**Course Description**

How old is the Vatican? Despite its bimillennial history, this city-state is a relatively new country, less than ninety years old. Yet, from the day when Peter, a simple Galilean fisherman was chosen to be the rock on which Jesus would build his church, to today’s innovative figure of Pope Francis, an unparalleled sequence of events and people has brought about the quasi-paradox of the world’s smallest state ruled by the most influential leader on the planet.

This course will discuss those events and introduce the relevant people: Roman emperors, popes, saints, heretics, kings, as well as artists and political leaders of our era. In fact, the Vatican is the repository of 2,000 years of political, cultural, theological, philosophical, scientific, artistic, and sociological history. At the same time, it is a modern state engaged in the most critical issues of the 21st century. Moreover, it is an endless source of inspiration for works of fiction, often aiming at feeding the public’s appetite for scandal and mystery, rather than at providing accurate historical accounts.

This course will analyze key features of this vast universe, while placing emphasis on their impact both on the city of Rome and worldwide. Art and site visits will receive special attention, to help the students recognize the interplay between the Papacy and its seat. Primary sources, both textual and visual, will be extensively used to accompany students throughout this Vatican journey.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Distinguish the relationship between architecture, society and politics in the Vatican;
- Examine social and religious implications through the history of the Papacy;
- Formulate consistent arguments in observing, interpreting and evaluating the historical relationship between Rome and the Vatican;
- Manage a clear knowledge of specific vocabulary in the field of the Vatican political system: structure, government and laws;
- Value the cultural and artistic role of the Papacy;
- Investigate the political and diplomatic role of the Vatican in the 20th and 21st centuries;
- Research representations of the Vatican through the media.

**Course Prerequisites**

No specific pre-requisites are needed for this course.

**Textbook:** no textbook required, the assigned readings will be available to students via Canvas.

**Methods of Instruction**

This course will combine online lectures, class debates, museum and sites virtual tours and film screenings.

**Assessment and Final Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly assignments (3)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Course Requirements**

**Weekly assignments**
Students will be given weekly assignments based on the mandatory readings.
*Time on Task: 15 hours*

**Term Paper**
Students will be asked to write an essay by analyzing, interpreting and commenting on a specific aspect of the Vatican City, with references to the historical, social and cultural contexts, as discussed in class. Professor will provide extensive and precise guidelines (8 pages)
*Time on task: 32 hours*

**Final Exam**
Students will take a final exam at the end of the course. The exam is cumulative and will therefore cover all topics discussed and analyzed in class. Question types may include multiple choice, true/false, chronology and terminology. Rubrics will be used to assess each assignment.
*Time on task: 20 hours*

**Participation**
Participation is defined as meaningful contribution in the digital classroom, using the resources and
materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to prepare in advance of each recorded session and regularly engage with the resources, discussions, reflective assignments, and all other online learning activities. Students are required to demonstrate engagement with course materials, for example, through insightful, constructive comments and by using subject-appropriate terminology in: online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after viewing the presentations of others), interaction with guest speakers, where available, and submissions related to other outside-of-class activities. Students should ensure that submitted commentary balances opinions, general impressions, and specific and thoughtful criticisms or contributions. Grades are based on the content, depth, and quality of the aforementioned types of meaningful contributions as measured per the Participation grading rubric in Canvas.

Students are also expected to use the Canvas inbox for communicating any clarifying questions they may want to ask about assessments or other course requirements.

Technology Requirements
Participation requires access to a computer with microphone (a headset and microphone are preferred over built-in sound devices) and webcam; a stable and strong internet connection; and a quiet and well-lit environment.

Attendance
Expectations: In an asynchronous online learning format, attendance takes the form of active student engagement:

- in instructional activities, course content, course tools
- with the course instructor, other students, and
- by timely completion of all assessments.

“Attendance” is more than just logging into the course on Canvas. Students must establish a record of participation in academically related activities in order to comply with this requirement.

Academically related activities include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an academic assignment;
- taking an exam or quiz;
- attending a study group that is assigned by the instructor;
- participating in an online discussion about academic matters, designed by the instructor; or
- initiating contact in Canvas with the instructor to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Academically related activities do NOT include activities where a student may be present, but not academically engaged, such as:

- logging into an online class without active participation
- contributing to or engaging in the CIEE Orientation or Community Course(s)

First Week of Class: Online courses officially commence on the first day of the term. Students must demonstrate engagement in class by no later than day 5 of the term, or risk being administratively dropped from the course with no opportunity to re-enroll. Students administratively dropped from the course for failure to engage will be considered withdrawn from the program and subject to CIEE financial withdrawal policies and fees.

