

FRANCESCA GUERRI

Associate Professor of History

University of St. Thomas

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EDUCATION

Education

Ph.D. in History, University of Houston, Fall 2020

- **Dissertation:** *The Friendship Network of Matilda of Tuscany: Reconstructing Matilda's Motivation and Ideology through the Lens of her Individual Relationships*
 - Awarded *Distinction*
- **Major:** Medieval and Renaissance History | **Minor:** Art History
- **Fields:** Medieval History, Roman History, History of Early Modern England, Art History
- **Cumulative GPA:** 4.0

M.A. in Medieval History, University of Florence, Italy, April 1999

- **Thesis:** *Life and Business of Niccolò del Buono Busini, a 13th-Century Merchant, Seen through His Manuscripts "Ricordanze Private"*
 - Examined manuscripts written in Florence between 1393 and 1413 by Niccolò Busini, analyzing his social role and the broader significance of merchants in Florentine society during its period of greatest splendor.
 - Research utilized primary sources from the National Archive, providing insight into civic record-keeping practices and the societal influence of merchant families.

B.A. in Italian Literature, University of Florence, Italy, April 1999

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses taught at the University of St. Thomas (Houston):

- Fall 2021
 - ARTHS 3341-A (2547) Late Medieval Art (Lecture)
 - HIST 1335-B (1345) World Community I (Lecture)

- • HIST 3304-A (1353) Renaissance and Reformation (Lecture)
- • MLART 5341-A (2548) Late Medieval Art (Lecture)
- • HIST 2345 Historical Consciousness (Co-created pilot for new core curriculum)
- Spring 2022
 - • ARTHS 3391-A / MLART 5391-A (2107/1819) Early Renaissance Art (Lecture)
 - • HIST 1335-A (1622) World Community I (Lecture)
 - • **HIST 3318-A / MLHIS 5318-A (2063/2262) Medieval Women (New Course Created)**
 - • HIST 4094-A (2295) Capstone Thesis Prep Course II (Seminar)
- Fall 2022
 - • **ARTHS 3361-A / MLART 5361-A (1274) Art of Greece and Rome (New Course Created)**
 - • HIST 1335-A (1244) World Community I (Lecture)
 - • **HIST 3301-A / MLHIS 5301-A (2278) Greek and Roman History (New Course Created)**
- Spring 2023
 - • ARTHS 4345-A / MLART 6345-A (2051/1788) Iconography of Christian Art (Lecture)
 - • HIST 1335-A (1735) World Community I (Lecture)
 - • HIST 3304-A (1741) Renaissance and Reformation (Lecture)
 - • HISTC 1301-C (1243) History of Western Culture Ideas (Lecture)
 - • MLHIS 5304-A (1802) Europe: The Early Modern Age (Lecture)
- Fall 2023
 - • ARTHS 3341-A / MLART 5341-A (2473/2474) Late Medieval Art (Lecture)
 - • **HIST 3315-A / MLHIS 5315-A (2394/2393) The Crusades (New Course Created)**
 - • HISTC 1301-C (1761) History of Western Culture Ideas (Lecture)
 - • **UNIV 1111-M (2289) Heroic Women in Medicine (Freshman Symposium, New Course Co-created with Prof. Kristian Leyden)**
- Spring 2024
 - • ARTHS 4393-A / HIST 4393-A / MLART 6393-A / MLCOM 6393-A / MLHIS 6393-A (2010–2121) Special Topics – The Eye of the Beholder (New Course, Co-taught with Adam Pugen)
 - • **HIST 3305-A / MLHIS 5305-A (2033/1703) Renaissance Women (New Course Created)**

