

# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

## CSU Virtual International Program

### SSC 401 Italian Politics & Society

#### SYLLABUS – Spring Semester VIP 2020

Lecturer: Prof. LORENZO CICCHI

**Class schedule (from March 16<sup>th</sup>)<sup>1</sup>: THURSDAY, 11.15AM – 12.15 PM (Pacific Daylight Time, GMT -7)**

Office hours: upon appointment and, if possible, FRIDAY, 10.15 – 11.15 AM (Pacific Daylight Time, GMT -7)

E-mail: [lorenzo.cicchi@eui.eu](mailto:lorenzo.cicchi@eui.eu)

Bio: <http://europeangovernanceandpolitics.eui.eu/team/cicchi-lorenzo/>

**Credits – 3 CSU semester units.**

**Location of Course – Zoom virtual room, **Personal Meeting ID 511-361-8615****

**Mid-term exam:** Wednesday April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020, 11.15AM – 12.15 PM

**Final exam:** May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 11-15AM – 12.15PM

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course focuses on Italy as a political system and the key features of Italian society, from the middle ages up to today. Focusing in particular on the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the post-WWII period, the course covers the main historical, economic and societal events that constitute the basis of a full understanding of what Italy is today. A particular attention is devoted to the institutional, cultural and political differences between Italy and the United States.

Class discussion on current events, in order to give the students a more concrete understanding of the way the system operates, is a central element of the course. In particular, students will be asked to discuss, under the guidance of the lecturer, the key topics covered during the course encouraging their critical questioning and analysis.

**CSU GE category – D3 or D5**

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**TEXTBOOK** (required): James L. Newell (2010), *The Politics of Italy. Governance in a normal country*, Cambridge University Press.

**JOURNAL ARTICLE** (required): Calossi, E. and Cicchi, L. (2018) “The Italian party system’s three functional arenas after the 2018 election: the tsunami after the earthquake”, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, Volume 23, Issue 4, pp. 437-459.

**ADDITIONAL SHORT READINGS**, on a maximum of one per class, may be assigned throughout the course by the lecturer. When that happens, the lecturer will make them available on Canvas.

---

<sup>1</sup> The first two classes took place at the Florence CSU IP Campus in February 2020. All the remaining classes and exams will take place via Zoom.

## GENERAL COURSE 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 textbook and vice versa; the teacher will upload, after every class, the material covered in class (slides and assigned readings) on Canvas. Movies listed in the logical description of the course help to fully understand of the course's subject matter; knowledge of them, however, will not be assumed in evaluating and grading tests and exams.

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will learn 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, political parties, interest groups, social movements.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the semester students will have familiarized with Italy as a political system and in general with Italian society, and will be able to identify the main elements of differences from the American context. They will be able to better understand the political news and the key 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.

## SUBMISSION OF REPORTS/PAPERS

All submission will be managed through Canvas. Late submissions by up to two days will result in a two-points (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-points (i.e., from 89 to 84) deduction from the total score, irrespective of the quality of the report.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

Any form of plagiarism or cheating may result in a failing final grade in the course and might be reported to IP and your campus. You are better off spending your time studying for the class. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please refer to the student handbook and catalog of your campus and also ask me and/ or the Resident Director for more information.

## GRADING

Grades will be based on four performances, that assign a maximum of 100 points in total.

The first two take place in the **midterm exam** and weigh as follows: **virtual in-class essay**, max 26 points; **multiple choice questions test**, max 14 points (40 points in total). Both these tests will take place via Zoom/Canvas.

The final two take place in the **final exam** and weigh as follows: **home essay**, max 38 points; **multiple choice questions test**, max 22 points (60 points in total). The multiple choice questions test will take place via Zoom/Canvas. The home essay will have to be uploaded on Canvas by the day of the final exam.

In terms of mid-term and final exams, the final score percentage is the following:

- mid-term exam: 40%

- final exam: 60%

In terms of types of performance, the final score percentage is the following:

- 1x home essays: 38% (38 points in the final exam)
- 2x multiple choice: 36% (14 points in the mid-term exam, 22 points in the final exam)
- 1x in-class essay: 26% (26 points in the mid-term exam)

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 grades will be assigned on the basis of a consideration of both the student's overall performance in class and his/her final score (max40/midterm + max60/final) using the following translation scheme:

- 100-94	→	A
- 93-90	→	A-
- 89-87	→	B+
- 86-83	→	B
- 82-80	→	B-
- 79-77	→	C+
- 76-73	→	C
- 72-69	→	C-
- 68-67	→	D+
- 66-63	→	D
- 62-60	→	D-
- 59 and below	→	F

In any event a full A grade will be assigned exclusively to students whose total scores are 90 and above. The grade A+ can be awarded to outstanding students. Likewise, a total final score of at least 60 points will be necessary to obtain a passing grade.