Duration of Course: Continued, regular class engagement is required throughout the scheduled duration of the course, and disengagement will result in a lower participation grade for any affected
CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for completing courses online, consistent failure to engage in the course on a weekly basis (defined as failing to engage for two or more weeks of online learning) will result in a formal written warning from the CIEE Center Director. CIEE instructors / staff will monitor student engagement on a weekly basis. The weekly schedule below outlines due dates for asynchronous learning activities for this course.

N.B. Please note the class schedule is subject to change if opportunities arise to enhance the curriculum.

Weekly Schedule

**Week 1**

**Session 1 - Introduction and Overview**  
Syllabus will be presented and reviewed. Introduction to the keywords and concepts of the course.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

**Session 2 - The Birth of a New Religion: its Effects in Rome and the Empire**  
In this session the reaction of the Roman emperors as representatives of the State Religion to the spread of Christianity will be analyzed with particular emphasis on the persecutions implemented under such figures as Nero, Marcus Aurelius and Diocletian.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

**Session 3 - Constantine, the “First Christian Emperor”**  
The session will explore the dramatic change that resulted from the transformation of Christianity into the state religion and the new role played by the Church and the popes within Rome.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

**Week 2**

**Session 1: Christian Burial and the Catacombs**  
With the growth of the Christian community whose attitudes toward death and the body contrasted with prevailing notions in Rome, there arose new needs including appropriate burial spaces for their members. This need engendered the extensive forms of burial known as catacombs. In this session, students study their form and function with specific emphasis on their more famous
occupants, martyred saints and popes.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

**Session 2: New Landmark within the City of Rome: The Basilica of St. John the Lateran**

This session examines the Edict of Milan’s imprint on the urban fabric of Rome by highlighting a seminal, Christianized typology of architecture through the case study of The Basilica of St. John the Lateran.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

**Session 3 - The Tomb of Peter and the Basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul**

This session delves into the historical and legendary sources on St Peter as the first bishop of Rome, his presence in the city, as well as his death and burial. In parallel, students will examine the importance assigned to the role of St. Paul’s death and burial as a means to bolster the Church of Rome and underscore papal primacy.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

**Week 3**

**Session 1 - The Papacy: from the Origins to the Early Middle Ages**

This session traces the evolution of the papacy from its genesis to the establishment of its religious and civil authority over Roman Christendom.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

**Session 2 - The Pope in Exile: Avignon and the Great Schism**

This session treats the turbulent phases in the papacy’s history, during which its seat was transferred to Avignon and simultaneous claims were advanced by more than one contender for the pontifical throne. The lasting effect of the pope’s absence in Rome will also be examined.

Time on Task = 6 Hours
Session 3 - The Early Modern Papacy from 1417 to 1789
This session discusses the return of the papacy to Rome and Martin Luther’s 95 theses. The lesson will then turn to the Council of Trent’s response to the northern European reform movement instigated by Luther. The session concludes with the repercussions of the French Revolution on the Papal State and its leader.

Time on Task = 6 Hours
Session 1 - Italy’s Unification and the Roman Question
The nineteenth-century Italian Risorgimento questioned the political role of the popes as political leaders, thereby generating the so-called Questione Romana (or Roman Question) during Italy’s unification. This session will focus largely on this debate and the process toward a resolution.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

Session 2 - Mussolini, the Lateran Treaty and the Birth of the Vatican State
The historical event of February 11, 1929 will be parsed into its geopolitical and economic ramifications for the Papal State, Rome and the rest of Italy.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

Session 3 - The Vatican Today
This session will center on the unique political system of the modern-day Vatican State.

Time on Task = 6 Hours

Readings

Reese, J.T., Inside the Vatican, 2001
Hibbert, C., Rome. The Biography of a City, 1985
Cameron, A., The Later Roman Empire, 1993
Brown, P., The World of Late Antiquity, 1989
Beales D, Biagini E., The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy, 1971
Duggan, C., A Concise History of Italy
Boatwright, M.T., Gargola, D., Talbert, R., The Romans: from Village to Empire, 2004


Further reading materials will be assigned on a week-by-week basis.