

Business for the Arts

TUE 10:00-12:30p

3 credits/45 Contact Hours: No Prerequisites

Office Hours: TUE 12:30p-1:30p

Instructor: Dr. Lorenzo Perillo

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Course Description

This study-abroad seminar builds practical skills for launching and sustaining careers in the performing arts, with an emphasis on dance and theatre enterprises operating within the Italian and broader European cultural economy. Students compare U.S. nonprofit models to Italian/EU cultural funding structures; develop market- and mission-aligned project concepts; write grant/sponsorship proposals; and design professional portfolios. Florence serves as a living classroom: performances, studio workshops, company shadowing, and site visits provide hands-on learning about programming, budgeting, production management, branding, and community engagement.

Student Learning Outcomes (integrated with Study Abroad Center Student Learning Outcomes)

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

SLO1. Demonstrate cultural awareness in global arts economies

Identify and reflect on their own cultural values and biases, and analyze how these influence their understanding of Italian, European, and global arts systems—such as funding, cultural policy, heritage preservation, festival economies, and nonprofit vs. commercial models.

SLO2. Apply arts management and entrepreneurial strategies in real-world contexts

Use core concepts of arts administration—budgeting, marketing, fundraising, grant writing, touring logistics, contracts, and audience development—to examine actual arts organizations, dance companies, festivals, museums, and studios in Florence and beyond.

SLO3. Analyze arts practices from multiple cultural and ethical perspectives

Compare and critically evaluate how artistic labor, intellectual property, cultural heritage, and creative economies operate across different political, religious, and social contexts. Demonstrate ability to consider disparate viewpoints (artists, producers, funders, communities, migrants, etc.) with equity and ethical sensitivity.

SLO4. Communicate and collaborate effectively across cultures in artistic settings

Work collaboratively with peers, artists, and arts professionals to produce proposals,

presentations, or case studies. Communicate professionally and respectfully with culturally diverse individuals and organizations in written formats (grants, budgets, sponsorship emails) and spoken/embodied forms (presentations, interviews, workshops).

4. Assignments & Evaluation

Grading components and brief descriptions:

Assignment	Percentage
Performance Critiques (2 total)	10%
Project 1: Arts Organization Case Study (Italy-based)	10%
Project 2: Grant Proposal or Sponsorship Letter	15%
Project 3: Artist/Company Shadowing & Reflection	15%
Budget & Touring Plan	10%
AI Creative/Strategic Tools Project	10%
Final Portfolio & Pitch (Website or PDF)	20%
Fieldwork/Performance Journals (weekly)	5%
Class Participation & Professional Conduct (attendance, etiquette, discussions)	5%
Total	100%

Grading Scale: A = 90–100; B = 80–89; C = 70–79; D = 60–69; F = <60.

Assignment Descriptions

Performance Critiques (Florence Dance, Opera, Festival Events)

Students will attend at least two live performances in Florence (dance, opera, theatre, or festival event) and submit a 500–700 word critique for each. Critiques should include artistic analysis (movement, staging, lighting, sound), but also a business perspective: funding sources, venue logistics, marketing choices, sponsorship visibility, cultural positioning, and audience demographics. Students should reference course readings or artists discussed in class. Respectful cultural critique, not casual opinion, is expected. No filming unless explicitly allowed. These critiques help students understand performance as both artistic expression and economic labor within Italian and global arts ecosystems.

Project 1: Arts Organization Case Study

Students will select a local Italian arts organization (e.g., Florence Dance Festival, Opera di Firenze, Uffizi cultural programming, independent studio, or nonprofit collective) and analyze its mission, funding model, leadership structure, audiences, and community role. Students must engage in direct observation, interview an artist or administrator when possible, and connect their findings to course readings on arts management and cultural policy. The final deliverable is a 3–4 page written analysis or multimedia presentation (video, podcast, or infographic). Emphasis should be placed on cultural context—how Italian history, religion, politics, or tourism influences artistic survival and innovation.

Project 2: Grant Proposal or Sponsorship Letter

Students will write a mock grant proposal or sponsorship request for an original artistic project, festival, residency, or touring production. This assignment includes crafting a mission statement, project description, budget, timeline, and justification for funding. Students may model their proposal after Italian or European Union arts funding systems (e.g., Ministry of Culture, EU Creative Europe, private patrons, or church-based arts support). The proposal should demonstrate financial clarity, artistic vision, and alignment with cultural values in Florence. Students will reflect on ethical questions regarding cultural appropriation, authenticity, and artistic accountability in international funding contexts.