- • HISTC 1301-C (1174) History of Western Culture Ideas (Lecture)
- Fall 2024
 - • ARTHS 3361-A / MLART 5361-A / MLHIS 5361-A Art of Greece and Rome (Lecture)
 - • HIST 1335-A (1015) World Community I (Lecture)
 - • HIST 3301-A (1019) Greek and Roman History (Lecture)
 - • HISTC 1301-C (1193) History of Western Culture Ideas (Lecture)
 - • UNIV 1111-F (2486) Freshman Symposium (Seminar)
- Spring 2025
 - • **Study Abroad Program (New Academic Initiative)**
 - • ARTHI 4393-A / MLART 6393-ITA / MLHIS 6393-ITA Art History Special Topic (Florence, Rome, Assisi, Siena)
 - • HISTC 1301-C (1230) History of Western Culture Ideas (Lecture)
- Fall 2025
 - • **ARTHI 3330-A / MLARTHI 5330-A (5310/5523) Renaissance and Baroque Art (New Course Created)**
 - • **UNIV 1111-W (2823) Hollywood and History (New Freshman Symposium Created)**
 - • HISTC 1301-C (1044) History of Western Culture Ideas (Lecture)
 - • HIST 3318-B / MLHIS 5318-A / MLHIS 5318-B Medieval Women (Lecture)
- Spring 2026
 - • **HIST 4318-A / MLHIS 6318-A / MLHIS 6318-B (5489–5492) The Medici: Masters of the Renaissance (New Course Created)**

NEW COURSES CREATED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

- **HIST 3305-A / MLHIS 5305-A (2033/1703) – Renaissance Women**
Explores the lives, roles, and contributions of women in Renaissance Europe, emphasizing their influence on politics, culture, and the arts through a Women's Studies lens.
- **HIST 3318 / MLHIS 5318 – Medieval Women (Spring 2022)**
Examines women's social, religious, and political roles in medieval society, highlighting their historical significance and agency.

- **HIST 3301 / MLHIS 5301 – Greek and Roman History (Fall 2024)**
Provides a foundation in the political, cultural, and intellectual developments of ancient Greece and Rome.
- **ARTHS 3361 / MLART 5361 – Art of Greece and Rome (Fall 2024)**
Focuses on the visual culture, architecture, and artistic achievements of ancient Mediterranean civilizations.
- **HIST 3315 / MLHIS 5315 – The Crusades (Fall 2023)**
Analyzes the religious, political, and cultural dimensions of the Crusades and their impact on Europe and the Near East.
- **ARTHS 4393 – The Eye of the Beholder: Art, Society, and Communication (Co-taught with Adam Pugen, Spring 2024)**
Explores the interaction between art, society, and communication across historical periods, emphasizing cultural literacy and critical analysis.
- **HIST 4318 / MLHIS 6318 – The Medici: Masters of the Renaissance (Fall 2025)**
Studies the Medici family's political, economic, and cultural influence on Renaissance Florence and European history.
- **UNIV 1111 – Hollywood and History (Freshman Symposium, Fall 2025)**
Investigates the relationship between historical events and their representation in Hollywood films, fostering critical thinking about media and historical understanding.
- **UNIV 1111 – Heroic Women in Medicine (Co-created with Prof. Kristian Leyden, Fall 2023)**
Highlights pioneering women in medicine, emphasizing their contributions, challenges, and societal impact.
- **HIST 4317 / MLHIS 6317: St. Francis of Assisi — The Light of the Middle Ages**
Marking the 800th anniversary of his death, this course recovers the historical Francis from the earliest sources, exploring what his radical life of poverty and penance meant in the thirteenth century — and what it still teaches us about true reform and freedom.

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM – Italy 2025

- **Study Abroad Program (New Academic Initiative)**
- **ARTHI 4393-A / MLART 6393-ITA / MLHIS 6393-ITA – Art History Special Topic (Florence, Rome, Assisi, Siena)**

Developed, organized, and led the University of St. Thomas Study Abroad Program to Italy (May 16–June 6, 2025). This three-week academic and cultural experience combined classroom instruction with immersive learning in four major Italian cities—Florence, Rome, Siena, and Assisi.

- Designed the complete **itinerary** and **academic curriculum** for *Italy: Art, History, and Faith*.
- Personally selected and coordinated **local tour guides, museum visits, and excursions**.
- Identified and negotiated with **contact providers, hotels, and residences**, ensuring a high-quality and safe student experience.
- Led a **compressed preparatory track** (March–May 2025) to introduce students to Italian art, culture, and history prior to travel.
- Secured **student scholarships** through the **Albritton Art Institute**.
- Promoted **intercultural understanding, Catholic identity, and experiential learning** through direct engagement with sacred art and architecture.

