COURSE SYLLABUS
Cathedral: messages of power
General Studies, Elon University

STA 178, 1sh  Fall 2009
GST 278, 4sh  Winter 2010

FACULTY:
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Obviously, during winter term when we are on the road ‘office hours’ will be 24/7.

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Office Hours: Fall hours are by appointment.
Obviously, during winter term when we are on the road, ‘office hours’ will be 24/7.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE:
This is actually two courses rolled together, one meeting in the fall semester, the other in winter term. In the fall we meet in a classroom, conducting a course much like any other fall-term course with the objectives of:
• establishing the fundamental topic of the course,
• settling on our individual assignments
• handling logistics and, most importantly,
• developing the academic understanding which facilitates making the Winter Term portion of the course something other than simply a trip abroad.

During the Winter Term we travel to the various cathedrals in order to gain the information necessary to complete our individually chosen/assigned tasks. On return to Elon each of us will prepare two documents; a paper dealing with our topic, and a reflection paper on the growth experienced during this course.

TEXTS:
Required
• Follett, Ken. The Pillars of the Earth. New York: New American Library (reissue), 1996. (read during winter term while on the road)
Recommended/available for loan

- These will vary depending on the topic or structure you have chosen or been assigned. See the bibliography listing of both my collection and the Elon Library collection in the Coursebook.

Activities:
During the fall we will be meeting on six separate occasions for a total of fifteen hours. These meetings constitute a one-hour course, for which you will receive credit and a grade. Enrollment in the fall course is a prerequisite for participation in the winter experience. In the fall we will concentrate on developing the base knowledge needed to make the winter term course successful. There will be quite a bit of reading, a presentation, and a short exam. During the winter term we will travel in Europe to the sites important to the study of the messages built into the cathedral as a structure of power; messages useful teaching and theological ventures, but also useful in maintaining the Church as a source of economic, political, scientific, and social control/influence. To understand the lives of those involved in the building of the great cathedrals, we will take with us, and read as we travel, Pillars of the Earth.

Our schedule in general is:
In Paris we have two trips out to outlying cities, Chartres on one day and Laon and Reims on another. In addition we will, of course, visit the principal buildings of Paris as well as the "official" tourist sites.
- The Abbey Church of St. Denis. This abbey church is considered the harbinger of the gothic style. This is also the burial church of the French nobility.
- Cathedral of Notre Dame, Chartres. This cathedral was constructed in large part by the citizens of Chartres and, as a result, can be thought of as truly a "people's church" to the glory of God.
- Notre Dame de Laon Cathedral in Laon. This is the principal church of the early Northern French Gothic School. In the French School, Northern Gothic is largely contrasted with Southern by the overall appearance of the exterior of the building. Pay attention to how this building, and the one below, contrast with the cathedrals at Chartres and Cologne.
- Cathedral Notre Dame of Reims. With Chartres and Amiens this is one of the three great gothic cathedrals of France.
- Notre Dame l'Isle, Paris. Principal Church of Paris, one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture. Our visit to Notre Dame, Paris is largely for the architectural interest.
- Saint Chapelle, Paris. Relic church built to house the Crown of Thorns. This Chapel has been described as the second most beautiful man-made place on earth, second only to the Taj Mahal.
- Église Sainte Sulpice, Paris. This site has built into it some fascination scientific instrumentation, important to maintain the Church as the arbiter of time.

In Rome we will deal with both the establishment of the Church as an economic power, and the rise of the mendicant orders; those that were established in response to, and in protest of, the economically monopolistic, profit maximizing, behavior of the Church. Toward this end we visit the four principal Basilicas of Rome plus three other sites:
- Saint John in Lateran Basilica, Rome. The first Christian church of any real size (314-335) The current basilica dates from the 17th century
- Saint Mary Major Basilica, “Liberiana,” Rome. The only Roman basilica to retain its original shape (432-440)
- Saint Peter’s in the Vatican Basilica, Holy See. The home of the Catholic Church worldwide – the largest church in the world (> 21K m2)
- Saint Paul Outside the Walls Basilica, Rome. The site of the beheading of Paul.
- San Clemente, Rome. This site is constructed over two earlier sites, one Christian, the other Mithraic. Thus it is a wonderful combination of mixed messages and historical development.
• Santa Maria degli Angeli, Rome. Here is an excellent meridiane, a means of establishing the exact occurrence of both solar noon and the spring equinox.

