

## ❖❖ Learning Tuscany, Summer 2026 ❖❖

### Week of Monday, June 1

#### **Wednesday, June 3: STUDENTS LEAVE US**

- 6/4 (Th): **Arrive Rome:** Check in at Albergo Santa Chiara; orientation at IES, sleep!  
6/5 (F): Rome: Ancient Day: Colosseum, Forum, Campidoglio, Pantheon; **group dinner**  
6/6 (S): Rome: Medieval Day: Roman Ghetto, Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Santa Maria in Trastevere  
6/7 (Su): Rome: Renaissance/Baroque Day, Part I: Gesù, S. Luigi dei Francesi, Borghese, group dinner  
(all Rome days subject to change, because, well, it's Rome)

### Week of Monday, June 8

- 6/8 (M): Rome: Renaissance Baroque Day, Part II: Piazza Navona, Vatican Museums, St. Peter's, **group dinner**  
6/9 (T): **Siena:** by coach bus: Get settled, brief walking tour, **welcome dinner**  
6/10 (W): **Class:** introduction and orientation am, visit to Mercato (market); ART pm  
6/11 (Th): **Class:** Piazza del Campo, Palazzo Pubblico am; ART pm  
6/12 (F): **Florence (Firenze)** by rail. Walking tour of the major monuments of the city. Return by bus.  
6/13-14 (S-Su) **FREE WEEKEND**

### Week of Monday, June 15

- 6/15 (M): **Class:** Siena Duomo, crypt, and baptistery am; ART pm  
6/16 (T): **Class:** Duomo museum am; ART pm  
6/17 (W): **Class:** Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala am; ART pm, **group dinner in Selva contrada**  
6/18 (Th): **Class:** San Domenico, Santuario di Santa Caterina, Fonte Branda am; ART pm  
6/19 (F): **Florence (Firenze)** by rail. San Marco and the Duomo Museum. Return by bus after long weekend.  
6/20-23 (S-T) **LONG WEEKEND**

### Week of Monday, June 22

- 6/22 (M): **Return from long weekend**  
6/23 (T): **Return from long weekend**  
6/24 (W): **Class:** SM dei Servi am, Porta Romana: ART pm  
6/25 (Th): **Class:** Biccherna museum (Archivio) am; ART pm  
6/26 (F): **Florence** by rail; Uffizi  
6/27-28 **FREE WEEKEND**

### Week of Monday, June 29

- 6/29 (M) **Class:** San Francesco am; ART pm  
6/30 (T) **Class:** Pinacoteca am; ART pm  
7/1 (W): **Class:** Work on Projects; ART pm  
7/2 (Th): **Palio Day**  
7/3 (F): **The Italian Countryside: Pienza, agricultural visit and lunch**  
7/4-5 **FREE WEEKEND**

### Week of Monday, July 6

- 7/6-7 (M-T): **Class:** Project Presentations; ART pm  
7/8-9 (W-Th): **Class:** finish Projects; ART pm  
7/10 (F): **Student Exhibition; farewell dinner**  
7/11 (Sa): Check out of apartments a.m.; **departure from Siena**

## Learning Tuscany: Course Descriptions, Summer 2026

Learning Tuscany, ART 319T / ART 352J / ART 379T

### **Sound, Action, and The Artist's Book**

Instructor: Hannah Spector, Assistant Professor of Practice, Studio Art

([hannah.spector@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:hannah.spector@austin.utexas.edu))

This course uses travelling as an impetus to actively respond to a new landscape. We will use sound, action, drawing, and bookmaking to find presence within the existing and ancient architecture of Siena, Florence, and Rome. As travelling is a multi-sensorial experience, so will our materials, processes, and products. Most work will be experiential and time-based, with our residue being captured as site-specific books, a collective sound bank, and experiential soundwalks and tours.