Project 3: Artist/Company Shadowing Reflection (Studio, Theatre, or Festival)

Students will observe or “shadow” a local arts organization, dance company, studio, museum, festival team, or individual artist in Florence. This may include rehearsals, costume preparation, marketing meetings, administration, or backstage work. Students will take notes and submit a 2-page reflection analyzing artistic process alongside business strategies—budgeting, rehearsal schedules, patron relationships, union/contract issues, funding challenges, ticketing models, or tourism influences. Shadowing must be done with respect, confidentiality, and minimal interruption. Students are ambassadors of UH Mānoa and must follow all etiquette and safety protocols. Objective: experience how labor, creativity, and economics intersect in real time.

Budget & Touring Plan for a Performance Project

Students will develop a professional budget and touring plan for a real or hypothetical dance or theater company traveling through Italy or Europe. The plan must include travel costs, rehearsal space, artist fees, lodging, venue rental, marketing, and ticket revenue projections. Students must research realistic Italian costs, exchange rates, and logistical considerations such as train travel, visas, and unions. Budgets will be accompanied by a 1–2 page rationale explaining financial decisions, cultural partnerships, and anticipated challenges. The goal is to understand how artists sustain work financially across borders while balancing creativity with economic survival.

Performance or Site Visit Business Reflection Journal

For each major performance, museum, or arts site visit, students will submit a 250–300 word journal analyzing not just the artistic elements, but also the *business* behind the art. Students should consider: How is this event funded? Who is the target audience? What role does tourism, government, religious institutions, or private patronage play? What marketing strategies are visible (programs, branding, sponsorships)? How does space, architecture, or city planning support or challenge artistic production? Reflections should blend observation, economics, and ethics while acknowledging cultural etiquette and local values in Florence.

AI Creative / Strategic Tools Project

Students will prototype a real-world arts business asset using AI responsibly. Options: (a) grant or sponsorship draft (narrative + budget notes), (b) marketing kit (taglines, copy, schedule), (c) tour planning brief (routing, costs, venues), or (d) audience insights memo (personas, outreach ideas). Submit: (1) the artifact (2–4 pages or equivalent), (2) a 2-page **Ethics & Method** reflection addressing authorship, cultural sensitivity, accuracy, and labor; and (3) an **Appendix of prompts/inputs** used. Students must fact-check data, cite sources, and clearly mark AI-generated text. Graded on usefulness, feasibility, cultural/ethical rigor, clarity, and documentation. (Scheduled in **Week 12.**) **Academic integrity note:** AI may support drafting/analysis, but you are responsible for accuracy, originality, attribution, and culturally respectful use.

Rubric

- Practical utility & feasibility (addresses a real need): 30%
- Ethics & cultural care (reflection, disclosures, sensitivity): 25%
- Clarity & professionalism (structure, tone, formatting): 20%
- Research & verification (facts, citations, budgets): 15%
- Prompt/inputs appendix (transparency): 10%

Final Portfolio & Pitch: Professional Website or PDF

Students will create a professional arts portfolio that showcases their work as a future artist, producer, arts administrator, or cultural entrepreneur. The portfolio may be a personal website or a curated PDF and must include: artist/mission statement, CV or résumé, project photos/videos (if available), sample grant or proposal excerpts, and a pitch for a future arts project, company, festival, or residency—ideally inspired by experiences in Florence. Students should consider European funding (EU Creative Europe,

Comune di Firenze), collaboration with Italian artists, or global touring contexts. The final in-class presentation simulates a pitch to funders or presenters.

5. Course Readings & Resources

Most items are accessible digitally via institutional library access, ProQuest/JSTOR/Project MUSE, or Florence libraries (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze; University of Florence).

Required Core Texts:

Luttrull, E. G. (2013). *Arts & numbers: a financial guide for artists, writers, performers, and other members of the creative class*. Agate Publishing.

Rosenberg, Gigi. *The Artist's Guide to Grant Writing: How to Find Funds and Write Foolproof Proposals for the Visual, Literary, and Performance Artist*. Watson-Guptill, 2010.

Liberatori, Ellen. *Guide to getting arts grants*. Simon and Schuster, 2010.

Stein, Tobie S., Jessica Rae Bathurst, and Renee Lasher. *Performing arts management: A handbook of professional practices*. Simon and Schuster, 2022.

Italy & EU-Specific Resources:

European Commission, Creative Europe: Funding Guide for Artists & Cultural Projects (guidelines, calls, templates).

<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/funding/cultureu-funding-guide>

Pier Luigi Sacco, Culture 3.0: A New Perspective for Cultural Policy;

<https://www.interarts.net/descargas/interarts2577.pdf>

UNESCO & Fondazione Symbola, Creative Economy reports (Italy/Europe focus).

<https://www.unesco.org/en/countries/it>

Florence Dance Festival archives and case studies on festival production in Tuscany.