Itinerary Highlights:

- Florence: Santa Maria del Fiore, Uffizi Gallery, San Miniato al Monte, and Medici Chapels
- Rome: St. Peter’s Basilica, Vatican Museums, Roman Forum, and the Colosseum
- Assisi: Basilica of St. Francis and Hermitage of the Carceri
- Siena: Cathedral, Palazzo Pubblico, and the historical Contrade districts
- Full Itinerary:
<https://www.canva.com/design/DAGgTPWIs48/6zEC0uMnbsQEI3cLswxh1A/edit>
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DEPARTMENTAL AND UNIVERSITY-LEVEL MISSION & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Mission and Vision

- Emphasizes history, art, and the humanities as essential to understanding the human experience.
- Promotes collaborative learning and community building beyond the classroom.
- Encourages student engagement with interdisciplinary scholarship and experiential learning opportunities.

Departmental Leadership & Student Engagement

- **Faculty Advisor, National History Honor Society:** Supports high-achieving students in historical research, scholarship, and service initiatives.
- **Student Engagement Advisor, Department of History:** Guides student participation in departmental events, lectures, study sessions, and academic enrichment programs.

Department of History – Events & Initiatives

1. History-Focused Guest Lectures

- Nov 29, 2022 – *Dr. Francesca Behr, Cosmos, Imperium, & Women in Virgil's Aeneid*
- Sep 26, 2023 – *Dr. Maria Corsi, Vikings in Hollywood*
- Nov 6, 2024 – *Dr. Richard H. Armstrong, Roman vs. American Law*
- Mar 20, 2025 – *Christophe Besnier (Notre-Dame), Excavating Notre-Dame*

2. History-Focused Movie Nights

- Nov 3, 2021 – *Gladiator*
- Feb 28, 2022 – *Vision: The Life of Hildegard of Bingen*
- Oct 20, 2022 – *The Lives of Others*
- Feb 28, 2023 – *La Vita è Bella*
- Oct 22, 2023 – *Hannah Arendt*
- Mar 22, 2024 – *Loving Vincent*
- Feb 27, 2025 – *The Most Reluctant Convert*

3. History Society Gatherings

- Feb 28, 2022 – General Meeting
- May 20, 2022 – Medieval Feast at Dr. Guerri's Home
- Sep 22, 2022 – General Meeting
- Dec 2022; Dec 2023; December 2024 – Holiday Gatherings
- Every Fall 2022-2025– General Meeting

4. Weekly Study Nights (2021–2025)

- Thursdays, 5:30–8:30 PM, open to all students in history and related fields
- Includes peer and faculty support, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and refreshments

5. Lunches with Scholars

- Small-group student meetings with visiting scholars
- Provides mentorship, in-depth discussion, and personalized engagement with research

University-Wide Student Engagement

1. Interdisciplinary Guest Lectures Open to All Students

- Mar 31, 2023 – *Andrew Balio, Why Every Community Needs Music*
- Sep 20, 2023 – *“AI & Humanity” – Dr. Carlos Monroy & Dr. Adam Pugen*
- Apr 3, 2024 – *Lucio Rossi (CERN), Limits and Mistakes in Science*

2. AGORA – Interdisciplinary Student Community

- A university-wide group fostering intellectual exchange across disciplines.
- Provides a forum for discussion of culture, art, and the humanities.
- Hosts general meetings, social gatherings, and academic events that promote cross-campus collaboration.

3. UST Italian Cultural Society (Founded 2025, Advisor: Dr. Guerri)

- Celebrates Italian contributions to art, literature, history, cuisine, and film.
- Organizes mission-oriented and educational events, including:
 - Apr 2, 2025 – First General Meeting, Anderson 209
 - May 1, 2025 – Movie Night: *Nuovo Cinema Paradiso* (co-hosted with Italian Consulate)
- Promotes leadership, inclusivity, and cultural literacy among students from all majors.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

July 2025 – July 2026

Dean, Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences & Global Studies

- Provide strategic leadership and oversight for academic programs, faculty, and student initiatives within the division.