**VERY IMPORTANT: Failure to complete all work and exams assigned in the course could result in failure of the class.**

#### **CLASS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Activities unrelated to the course (including private conversations, emailing, text messaging, reading, web surfing, etc.) are not permitted during class time. Please turn off or put all electronic devices on silent mode prior to the beginning of the class.

#### **IMPORTANT: EXAMS**

You must attend all exams and quizzes as scheduled. Make-up exams are given only for valid reasons.

#### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Upon identifying yourself to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluations. For more information, contact your teacher if you need special accommodations.

#### **COPYRIGHT AND PRIVACY LAWS**

No portion of the texts, films, videos, and other material used in this course can be reproduced in any format including scanning, electronic downloading or sharing of files.

In addition, no portion of class lectures, discussions, and activities can be reproduced and used in any format, including electronic, without the written consent of the instructor and/or guest speakers.

#### **CHANGES- IMPORTANT**

Information contained in this syllabus, including the class calendar, other than that mandated by the University, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

For on-line classes, the teacher will track attendance through the Canvas portal.

#### **POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL COSTS**

None.

#### **LOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE**

##### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Italy's political system: overview.

Movie suggestion: "La Meglio Gioventù" (2003) by Marco Tullio Giordana

##### **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 suggestion: "Rocco and his Brothers" (1960) by Luchino Visconti, "The Working Class Goes top Heaven" (1971) by Elio Petri

##### **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: part of chapters 2-7 (required)

Movie suggestion: "Il Divo" (2008) by Paolo Sorrentino

##### **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, part of chapters 8-9 (required)

Movie suggestions: "La Mafia Uccide Solo D'Estate" (2013) by Pierfrancesco Diliberto, "Gomorra" (2008) by Matteo Garrone

##### **5. THE CHANGING ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM**

Changes in electoral behavior. Old and new actors. Actor change vs. structural change. 2016 referendum on Constitutional reform, 2018 general elections

Calossi, E. and Cicchi, L. (2018) "The Italian party system's three functional arenas after the 2018 election: the tsunami after the earthquake", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, Volume 23, Issue 4, pp. 437-459 (required, provided by the lecturer)

Movie suggestion: "Il Caimano" by Nanni Moretti (2013)

##### **6. ITALY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND IN THE WORLD**

EU impact on institutions, parties, policies and culture.

Newell: parts of chapters 10 (required)

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

## 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

### CHANGES - IMPORTANT

Information contained in this syllabus, including the class calendar, other than that mandated by the University, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

### CLASS CALENDAR

CLASS #	DAY	SUBJECT	READINGS, CHAPTER(S)	TEXTBOOK
1*	Tuesday, February 25 <sup>th</sup>	Course introduction - in Florence, Italy	Slides	
2*	Tuesday, March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Italy in a nutshell, comparative analysis Italy vs USA – in Florence, Italy	Slides	
	<b>March 5 - 12</b>	<b>Suspension of all classes in Florence, Italy</b>		
3	Thursday, March 19 <sup>th</sup>	Historical background, contemporary Italy	Slides, Ch. 1	
4	Thursday, March 26 <sup>th</sup>	Constitutional framework, multi-level democracy, supranational level	Slides, Ch. 2	
5	Thursday, April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Parties and party system, The Italian “First Republic”	Slides, C. 3 (partly)	
6	Thursday, April 9 <sup>th</sup>	Parties and party system, The Italian “Second Republic”	Slides, C. 3 (partly)	
7	Tuesday, April 16 <sup>th</sup>	Social and interest groups, organized crime, sub-cultures	Slides, Ch. 4, 5 (partly)	
8	Thursday, April 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	All material covered so far	
9	Thursday, April 30 <sup>th</sup>	Party system change, new cleavages & populism	Slides, article by Calossi & Cicchi	
10	Thursday, May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Electoral systems, Welfare state	Slides, Ch. 6, 7 (partly)	
11	Thursday, May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Personal rights, foreign affairs	Slides, Ch. 8, 9 (partly)	
12	Thursday, May 21 <sup>th</sup>	European Union, information and sport system	Slides, Ch. 10 (partly) newspaper articles	
13	Thursday, May 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	All material of the course	

\* The first two classes took place at CSU IP Campus in Florence. All the remaining class will take place via Zoom.