<https://www.florenceisyou.com/tag/florence-dance-festival/>

Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Opera di Firenze) archival/management materials (public programming, budgeting, coproductions).

<https://www.maggiofiorentino.com/en/archivio-storico-2/>

Selected articles:

European Cultural Foundation: How the EU Funds Performing Arts (Creative Europe, regional funds, residencies).

<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/culture-moves-europe>

<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/cultural-and-creative-sectors/performing-arts/eu-policies-and-the-performing-arts-sector>

Seguiti, Maria Laura. *Reinventing budgeting: A comparison between the United States and Italy*. American University, 1996.

Van Assche, Annelies, and Dancing Precarity. "Labor and Aesthetics in European Contemporary Dance." (2020).

Documentary: Giorgio Armani – Timeless Thoughts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpW94aAvM40>

NPR/Planet Money series adapted as a cost pipeline exercise (translate to production budgets, touring logistics, costuming).

<https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2013/12/01/246744370/planet-money-makes-a-t-shirt>

McGregor, Wayne - 'AI and Choreography in Contemporary Production'

<https://waynemcgregor.com/productions/living-archive>

European Commission – "Study on Opportunities and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Technologies for the Cultural and Creative Sectors" [https://digital-](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/study-opportunities-and-challenges-artificial-intelligence-ai-technologies-cultural-and-creative#:~:text=The%20study%20explores%20existing%20and,experts%20from%20the%20te)

[strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/study-opportunities-and-challenges-artificial-intelligence-ai-](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/study-opportunities-and-challenges-artificial-intelligence-ai-technologies-cultural-and-creative#:~:text=The%20study%20explores%20existing%20and,experts%20from%20the%20te)

[technologies-cultural-and-](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/study-opportunities-and-challenges-artificial-intelligence-ai-technologies-cultural-and-creative#:~:text=The%20study%20explores%20existing%20and,experts%20from%20the%20te)

[creative#:~:text=The%20study%20explores%20existing%20and,experts%20from%20the%20te](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/study-opportunities-and-challenges-artificial-intelligence-ai-technologies-cultural-and-creative#:~:text=The%20study%20explores%20existing%20and,experts%20from%20the%20te)

[n%20sectors.](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/study-opportunities-and-challenges-artificial-intelligence-ai-technologies-cultural-and-creative#:~:text=The%20study%20explores%20existing%20and,experts%20from%20the%20te)

Forsythe, William – Synchronous Objects Project

<https://synchronousobjects.osu.edu/>

ChatGPT & Arts Funding Proposal Writing Exercise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9p32cuHbkHc>

6. Weekly Schedule (14 Weeks)

Note: Site visits are contingent on venue availability; substitutions of equal value may occur. Readings are to be completed before class.

Week 1	<p>Orientation—Why Business for the Arts in Florence? Experiential Component: Walking tour of cultural districts (Oltrarno/Santo Spirito) and local theatres. Readings/Tasks: Luttrull Ch.1; Rosenberg Intro; short piece on Florence cultural economy; set up reflection log.</p>
Week 2	<p>Cultural Policy & Economies—Italy, EU, U.S. Compared Experiential Component: Guest lecture: Italian cultural policy scholar (LdM/UniFi). Readings/Tasks: Sacco, Culture 3.0 (selections); Journal of Cultural Economics article.</p>
Week 3	<p>Nonprofit, Commercial, Hybrid Models Experiential Component: Site visit: Fabbrica Europa (programming/partnerships). Readings/Tasks: Stein & Bathurst Ch.1–2; case reading on hybrid governance.</p>
Week 4	<p>Organization Profile Methods (Project 1 Assigned) Experiential Component: Studio/company visit: DanceHub Firenze or Opus Ballet. Readings/Tasks: Sample profiles; budgeting primer; create interview guide for orgs.</p>
Week 5	<p>EU Funding Landscape—Creative Europe & Foundations Experiential Component: Workshop: Reading calls, eligibility, templates; budget lines & co-funding. Readings/Tasks: Creative Europe guidelines; Liberatori Grant chapters; sample budgets.</p>
Week 6	<p>Patrons, Sponsors & Tourism Experiential Component: Backstage visit: Teatro della Pergola—management talk Readings/Tasks: UNESCO/Fondazione Symbola report (tourism/heritage); marketing case.</p>
Week 7	<p>Project 1 Presentations—Organization Profiles Experiential Component: In-class presentations + feedback clinic. Readings/Tasks: Peer review rubrics; submit written profile.</p>
Week 8	<p>Midterm Break / Optional Biennale Trip Experiential Component: Optional independent travel with reflective prompt. Readings/Tasks: No assigned reading; optional museum/venue notes.</p>
Week 9	<p>Branding, Audience Development & Digital Strategy Experiential Component: Workshop: Brand audit + social media plan (Italian audiences). Readings/Tasks: Luttrull goal-setting; sample brand kits; Italian GDPR/consent basics.</p>
Week 10	<p>Internships & Artist Survival—Labor & Wellbeing Experiential Component: Shadowing (5–10 hrs): rehearsal, production, or marketing ops. Readings/Tasks: Dance Research Journal article on labor/precarity; reflection due.</p>
Week 11	<p>Project 2 Assigned—EU/Italy Proposal Experiential Component: Visit: Opera di Firenze (production office)—coproduction models. Readings/Tasks: Rosenberg proposal chapters; EU evaluation criteria; draft LOI.</p>
Week 12	<p>Producing, Touring & AI in Arts Management Experiential: Attend Florence Dance Festival or explore AI tools in production planning. Readings/Tasks: McGregor, European Commission, Forsythe, AI & Arts Funding Proposal Writing Exercise</p>
Week 13	<p>Portfolio & Pitch Workshop Experiential Component: Mock pitches to invited practitioners (5 minutes + Q&A). Readings/Tasks: Website/reel exemplars; one-pager template; feedback integration.</p>
Week 14	<p>Final Presentations & Aperitivo Showcase Experiential Component: Public mini-showcase or pitch session; closing reflection.</p>