Foster interdisciplinary collaboration and mission-driven engagement across the division:

- **Academic Leadership & Faculty Oversight:**
 - Review and maintain course evaluations; optionally, conduct peer teaching evaluations.
 - Oversee faculty workload, contract obligations, outside employment forms, and adjunct hiring.
 - Manage tenure and promotion processes, including notification letters, recommendations, mentoring, sabbatical requests, and emeritus appointments.
 - Review, evaluate, and provide solutions for various academic programs in our division
- **Curriculum & Scheduling Management:**
 - Collect, validate, and maintain course schedules; make adjustments for underenrollment or conflicts.
 - Approve curriculum committee requests, syllabi, and endowed lectures; ensure smooth coordination across programs.
 - Maintain historical course offering information and access analytics for informed decision-making.
- **Budgeting & Financial Oversight:**

- Propose and manage division budgets, capital requests, and responsible spending.
- Approve invoices, purchase requisitions, expense reports, credit card transactions, PAFs, and faculty raises.
- **Program & Student Engagement:**
 - Field student complaints and support program assessment initiatives.
 - Oversee adjunct onboarding and related IT and HR processes.
 - Track adjunct credentials and manage administrative documentation for compliance.
- **Operational Leadership & Coordination:**
 - Conduct routine meetings with faculty and administrative assistants.
 - Support chairs and faculty with scheduling, hiring, and administrative troubleshooting.
 - Ensure compliance with all university policies and accreditation requirements (SACSCOC, Watermark, etc.).

Fall 2026 – Planned

Founder and Coordinator, St. Francis 800th Anniversary Interdisciplinary Project

- Initiated a university-wide, interdisciplinary project to commemorate 800 years since the death of St. Francis of Assisi.
- Collaborating with faculty across multiple disciplines, including Core, Theology, Philosophy, History, Art History, English, International Studies, Psychology, Communication, and the Center for Faith and Culture.
- Developing curriculum integration, with selected courses dedicating modules or classes to St. Francis and Franciscan themes, such as art, literature, education, and humanistic studies.
- Planning experiential learning and community engagement through campus exhibitions, student-led guided tours, and collaboration with local museums.
- Organizing public events, including film screenings, lectures, and panel discussions highlighting the historical, spiritual, artistic, and global significance of St. Francis.
- Partnering with colleagues to design programming that fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, experiential teaching, and transferable skills for students.

Fall 2022 – 2025

Assistant Dean, Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences & Global Studies

- Assisted the Dean with division-wide administrative leadership, including faculty support, enrollment reporting, scheduling activities, advisings, and job requisitions.
- Contributed to the **revamping of the Communication Department**, supporting hiring processes, faculty mentorship, and strategic departmental initiatives.

- Oversaw division compliance and assessment processes, including **PT OL** and **Watermark SACSCOC evaluations**.
- Coordinated division-wide **honor societies** and student recognition programs, fostering academic excellence and engagement.
- Served as **Faculty Advisor** for the **National History Honor Society**.
- Re-established the **History Society RSO** at UST, serving as founding member and president, and promoting student leadership and community building.
- Acted as **Student Engagement Advisor** for the Department of History, overseeing student events, mentorship programs, and experiential learning initiatives.
- Served as **Faculty Leader** for Study Abroad programs in **Rome, Florence, Assisi, and Siena, Italy**, facilitating immersive cultural and academic experiences.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX

Assistant Professor of European History | August 2021 – Present

Adjunct Professor of World Community I (World Civilization to 1500) | January 2021 – May 2021

Aquinas High School, Houston, TX

Medieval History Teacher | September 2020 – May 2021

Lone Star College, Montgomery, TX

Italian Instructor | January 2010 – June 2012

- Taught *Italian Beginners I* and *Italian Beginners II* courses.

Tolomei Cultural Institute, Florence, Italy

Instructor of Italian Language, Literature, and Culture | September 2008 – January 2010

- Developed and taught semester-long Italian courses for American study-abroad students (Benedictine College, KS).
- Instructed international students from Siberia and Kazakhstan (Akademgorodok, University of Novosibirsk).
- Designed and taught advanced didactic courses on teaching Italian as a foreign language for Italian professors (COASIT, Australia).

Italian Cultural and Community Center, Houston, TX

Italian Instructor | January 2007 – June 2007

- Taught Italian language courses ranging from beginner to advanced levels for American students.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- *In Progress, 2027 – Matilda of Tuscany and the 'New Senate of Women': Leadership, Power, and Relationships in the Medieval World*, Brepols.
- Dissertation, 2020 – *The Friendship Network of Matilda of Tuscany. Reconstructing Matilda's Motivation and Ideology through the Lens of her Individual Relationships*.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- 2026 – *in press* - “Reconstructing Matilda’s Relationship with Countess Ida of Boulogne,” *MATILDICA* Journal, in press.
- 2021 – “Anselm of Canterbury and Matilda of Tuscany: The Journey of Friendship,” *MATILDICA* III (2020).
- 2018 – “Nihil Terrenum, Nihilque Carnale in Ea: Matilda of Tuscany and Anselm of Lucca during the Investiture Controversy,” *Storicamente* 13, 31 (2018).