Learning Tuscany 2026, ARH 331J (VAPA)

## Holy Ground: Art and Pilgrimage in Medieval and Renaissance Italy

Instructor: Dr. Ann Johns, Distinguished Senior Lecturer, Art History

([acjohns@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:acjohns@austin.utexas.edu))

Why did people travel in the Middle Ages and Renaissance Italy? How were these journeys reflected in art and architecture, whether as portable objects (small altarpieces), illustrated books and manuscripts, narratives of journeys, pilgrimage churches (such as San Domenico and the Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala in Siena), or large-scale paintings of experienced or spiritual travel, such as Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Good Government* frescoes in Siena? And how different was the medieval pilgrim, collecting her religious tokens along a pilgrimage route, from today's cultural "pilgrim", who might collect T-shirts, post-cards, or even countries themselves? Italy has long been a destination for travelers of every ilk: foreign merchants, religious pilgrims, travelers in seek of adventure, and cultural enthusiasts. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the economies of Siena, Florence, and Rome were greatly enriched by both religious pilgrims and lay travelers, resulting in the spectacular development of art and architecture that we know today. In this course, we will explore the notion of pilgrimage in the art and architecture of central Italy, through reading, discussion, site visits, presentations, and post-field trip analyses. While we will study and visit the great, canonical works of central Italy, we will also explore smaller and more personal elements of material culture, including relics, small paintings, and modest churches and hospitals. Throughout, we will use the issue of travel and pilgrimage as a prism with which we can focus our explorations.

### "Typical" Days on the Learning Tuscany program

#### 1. A Field Trip Day (not Rome)

We leave for Florence (3 times) or the Italian Countryside (once) by train or coach bus early (around 7:00 or 7:30); give yourselves plenty of time to get to the train or bus station, and remember that it gets light around 5:00, so it's not as hard to get up. You'll also want to make sure your knees, stomachs, and shoulders can be covered for church visits. Try to grab some coffee and breakfast for the train/bus ride; more bars are selling coffee in "to go" cups, which are fine for the train but less so for a bus. We'll arrive in our city/town and have time for coffee/bathroom/more food. We'll look at art/have time to make art as a group until lunch, and usually have some free time. We'll meet in the afternoon for more looking at art/ART. For the 3 Florence trips, you'll have a return bus ticket so that you can take one of the many express buses back to Siena. So you can go back to Siena to eat dinner, stay in Florence, or go somewhere for the weekend. You will have taken a preparatory quiz prior to each field trip, so you'll be prepared. We go to Florence at the ends of 3 weeks, so that you can catch another train if you want to travel over the weekend. We'll give you time in the morning to check your overnight bags in the Florence train station.

#### 2. A Field Trip Day, Rome

The breakfast buffet at our hotel opens at 7:00. There is a large selection of food (cereal, rolls, juices and coffee, yogurt, cheese and meats, and sometimes eggs), but be sure to eat in the breakfast room; they get freaked out if you try to take food out of the breakfast area. We will usually be ready to hit the streets of Rome by 8:30, and they are LONG and FABULOUS days, with all of our classes on site. You will have breaks for lunch. There should be a mini-fridge in your room; you could go to an *alimentari* (grocery store) and get some lunch supplies to keep in your fridge. This is a great way to save some money. You will need to be rested, fed, and hydrated for these days, because we do a lot of walking (at a brisk pace) and looking (you'll need to develop your museum stamina if you don't have it already)!

#### 3. Days in Siena

Your weekdays in Siena will typically be very full. Even at the end, you'll have projects and you'll be getting ready for your Siena (and later VAC) exhibition, so you need to keep up with your work. Don't get frustrated! Remember that this is not a vacation; you are getting 6 hours of credit for this, and surely you want to learn a lot! But if you're feeling overwhelmed, please come talk to Ann, Hannah, and/or your TA, because our intent is to teach you as much as possible while still giving you time to explore Siena.

Typically, we will meet somewhere around 9:00 for the art history class. This might be in the classroom or onsite at the Duomo, a museum, the Ospedale, or even a café for discussion of the readings; my goal, however, is to spend as little time as possible in the classroom, so rather than looking at slides, we'll go look at some art! Expect to stay focused for much of the morning. We will then give you time for lunch, and some days we might eat lunch (or breakfast, or dinner) together. After lunch, you'll have Hannah's studio class, usually from 2-5. Some days you'll be in the classroom, but much of the time you'll be in the city, making your work. These are full days!

For the art history component of the program, you will begin working in groups on your group project at the end of the program. So, at the end, I'll meet with individual groups on a rotating basis, which means I won't meet with each person every day. You'll have Hannah's class in the afternoon, as you work toward your final exhibitions.