Experiential Component: Attend a Florence Dance Festival or comparable performance.

Readings/Tasks: Touring checklist; insurance & contracts basics; pricing exercise.

7. Attendance & Experiential Learning Policy (Study Abroad)

This is a field-intensive course. Attendance at seminars and scheduled site visits is required. Because site access is pre-arranged with partner institutions, punctuality is essential. More than two (2) absences from seminar or required visits may lower the final grade; missing a performance or scheduled visit requires a make-up assignment approved in advance. Students must follow venue rules (dress/etiquette), respect staff and artists, and refrain from recording when prohibited. Always carry a notebook; submit reflections within 48 hours of each visit.

8. General Policies (International Study Abroad Standards)

Professional Conduct & Cultural Etiquette: Maintain respectful behavior in all cultural spaces (museums, churches, theatres). Shoulders/knees covered where required; no food/drink in museums; follow staff instructions at all times.

Academic Integrity: Submit original work and cite sources. Collaboration is encouraged where specified; otherwise, assignments are individual. Plagiarism or falsification of records will result in assignment failure and may trigger program review.

Accessibility & Learning Needs: Students seeking accommodations should notify the program coordinator prior to the start of the term; reasonable adjustments will be made in alignment with study abroad policies and host-institution guidelines.

Health & Safety: Follow all local laws and program safety guidance. Keep emergency contacts on hand; inform the instructor of any medical concerns that may impact site participation. Travel with a buddy when possible; mind personal belongings.

Technology & Devices: Phones and laptops should be silenced during performances, workshops, and meetings unless explicitly permitted for note-taking. Recording is prohibited unless the host site grants permission.

Costs & Admission Fees: Some site visits may require modest admission or transit fees. When possible, student rates will be secured. Any additional costs will be communicated in advance.

Communication: Course announcements and document sharing will be done via the program's learning platform and email. Check both regularly.

Reflection Prompt: What business strategies or cultural values did you observe? Connect this to arts management or entrepreneurship.

Weekly Reflection Journal Template

Name: _____ Week: _____

1. Description of Experience:

2. Cultural/Movement Analysis:

3. Connection to Readings/Concepts:

4. Personal Reflection:

Reflection Journal Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (9-10)	Developing (5-8)
Description of Experience	Detailed, clear, insightful	Basic description, lacks detail
Cultural/Movement Analysis	Strong analytical connections	Minimal analysis
Connection to Readings	Clear integration of sources	Weak or no connection
Personal Reflection	Thoughtful, introspective	General or surface-level reflection

Performance Attendance Checklist

For each required performance, students must record:

- Name of Performance / Company
- Venue / Location
- Date & Time
- Ticket Cost (if applicable)
- Main Artistic Director / Choreographer
- Observations on lighting, staging, costumes
- Audience demographics & engagement
- Funding or sponsor logos visible (Business class)
- Cultural/embodyed themes present (Global Perspectives class)

Site Visit Checklist

During weekly site-based learning, students should note:

- Location Name
- Type of Site (museum, church, studio, festival, archive)
- Entry Fee or Access Requirements
- Movement / Rituals / Practices Observed
- Rules or Restrictions (photography, dress code, silence)
- Role of space in community or cultural identity
- Business perspective: How is space funded/managed?
- Reflection: What surprised you? What challenged assumptions?