In Assisi we visit the Cathedral San Rufino, the churches Santa Chiara as well as the Basilicas of Saint Francis (San Francesco) and Santa Maria degli Angeli. This is the home city of Francis, founder of the Franciscan order. The Franciscans are a mendicant order, living in poverty and service. The rise of such orders is an indication of the internal strife caused within the Church as its priests began to object to the blatant enriching behavior of the leaders.

In Florence we explore the relationship of the Church to the merchant class. Perhaps the most powerful of the principal cameral merchant families was the Medici family. The relationship between the Medici and the Church is extremely complex and sheds quite a bit of light on the Church’s attempt to profit from their establishment of guides for eternal salvation that, in addition to saving the lost, enriched the Church. We will visit:

• San Lorenzo Church, Florence. At the foot of the San Lorenzo church is the Florence leather market. This is reminiscent of the markets surrounding churches and cathedrals from earlier years. Additionally, this is the home church of the Medici family, a focal point of the Church/commerce interaction. We will also visit the Medici Chapel, designed by Michelangelo for the Medici family’s private use.

• Santa Maria Novella Basilica, Florence. Home of the Dominican Order. The Dominicans are a mendicant order much like the Franciscans. Here, as at Saint Sulpice in Paris, we will be concentrating on the scientific activities of the Church, again related to keeping time.

• Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral, “The Duomo,” Florence. This is the structure we are focusing on for the architectural portion of the course. Here is “Brunelleschi’s Dome.” In addition, it is a wonderful example of the magnificent edifices constructed by the merchants to assure their place in heaven in spite of their earthly behavior. In the Duomo is a pair of time devices; one operating to maintain the daily passage of the hours (a theological clock), the other to mark the occurrence of the spring equinox, thus allowing the exact date of Easter to be maintained.

• Basilica di Santa Croce, the principal Franciscan church of Florence, perhaps established by Francis himself. This church houses the ‘graveyard of the renaissance’ with the tombs of Michelangelo, Galileo, Machiavelli, and many others. We will also visit the famous Scuola del Cuoio, the Leather School of Florence.

• We will also have one day in which we will be leaving Florence in small groups to visit some of the smaller cities in the Tuscany region. This assignment is particularly interesting when we all come back together and discuss our findings.¹

During the Independent Study time each student group will establish a set of places and establishments to visit based on their individual study interests.²

In Heidelberg we will be dealing with the extension of the Church out of its logical home in Rome. Toward this end we will visit several principal sites:

• Speyer Cathedral, Speyer. This is the largest Romanesque structure still standing on the planet. The traditional burial place of the Germanic Emperors, Speyer Cathedral is one of the most important Romanesque monuments from the time of the Holy Roman Empire.

• Köln Cathedral, Köln. This is as fine an example of the later “solidification” of the Church in northern Europe as we may find. The cathedral at Köln is not only an imposing structure; it also

¹ See the day-trip assignment in the Assignments section for more detail on this activity.
² See the independent study assignment in the Assignments section for more detail on this activity.
incorporates most of the religious messages so important to maintaining the notion of “one God, one Faith.”

- Aachen Cathedral in Aachen. This is the Imperial Cathedral of Charlemagne, begun in 786. In addition to Charlemagne being buried here this is the coronation church for 30 kings of the Holy Roman Empire.
- Mainz Cathedral, Mainz. This Pillar-Romanesque structure was modeled after Old St. Peter’s in Rome. In addition to the church itself the buildings in the area around have been preserved so this may be the best example of a church in its original environment that we will see.
- Depending on time and weather, we may visit St. Peter’s Cathedral, Worms. This example of early Romanesque architecture was restored in the 12th century in a later Romanesque style. Our objective is to look at the contrasting styles as well as study the relationship between the church and the nearby castle.
- Visiting Our Lady of Ulm, Ulm is also dependent on time and weather. This structure is one of the newer we will see, begun in the late 15th century. We will be studying the northern Gothic style typical of here and Köln. In addition to its historical and architectural interest, Ulm Cathedral has the tallest spire in Europe at 161.53 meters.

