This course offers a panoramic introduction to the greatest artists and masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance from its beginnings in Florence through its triumph in Rome and Venice. After setting the stage with a brief overview of the art of the Late Gothic period in Italy, lectures will trace the nature of the revolutionary changes that transformed painting and sculpture in the 15th century and 16th centuries. One major purpose of the course will be to clarify the special characteristics of Renaissance art that continue to have their place with art and artists even today.