whole Foods. Fun stuff. I am also an active member and former Director-at-Large of the Jaguar Associate Group (JAG) in San Francisco. Love to wrench on my old Jags and can also be found racing my V12 at Sonoma Raceway. Okay, so let's get down to business:

IDSGN 120: Introduction to Industrial and Product Design

3 Units; CSU/UC transferable

This introductory product design course that I will be teaching in Florence (how cool is this) will expose students to a broad spectrum of product design, general design principles, and theories with a focus on visual theory, aesthetics, and historical context. Emphasis is placed on the development of critical thinking skills through the analysis of cultural and technological constructs that influence the creation of specific products. Design research methodology and creative problem-solving skills will be emphasized and explored through the completion of studio projects. Students always love this class and many often find it a compelling new career path.

ARTDM 214: Introduction to Graphic Design

3 Units; CSU/UC transferable

This course can relate to the IDSGN-120 class with the development and refinement of your own brand logos in Illustrator and learning how to use Photoshop for product placement. ARTDM-214 presents the fundamentals of graphic design including history, theory, and practice. Students will use graphic design as a means of communicating ideas in a digital environment. Specific focus will be given to principles of design, balance and visual hierarchy, and the integration of text and image. Students will survey the history of graphic design as a basis for exploring and understanding graphic design fundamentals.