



## SYLLABUS

### **POLITICS IN ITALY: BETWEEN HISTORY AND SOCIETY**

**Instructor: Angela Torelli**

**Contact Hrs: 45**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**SIENA, ITALY**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

“Man is by nature a social animal” (Aristotle). Humanity has decided to give herself rules in order to govern human relationships and to take collective decisions. It does it through politics.

We will examine the political system of Italy and compare it to the American one. The course maintains a political approach but also develops some specific thematic issues (also through student presentations). This will provide students with a thorough knowledge of the factors which have shaped and influenced the construction of Italian identity and politics. This course will help students to understand the peculiarity of the Italian model.

This class aims at: 1) Presenting an overview of the origins of the Italian republic, including reading through its constitution. 2) Describing how its political system reflected the Cold War confrontation. 3) Explaining why and how it experienced dramatic changes at the beginning of the 1990's. 4) Observing and analyzing today's political arena and political actors.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the course is to analyze the Italian political system. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- display confident knowledge of Italian politics and society;
- analyze accurately the successes and failures of the Italian political system;
- improve oral communication skills;
- improve the ability to work in a team in class;
- conduct research into political questions;
- develop critical thinking.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY**

Acquisition of knowledge and understanding is promoted through a combination of lectures, in-class discussions and active involvement. Lectures may be complemented with documentaries and extracts from movies.

Students participate in group discussions on assigned readings, with further information and data provided by the instructor through lectures and electronic slides presentations. The

teacher will distribute handouts, newspaper articles, and other material in order to stimulate discussion on certain topics. Lectures do not simply explain the readings, but complement them and present different material. Taking notes during classes, as well as actively participating in the in-class discussions is highly recommended, as the topics raised there will constitute integral part of the exams. Student participation is encouraged, appreciated and rewarded.

## **METHOD OF EVALUATION**

Students will be graded according to their performance in an oral presentation, class participation, final paper, a midterm and a final exam.

**1. Class participation:** Participation is extremely important and the contribution given by students to the class discussions influences the participation grade.

The grade will be calculated to reflect your participation in class discussions, your capacity to introduce ideas and thoughts dealing with the texts, your ability to express your analysis in intellectual, constructive argumentation. When determining your class participation grade, traditional criteria such as material preparation, completed reading before class, and collaborative group work are also evaluated. But it is the active, meaningful and informed verbal and written contribution that you make that is most important to your overall participation grade. Whereas attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively towards the grade, laxity in these areas will have a negative effect on your grade.

**2. Final paper:** A brief research paper will deal with a specific topic concerning Italy.

Further information on the topics will be provided in class. The Final Paper should be 8 pages long, 2500 words, mandatorily typed, font size 12. Deadline to hand it in: **Week 9**. Please note: a short abstract (150 words) with preliminary bibliography is due **Week 7**.

Paper will be evaluated according to their completeness, clarity, consistency, and originality.

**3. Oral presentation:** Students will be expected to give a 15-20 minutes presentation. The aim of the presentation is to develop one of the topics of the course or to discuss a case-study.

The grade assesses the saliency of the chosen material, the organization, clarity and timeliness of the presentation, the thoroughness of the research and the ability to answer questions. The topic of the presentation can be developed in the final paper but students can choose a different topic.

## **4. Exams**

There is one **midterm** and one **final exam**. Both exams will be closed-book essay style. The final exam will be cumulative. The exams serve to test the students' factual knowledge and their ability to make use of it reasonably and critically.

A review guide will be distributed to students a week before the exam.

10% Class Participation

15% Final Paper

20% Oral presentation

25% Midterm exam

30% Final exam

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

*Please consider that the content of individual classes may change throughout the course according to the class's progress.*

#### Week 1:

Presentation of the course: why is it complex to study Italian politics?

Fascism and Mussolini's Italy.

Reading: Chap. 1, pp. 9-25.

#### Week 2:

Democracy and the first Republic 1948-1992.

Reading: Chap. 1, pp. 25-31 and Chap. 2, pp. 49-78.

#### Week 3:

The end of the Cold War, "Tangentopoli" and fundamental changes in the Italian political system.

Reading: Chap. 1, pp. 31-46.

#### Week 4:

Understanding Berlusconi's emergence and era.

Reading: Alexander Stille, "The Corrupt Reign of Emperor Silvio" in *The New York Review of Books*, March 11, 2010.

#### Week 5:

Policy-making and policy implementation: executives, legislature and bureaucrats.

Reading: Chap. 4, pp 108-142.

#### Week 6:

Review and midterm exam.

#### Week 7:

Political culture and behavior: different parties, same culture?

Reading: Chap 5, pp. 145-178 and Chap. 7, pp. 210-247.

### **ABSTRACT PAPER DUE**

#### Week 8:

Interests and interest mediation: voluntary associations and pressure groups.

Reading: Chap. 6, pp. 179- 209.

#### Week 9:

Economic policy and welfare. Italy between Europeanization and globalization.

Reading: Chap. 8, pp. 253- 282 and Chap. 9, pp. 283-317.

### **FINAL PAPER DUE**

#### Week 10:

On the quality of democracy. Is Italy a good democracy?

Putnam's Making Democracy Work.

Conclusion and review.

Reading: Joseph La Palombara, "Making Democracy Work (book review)" *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 108, Fall 1993 and Leonardo Morlino, 2003, "What is a 'good' democracy? Theory and the case of Italy, *Southern European Society and Politics*, Vol. 8, No. 3.

Week 11:  
Final exam

## **COURSE TEXTS**

### **Required readings**

James L. Newell, *The Politics of Italy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Further articles and readings will be provided by the teacher during the course, according to the specific topics of the lessons.

### **Bibliography**

Andrews G., 2005, *Not a Normal Country: Italy after Berlusconi*, Pluto Press.

Bull M. J. and J. L. Newell, 2005, *Italian Politics*, Polity Press.

Carter N., 2009, *Modern Italy in Historical Perspective*, Bloomsbury Academic.

Clark M., 2008, *Modern Italy: 1871 to the Present*, Longman.

Cotta M. and L. Verzichelli, 2007, *Political institutions in Italy*, Oxford University Press.

Gilbert M., *The Italian Revolution: The End of Politics, Italian Style?*

Ginsborg P., 2003, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics 1943-1988*, Palgrave Macmillan.

Ginsborg P., 2003, *Italy and its Discontents: Family, Civil Society, State, 1980-2001*, Penguin.

Hirst P.Q., 1994, *Associative Democracy: New Forms of Economic and Social Governance*, Polity Press.

Hirst P. Q., 1997, *From Statism to Pluralism: Democracy, Civil Society, and Global Politics*, UCL Press.

Koff Sondra Z. and S. P. Koff, 2000, *Italy From the First to the Second Republic*, Routledge.

Mammone A. and G. A. Veltri, eds., 2010, *Italy Today: the Sick Man of Europe*, Routledge.

Mignone M. B., 2008, *Italy Today: Facing the Challenges of a New Millennium*, Peter Lang.

Putnam R. D., 1993, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press.

Scoppola P., 1997, *La repubblica dei partiti: evoluzione e crisi di un sistema politico, 1945-1996*, Il Mulino.

Stille A., 2006, *The Sack of Rome: How a Beautiful Country with a Fabled History and a Storied Culture Was Taken Over by a Man Named Silvio Berlusconi*, Penguin Press.