**GRADING EXPECTATIONS:**

In the fall grading will be based entirely on your participation, in-class presentation, Florence day-outing preparation, and the text on our two assigned readings. I strongly recommend that you read both Brunelleschi’s Dome and The Gothic Enterprise early as you really do not want to be trying to read these books while finishing up other classes – writing term-papers and preparing for exams in other courses.

All students are expected to participate in all the sessions at Elon and abroad. You must attend those which occur in the fall, those in which we visit and study particular cathedrals, and when we meet as a group to discuss our findings.

You will be assigned a structure to research and present to the class. In the fall segment you will be required to make a preliminary presentation on your structure. It should include the appropriate historical information and what messages we should look for when we arrive at this place. Studying the detailed suggested outline for your paper (below) will be extremely helpful in preparing this presentation.

Additionally, in the winter term you will be presenting your assigned structure to the class while we are actually on site. This presentation is the follow-on to the one noted above. Both presentations are preliminary to your paper (see below) and are expected to be thorough, detailed, and insightful. Simply pointing out the obvious (e.g. Chartres is a Gothic structure famous for its stained glass windows) while we are either in class at Elon or standing in front of Chartres Cathedral, is not adequate to earn a passing grade.

On our return you are expected to provide two documents:

- a paper, either on the structure you have been assigned or on a topic of your choosing relevant to the course, as per the instructions below, and
- an introspective essay reacting to and reflecting on your experience.

Fall term grades [1 semester hour] will be determined by:

- your active participation in the course during our class meetings and any on-line discussions which may arise [15%]
- your preparation for the Florence one-day outing [20%]
- your grade on the two-text test taken at the end of the fall term [30%]
- your presentation of your assigned structure to the class [35%]

Winter term grades [4 semester hours] will be determined by:
• your participation in the sessions while abroad (not just your attendance, which is mandatory, but your participation) [15%],
• the presentation of your structure on site [30%],
• your paper on the structure you have been assigned or the topic you have chosen. [45%], and
• the reflective piece (this more for your use in the future and, as such is either completed satisfactorily or not) [10%].

Generally time at Elon is like any other 1-hour class, with class time and homework time, while time on the road is divided into approximate thirds, roughly one-third in sessions related directly to the course material, one-third in organized activities (sight-seeing, touring, etc.), and one-third in individual activities.

PERSONAL COMMENT AND MY EXPECTATIONS:
This is my nineteenth year of leading students in Elon study abroad courses. Each has been excellent. The reason for this has been the students who have traveled with me. I expect this group to be as fine as previous ones.

A few notes on my expectations might help you get a clearer picture of what is going to happen while we are away: The vast majority of problems students encounter are related to excessive drinking by themselves or others in their group. I understand that it is normal for university students to drink and that Elon students are no different than the average university student. Neither of these facts indicates that I condone excessive consumption of alcohol or that I will tolerate drunken behavior. From my experience I have found that while in Europe a few of us tend to drink a bit more than while we are here. However, you must be responsible in your consumption. Any student who, as a result of consuming too much alcohol, puts themselves or others in an unsafe position, or jeopardizes the continuation of the academic portion of the course for themselves or other students, may be subject to dismissal from the course. The Enrollment agreement you signed is a contract, and I expect you to meet the conditions you have agreed to. In addition, remember; if you get sick or worn down you will miss a day or two and we do not have that many days in total. Thus you must keep up your resistance. The best way to do that is to get plenty of sleep, drink in moderation if at all and to be sure and eat a balanced diet. I know, I sound like your mother. Perhaps she is right in some of the advice she gives you.

We will have several side-trips, which are not required for the grade. Do try and come on these. Students tell me that they are often the highlight of our stop in a particular city. In addition you will have the opportunity to explore on your own. Take it! I'll give you pointers and general directions to the prominent places (and some not so prominent), but the intensity of the experience depends on you. If you are shy about traveling on your own I'm always off to somewhere during free time and you are more than welcome to come with me.

