

California State University
SYLLABUS – Spring 2017
Italian Politics & Society – SSC 401

Prof. LORENZO CICCHI

Class schedule: WEDNESDAY, 4:00 – 6:45 PM

Office hours: WEDNESDAY, 6:45 – 7:45 PM (by appointment). Also available for Skype calls on FRIDAY, 9:00 – 11 :00 AM (by appointment), Skype username: CICCHIORE

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CV available here: <http://www.eui.eu/Projects/EUDO-OPPR/Documents/2017/CV-Lorenzo-Cicchi-ENG-Feb2017.pdf>

Academia.edu profile: <https://eui.academia.edu/LorenzoCicchi>

Mid-term exam: Wednesday April 5th, 4.00 – 6.45 PM

Final exam: May 22nd – 25th, exact day and time to be announced

Make-up classes might be fixed for health or personal reasons of the lecturer

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course will provide students with the conceptual tools and the basic factual knowledge that are necessary for the understanding of the Italian political system. In particular, students will become acquainted with the major historical determinants of Italy's societal economic and institutional structure. These notions will constitute the frame of reference for the study of Italy's political actors and institutions; parliamentary system, elections, national and regional government, European Union membership, political parties, interest groups, social movements.

Class discussion will be encouraged on current events in order to give the students a more concrete understanding of the way the system operates. In particular, students will be asked to report on aspects of Italy's changing political system and socio-economic structure, such as: recently implemented or projected institutional reforms; party system changes (i.e. the transition from a bipolar to a tripolar political system); election results' political consequences; demographic trends; economic crisis and budgetary constraints.

REQUIREMENTS:

Completing ALL required readings and regular attendance will be expected of all students. Material covered in class will not always be covered in the readings and vice versa; students will be responsible for all material regardless of where presented. Readings listed as “recommended” are necessary for a full understanding of the course’s subject matter; knowledge of these readings, however, will not be assumed in evaluating and grading tests and exams.

Active participation in class discussions is strongly encouraged. Questions and comments

will always be welcome. Students will be asked to write reports on ALL movies indicated in the syllabus as “required”.

SUBMISSION OF REPORTS/PAPERS

For in-class activities, submission must be done by handing in a **HARD PRINTED** or **HAND WRITTEN** version of the report to the instructor before the end of class. At-home activities have to be sent by **EMAIL** to the lecturer. Late submissions by up to two days will result in a two point (i.e., from 89 to 87) deduction from the final total score irrespective of the quality of the report.

Reports submitted three or more days late or not submitted will result in a 5 point (i.e., from 89 to 84) deduction from the total score, irrespective of the quality of the report.

GRADING

Grades will be based on six performances. Three will be done within the **midterm exam** and they weigh as follows: **home essay**: 14 points; **in-class essay**: 12 points; **m/c questions**: 9 points. Other three will be done within the **final exam** and they weigh as follows: **home essay**: 28 points; **in-class essay**: 24 points; **m/c questions**: 13 points.

The mid-term exam will be based on knowledge taught in lessons held before the mid-term; the final exam will be based on the **WHOLE** program taught in class.

Final scores will be translated into grades on the basis of a consideration of the class’ overall performance. In any event, however, a full A grade will be awarded exclusively to students whose total scores are 90 and above. Likewise, a total final score of at least 60 points will be necessary to obtain a passing grade. Outstanding class participation and reports could result in a 5-point bonus. Poor class participation/reports **AND** lack of punctuality could each result in a 5-point penalization.

ATTENDANCE AND OTHER CLASS POLICIES

A) Attendance to all CSU courses is mandatory. One unexcused absence is allowed during the semester but more than one unexcused absence will lower your grade as follows (excused absences will be accepted only for serious medical reasons or emergencies): **TWO** unexcused absences, lowers by 1.5 letter grades (i.e., B to C-); **THREE** unexcused absences, lowers by 3 letter grades (i.e., A to D). More than **THREE unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.**

B) In order not to disrupt the class, **punctuality** is required. Students are expected to be in class at the beginning of the class hour; any delay exceeding ten minutes will be considered an absence.

C) Dates of mid-term and final exams **cannot** be changed for individual travel plans or personal needs. Missing the midterm or the final exam could result in the failure of the course.

D) During the academic year photocopies and other material may be distributed in class by the instructors. Students who were not in class are responsible for getting the material from their classmates and making their own photocopies.

E) Use of laptop computers or other electronic devices such as tablets in class is not permitted, unless previously approved by the professor.

F) Eating is **NOT** allowed in class. Water drinking is permitted (and recommended!)

G) Mobile phones must be **turned off** or placed on **silent mode** before the class starts, and in any case cannot be checked during the class.

POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL COSTS

Theater admissions for one or two movies (approximately €10 each)

Transportation and admission costs for a possible site visit in Florence or nearby (to be determined, in any case no more than €25)

LOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

1. INTRODUCTION

Italy's political system: overview.

Class handouts (required)

Movie suggestion: “La Meglio Gioventù” (2003) by Marco Tullio Giordana (non-compulsory)

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SOCIAL CLEAVAGES

Unification of Italy. Failure of the Liberal State. Fascism. The Resistance. Development of cultural diversity and consolidation of social cleavages. The Constitution and its implementation.

Newell: Chronology, Introduction, and chapter 1 (required)

Movie: “Rocco and his Brothers” (1960) by Luchino Visconti (required)

3. INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

Italy's old and new electoral systems. The President of the Republic. Prime Minister and Cabinet. Parliament. Public administration. Regional and local government.

Newell: chapters 2-7 (required)

Movie suggestion: “Il Divo” (2008) by Paolo Sorrentino (non-compulsory)

4. ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Reconstruction, economic boom, and crises. Social classes and actors (unions, industrialists, media, Catholic Church, social movements). Old and new problems: corruption, unemployment, housing, immigration.

Newell, chapters 8-9 (required)

Movie: “La Mafia Uccide Solo D’Estate” (2013) by Pierfrancesco Diliberto (required)

Movie suggestion: “Gomorra” (2008) by Matteo Garrone (non-compulsory)

5. THE CHANGING ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM

Changes in electoral behavior. Old and new actors. Actor change vs. structural change. 2014 European Elections, 2016 referendum on Constitutional reform.

Newspapers’ articles on the 2013 Political and 2014 European elections, and on the 2016 Constitutional referendum given by the teacher

Movie suggestion: “Viva la libertà” by Roberto Andò (2013) (not required)

6. ITALY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

EU impact on institutions, parties, policies and culture.

Newell: chapters 10 (required)

Movie suggestion: “Quo Vado” (2016) by Gennaro Nunziante (non-compulsory)

7. CONCLUSION. THE FUTURE OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL STALEMATE AND CHANGE

Limits of reform. Institutional and political consequences. What next?

Movie suggestion: “La Grande Bellezza” (2013) by Paolo Sorrentino (non-compulsory)

Please be aware that some of the readings may be replaced with more recent ones that could become available in the course of the term.

CLASS CALENDAR

CLASS #	DAY	SUBJECT	READINGS, TEXTBOOK CHAPTER(S)
1	Wednesday, February 22 nd	Introduction (History)	Slides, Ch. 1.
2	Wednesday, March 1 st	Contemporary Italy (History)	Slides, Ch. 1
3	Wednesday, March 8 th	Social changes in Italy	Movie: “Rocco e I suoi fratelli”
4	Wednesday, March 15 th	Constitutional framework and multi-level democracy, supranational level	Slides, Ch. 2, 3, 4 (partly)
n/a	Wednesday, March 22 nd	NO CLASS today – make-up class on Thursday, March 30th	n/a
5	Wednesday, March 29 th	Social groups, organized crime	Slides, Ch. 4.
6	Thursday, March 30th	Make-up class – Political culture, interests’ mediation, pressure groups	Slides, Ch. 5, 6.
7	Wednesday, April 5 th	MIDTERM EXAM	All material covered so far
n/a	April 7 th - 17 th	SPRING BREAK	n/a
8	Wednesday, April 19 th	Feedback on midterm, electoral systems (1/2)	Slides, Ch. 7 (partly)
9	Wednesday, April 26 th	NO CLASS – CSU 50th anniversary celebration*	To be announced
10	Wednesday, May 3 rd	Electoral systems (2/2), welfare state, personal rights, foreign affairs	Slides, Ch. 7 (partly), 9, 10.
11	Wednesday, May 10 th	Organized crime	Movie: “La mafia uccide solo d’estate”
12	Wednesday, May 17 th	European Union, Information System, Sports	Slides, newspaper articles
13	May 22 nd - 25 th , exact day and time to be announced	FINAL EXAM	All material of the course

***NO CLASS on April 26th due to CSU 50th Anniversary Celebration.** Students are required to attend events and activities that are part of this celebration IN PLACE OF this class. Home work will be assigned regarding the various events that students will be attending. Details will be announced in class.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TEXTBOOK

Newell, J. (2010) *The Politics of Italy. Governance in a normal country*, Cambridge University Press.

ADDITIONAL SHORT READINGS, on a maximum of one per class, may be assigned throughout the course by the teacher. When that happens, the teacher will provide them to students at the beginning of the class and discussed during it, or at end of the class, to be read during the week and discussed in the following class.