Rome has been called the Eternal City, and also “the city of visible history.” While it is much associated in popular imagination with its ancient past, Rome is also a vital, changing, and challenging contemporary city. One of Europe’s centers of design and culture, Rome has recently seen projects by architects such as Renzo Piano (the Parco della Musica), Zaha Hadid (MAXXI), and Richard Meier (the Jubilee Church, the Ara Pacis Museum), among others.

This course explores the history of architecture, urbanism, and topography in this great capital city from the approximately the first century BCE to the present. We will examine core moments of ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and Early Modern Roman architectural and city development, as well as the modern and contemporary city. Rome’s many layers allow for the study of multiple periods and styles of architecture (and how those intersect) within a single urban fabric, and the effects of politics, economics, religion, culture and societal change upon architecture and vice versa. We will look at this history of Roman urbanism and architecture with the aid of a variety of evidentiary materials: individual core monuments, maps, photographs, prints, primary texts, and films such as Roman Holiday and La grande bellezza/The Great Beauty. We will emphasize critical histories of the city, analyzing why differing architectural monuments and ensembles were created and how they have affected the lives of Romans over time.

3hrs; sophomore standing required (ARCH 210 or equivalent recommended). Assessment, emphasizing critical thinking skills and written and oral communication ability, is by quizzes, slide and essay examinations, in-class group work and discussion participation, and writing/research assignment.