A final note: Things will go wrong, count on it. A smile and a sense of humor, tolerance for ways different from ours, and the willingness to accept things as different from what we are used to, will keep an uncomfortable situation from being a bad one. Keep in mind that a good story must be paid for and they do not come cheap. In order to be able to tell a story about standing for two hours in the cold rain in Paris while an errant bus driver went to the wrong place to pick us up, which would make a great tale later, you must spend at least 20 minutes in the cold rain in Paris. At some point your room will be too small, too cold, too hot, or not have a hot shower, or some such. Smile, laugh, grit your teeth, count to 10 (or 100 if necessary) and tuck it away as a good story for later -- you're paying the price demanded by all good tales. We'll have a great time, laugh a lot, cry a little, and learn more than you can imagine.
ASSIGNMENTS:

There are not very many specific assignments for these courses; thus I expect those them to be done particularly well. The fall term section is fairly obvious, with expectations similar to any other one-hour academic course. While the second portion of the course is a winter term study abroad course, it is first and foremost an Elon academic course for which you are receiving four-hours of university credit. I expect you to put the same effort into this course's academic structure as you would put into any other Elon course you might take in winter or any other term.

We have three types of assignments:
• reading, study, and a presentation PRIOR to the commencement of the study-abroad portion of the course, for which you will receive a separate one-hour course grade
• activities and writing done DURING the study-abroad portion of the course
• material developed during the course but written into final form AFTER the end of the study-abroad portion of the course

The assignments are outlined in more detail below.

PRIOR to the commencement of the study-abroad portion of the course you have five assignments:
• Receive your assignment of one of the buildings we will visit for your presentation and begin the process of developing an outline/proposal for your final paper. To help focus your efforts prior to departure, you will be making a preliminary presentation of your structure to the class. If you wish to write your final paper on a topic other than this structure, you certainly may do so. Meet with me and let’s ferret out a topic that truly interests you.
• Attend all fall term class meetings.
• Select your day-trip outing site for the assignment from Florence. The work done here is preliminary and should not be overly taxing. There is more detail below on this assignment.
• Read Brunelleschi's Dome and The Gothic Enterprise. “Mine” the books for locations we need to visit and interesting things we need to watch out for. Put your findings in a list and bring the list with you. As an incentive to read the material prior to departure, you will be tested over it before we depart.
• Begin to read Pillars of the Earth. You do not need to complete it before we depart as a large portion of its purpose is to help you stay focused while we are traveling - so bring it with you. I suggest you start it immediately following the end of final exams.

DURING the study-abroad portion of the course you have five assignments:
• Maintain a personal journal in which you keep your reflections and your expectations/insights. This is more than a diary; this is a place for you to work out your conflicting emotions and the unexpected happenings that always accompany foreign travel, and especially foreign study.
• Attend all the sessions while abroad. You must attend those in which we are visiting particular sites, and those in which we are gathering as a class to discuss our findings.
• Present your assigned structure to the class when we actually visit it.
• Gather information on your assigned structure or chosen topic for your final paper.
• Assist others in gathering information on their assigned structures or chosen topics.
• Continue your reading of Pillars of the Earth. This will, as mentioned above, help you keep focused – in addition to being a rollicking-good read!
• Make full use of the two reference works, our Coursebook and How to Read a Church.

AFTER our return to Elon you have two assignments:
• Complete your paper on the structure you have been assigned or the topic you have chosen. This should be an eight to fifteen page work with proper citations and references. This is a term paper - treat it as such.
• Compose an introspective essay reflecting on your experience before, during, and after winter term itself. This paper is more nearly for your future use and is scored as completed satisfactorily or not. When you turn this in, do not expect to get it back as I use these to try and improve the courses I teach over the years.

Activity Assignments
In addition to the daily activities we engage in as a group, we will have an opportunity to undertake two independent assignments. The first will occur while we are in Florence, and the second will be done during the independent study time.

Day-Trip Assignment
From Florence you are to venture out into the countryside and visit one of the smaller cities or towns. The objective here is to go and visit a church site different from the ones that we are visiting together. You may think of this as a warm-up for the independent study.

The structure of the assignment is fairly simple:
• You are to travel in a group of at least two and no more than five people.
• No two groups may go to the same destination.
• You are to leave the city and go at least one full hour by train or bus to reach your city.
• Once in your city or town you are to visit a site that you have chosen and researched prior to departing Elon.
• At that site you are to record the same material that we have been recording in each of the sites we visit – architectural style, time of building, notable works of art and/or relics, messages embodied in the building and the art, how the space has been used through time, and how the space affects you.

