UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH, FALL 2022  
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES & LITERATURES  
HUMN\*3400/ITAL\*3400: Renaissance Lovers and Fools  
Dr. Mary DeCoste, mdecoste@uoguelph.ca \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

COURSE OUTLINE **(DRAFT - SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

Prerequisite: for HUMN\*3400: 5.0 credits; for ITAL\*3400: ITAL\*2090.

In recognition of these extraordinary times, the Fall 2022 offering of this course will focus on Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, written in the immediate aftermath of the 1348 plague that killed about half the population of Florence, Italy. We will read a significant part of the *Decameron*, focussing our attention on the ways in which the author and his narrators address the upheaval in families and in society more broadly caused by the plague, by erotic desire, and by a changing world.

**This course will be delivered on campus and in person. Attendance in class is expected.**

Course objectives:

Having successfully completed this course, you will be able to:  
- demonstrate an understanding of the central themes of Boccaccio’s *Decameron*  
- situate this work within the cultural context of medieval Italy  
- communicate what you have learned in discussion, in short written works, and in a midterm and final exam

Your responsibilities:  
- to read course assignments with care

- to participate in class discussion  
- to submit writing assignments when they are due  
- to adhere to the University’s regulations on academic integrity

My responsibilities:  
to mark and return written work in a timely manner  
to respond to students’ requests for assistance with coursework in a timely manner to assess all students fairly and equitably

Grades:  
Question sheets (7 sheets x 8 points each = 56 points), mid-term exam (20 points), final exam (24 points)

Texts:  
Boccaccio, Giovanni. The Decameron. Trans. Wayne Rebhorn. Norton & Company, 2013. (Please note that there are many English translations of The Decameron. This is the one that I consider to be the best and to offer the most engaging reading experience.)  
Herlihy, David. The Black Death and the Transformation of the West. Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1997.

The New York Times. Stories from Quarantine. New York, Scribner, 2022.