

**Course Title: 400/600 Italian Cities: History through Urban Form**

**Credits:** 2 or 3 (3 credits requires South of Italy Tour)

**Instructor:** Janet R. White, M. Arch., Ph.D.  
UNLV School of Architecture  
[janet.white@unlv.edu](mailto:janet.white@unlv.edu)

**Textbook:** Valerio Lintner, *A Traveller's History of Italy*. Brooklyn, NY: Interlink Books, 1998 (1ST American Edition).

**Description and Objectives:**

Cities are living artifacts; they grow by accretion, as successive inhabitants add layers of built form. Each historic period produces formal elements which respond to its needs and aesthetics, so that one can learn to “read” the history of a culture in the plans and buildings of its cities. Students will learn to recognize distinctive urban form of the Roman, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque eras in Italian history, and to understand how these forms reflect the culture of each period.

**Requirements:**

Participation in field trips to Ostia, Viterbo, Siena/Pienza, and Rome will be required, with field work to be completed in these cities. A mid-term presentation of this work will be required. The final project will require students to present the historical built form of one of the cities examined in the course through photography, sketches and text. Experience/skill in drawing is NOT required. Graduate students taking the course at the 600 level will in addition be required to write a 2500 word (ten-page) paper.

For students taking the course for three credits, participation in the South of Italy Tour is required. An additional project will be conducted during the tour.

**Readings:**

Readings should be completed BEFORE class each week. Readings not in the textbook will be posted through the UNLV Electronic Reserves system, accessed through the UNLV web site <[www.unlv.edu](http://www.unlv.edu)>. All UNLV students should verify that their library cards are renewed and fines paid before leaving for Italy, in order to have access to the Electronic Reserves. Students from other universities will be given an access code in Viterbo.

**Outline:**

Week of May 26      **Introduction and the Roman City**

Reading:      Linter - Ch. Two “The Romans.”  
James C. Anderson, Jr. *Roman Architecture and Society*. Ch. 4, “Layout and

Planning of Cities and Towns in Roman Italy.” Pp. 183-203.  
Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City*. Pp. 46-85. (Long; start now and finish by  
next week’s class)

Field Trip: Ostia

Week of June 2        **The Medieval City**  
Exercise #1 due

Reading:        Lintner - Ch. 3 “The Middle Ages: Barbarians to City States.”  
Howard Saalman, *Medieval Cities*. Pp. 12- 41.

Field Trip: Viterbo

Week of June 9        **The Renaissance City**  
Exercise #2 due

Reading:        Lintner – Ch. 4 “Rinascimento.”  
Christine Smith, “*Varietas and the Design of Pienza.*” in *Architecture in the  
Culture of Early Humanism*. Pp. 98-129.

Field Trip: Siena/Pienza

Week of June 16        **The Baroque City**

Reading:        Lintner – Ch 5 “A Pawn in the Game: Centuries of Foreign Domination.”  
Wolfgang Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and  
Architecture, 900-1900*. Ch. 6, “Seats of a Princely Court.” Pp. 186-  
193

June 26/27            Final Project Due

### **FOR STUDENTS TAKING COURSE FOR 3 CREDITS:**

June 28-July 2 South of Italy Tour    Final Project Part II Due July 1

### **Materials:**

It is not easy to get drawing supplies in Viterbo. Students should bring with them:

- 11X 14 hard-cover sketchbook for presentation of projects
- 6 X 9 sketchbook for lecture and field notes (spiral bound to lie flat is preferred type)
- Drawing pencils/lead holders (minimum 2H, H, HB, B) and color pencils (minimum: red,  
yellow, blue, green, orange, brown, black)
- Pencil and/or lead sharpener

Black sketching markers, assorted tip widths  
Pink Pearl or other soft eraser and erasing shield  
12" ruler  
Glue stick  
Optional: other drawing media as desired, such as felt-tipped markers, pastels, etc.

**Assessment:**            Exercise 1 15 %  
                                 Exercise 2 25%  
                                 Final Project 50%  
                                 Active participation 10%

Exercises and projects will be evaluated on the basis of responsiveness to assignment, comprehensiveness, demonstrated understanding of concepts covered in course, and thoughtfulness/originality of presentation. "Artistic quality" of sketches will NOT be a factor.

**Attendance Policy:**

USAC courses are designed to take advantage of the expertise of the instructor and therefore regular class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed one excused absence. Each tardy is .5 of an absence. Students are allowed only two tardies. After two tardies, the final grade will be lowered by ½ step, i.e., A > A-.