I recommend you stay in the town through meal time and then find your way back to Florence.

You may choose to visit any of the following 16 towns and cities:
Arezzo    Livorno    Modena    Pistoia
Carrara    Lucca    Padova    Prato
Faenza    Mantova    Parma    Ravenna
Forli    Massa    Pisa    Volterra

In preparation for this assignment you will select your group and your town during the fall term. You will then be responsible for preparing a plan of travel and study for the day in your town. This will include the train or bus schedule (both ways), information about the site you are visiting, information about other sites in the town you may want to see, and contact with the local tourist authority to gather information prior to departure and to schedule a visit to their office and gather information on site about the town.

Independent Study Assignment
During the independent study time you are to accomplish a similar activity to the one for the one-day assignment. However, in this time period you are to visit at least two separate sites in (ideally) two separate countries, but certainly in two separate cities. For this assignment you will need to gather information and establish your group (again, at least two, no more than five) while we are traveling. I suggest that you do some leg-work prior to departure, but it is not essential in this case. Unlike the day-trip assignment, multiple groups may travel to the same destination.
Journal Assignment
You are to keep a private (I will not be collecting or reading these) journal in which you keep track of your own growth (and whatever else you may wish to keep track of) as the course progresses. This journal should be started as soon as possible after you are accepted into the course as it is often very interesting to have a record of how we have changed from before ‘til well after a particular experience. This journal is also the source of the material from which you will write your reflection paper.

Paper Assignments
Assignment one
For your final paper in this class you will be writing on one of the sites we visit or on a topic of your choosing. If you choose a topic other than a site the following does not apply directly to you. However, the general sense of the thoroughness and attention to detail implied by these instructions DOES apply to your topic; it must be complete, to the point, and comparative in nature, using our travel as a large source of information. Of course you will have a site assignment and will make a presentation both at home and on site, but your larger work will be on the topic of your choice.

The assignment mechanism for sites will be determined by the group, with assignment by lot the default. No two persons are to share a site; this is an individual assignment. Once you have your site, you may trade with someone else as you both see fit. This paper should be no longer than fifteen or so pages and is due to me within the first two weeks of the semester (February 15 is the “drop dead” due date). Once you have your site you should begin to gather information on the history, art, and architecture of both the building and the area. In addition to the overarching topic of the messages embedded in the building and the art it houses, your paper should address:

• The history of the building itself,
  o When was it started?
  o What was there originally? and
  o How did it evolve into what we see now, as appropriate?

• The architectural style and how it is manifest in the building.
  o What is (are) the style or styles and how are they blended (if multiple styles)?
  o Where in the history of this style does this building fall (Early Gothic, Late Romanesque, etc.) and how does it exhibit this particular sub-style?

• Who was responsible for constructing this building and why was it built?
  o Was this built by the Church, the Ruler, or by the Town?
  o If by the town was it built by the people collectively or by an individual or small group?
  o How was it funded and how does that play into the history of the building?
  o How did who was responsible for the building affect the building’s use and impact?

• The art that is in this building (both in the interior and on the exterior).
  o Who were the artists and what were they trying to convey with their art?
  o How does the art tie in with the uses of the building and the way the building has fit into the larger community (see below)?
  o Is the art simply in the building, or is the art part and parcel of the building itself and does that matter in this case?

• How this building has been used through time
  o Has it been a place of worship and solace for the populace? or
  o Has it been a statement of political or economic power, the base from which a particular group (the Church, the Government, or some other powerful entity) has held sway?
  o Has its principal use been usurped by others at any time?

• How does being in the building affect you?
  o Do you “get it” – does this building feel like its history indicates it should?
• How does this building compare to others we visit in its placement and physical relationship to the surrounding area?
  o Is there anything unusual or noticeable about this building that is different from the others?
  o Is it much like another we have seen?
  o How are the differences and/or similarities manifest?
• What is your general impression of this building once you know something about it and its place in history – how does physically being there inform or alter your impression?

Assignment two
You are to compose an introspective essay reflecting on your experience before, during, and after winter term itself. This paper is more nearly for your future use and is scored as competed satisfactorily or not. When you turn this in, do not expect to get it back as I use these to try and improve the courses I teach over the years.