Book Reviews

- 2024 – Review of Penelope Nash, *The Spirituality of Countess Matilda of Tuscany, Early Medieval Europe*.
- 2022 – Review of Judith Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom, Catholic Social Science Review*, 27:146–150.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- **2025** – *International Medieval Congress, Leeds* – “Mirror of a Prince: The Biography of Matilda of Tuscany”
- **2025** – *Medieval Academy of America, Harvard* – “Gregory VII and Matilda of Tuscany: The Role of Women in Church Reform”
- **2024** – *VI Convegno dell'Associazione Matildica Internazionale, Italy* – “Reconstructing Matilda’s Relationship with Countess Ida of Boulogne”

- **2024** – *Medieval Academy of America, Notre Dame* – “Matilda of Tuscany and Women as Catalysts of Spiritual Renewal”
- **2022** – *Center for Thomistic Studies, University of St. Thomas* – “The Friendship Network of Matilda of Tuscany”
- **2018** – *University of Houston* – “Anselm of Lucca and Anselm of Canterbury: Two Separate Worlds?”
- **2015** – *50th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo* – “Matilda of Tuscany and Anselm of Lucca”

PUBLIC LECTURES

- **2023** – Presentation of *Luigi Giussani, The Religious Sense*, University of St. Thomas, Houston.
- **2023** – Chair, *Italian Research Day in the World 2023: “Science Interlocks with Gender Issues: STEM Passion, Scientific Challenges, and Gendered Innovations,”* University of St. Thomas, April 17.
- **2022** – *The Divine Michelangelo*, Community of Communion and Liberation, Mill Creek Ranch Resort, Canton, Texas.
- **2018** – *St. Francis and the Sultan*, Dubai American Academy, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- **2016** – *Giotto and the Arena Chapel*, University of St. Thomas, Houston.
- **2013** – *Duccio di Buoninsegna and his Maestà*, University of St. Thomas, Houston.
- **2011** – *The Life of St. Francis of Assisi Seen Through the Cycle of Twenty-Eight Frescoes in the Upper Church of the Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi*, University of St. Thomas, Houston.
- **2010** – *Life and Art of Caravaggio*, University of St. Thomas, Houston.

MEMBERSHIPS

- **Member**, Matilda of Canossa and Tuscany International Association, January 2018 – Present
- Actively engaged in international scholarly collaboration on medieval history and studies of Countess Matilda of Tuscany.
- [Association Website](#)
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AWARDS AND HONORS

- **Teach Online Faculty TOAST Award**, April 2023 – Recognized for excellence in online teaching and innovative instructional practices.
- **Saint Thomas Aquinas Excellence in Teaching Award**, Nominated: 2021–2022, 2023–2024, 2024–2025 – Honored for exceptional teaching and commitment to student learning.
- **Joseph M. McFadden Excellence in Service Award**, Nominated: 2022–2023 – Recognized for distinguished service contributions to the University of St. Thomas community.

UST UNIVERSITY SERVICE

University Service

- **Elected Member, University Senate; Social Committee—2026/2027**
- **Member, Faculty Search Committee, Art History, University of St. Thomas — Fall 2024**
Participated in the national search for a full-time Art History faculty member, reviewing applications, assessing teaching and scholarly qualifications, and

evaluating candidates' alignment with the University's Catholic mission. Assisted in organizing candidate interviews and providing recommendations.

- **Member, Faculty Search Committee, Art History, University of St.**

Thomas — Fall 2025

Served on the committee charged with recruiting a full-time Art History faculty member, reviewing academic credentials, evaluating teaching and research excellence, and ensuring compliance with SACSCOC guidelines and the University's Catholic mission. Participated in selection of candidates for on-campus interviews.

- **Member, Faculty Search Committee, Core History, University of St.**

Thomas — Fall 2024

Reviewed applications for a core History faculty position, evaluated candidates' scholarship and teaching, and assessed mission alignment with the University's Catholic identity. Assisted in coordinating interviews and providing recommendations to the committee chair.