

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
CSU Virtual International Program
Spring Semester VIP 2020

Course #: SSC 490 Special Topics: The Sicilian Mafia

Instructor: Natalia Piombino

Schedule: Thursday, 10:00am-11:00am (California PDT Time)

Credits – 3 CSU semester units.

Location of Course – Starting with week 3, March 16, the course will be delivered on-line, through Canvas.

Office hours: Friday, 10:00am-11:30am (California PDT Time) by appointment

Course Description

The course investigates the Sicilian Mafia from its genesis to present days by taking a multidisciplinary approach that will allow us to delve into the political, social and economic factors that made it possible. The major features of the mafia will be examined by analyzing a series of case studies that will allow us to contextualize the development of a major criminal organization. The course will tease out the conditions that made possible the long survival of the mafia as well as the role of ordinary citizens and the anti-mafia movement.

CSU GE category – CONSULT YOUR HOME CAMPUS ADVISOR REGARDING THIS

Required Book: John Dickie, *Cosa Nostra*, St. Martin's Griffin, London (last edition).

The students are expected to get hold of the book from the first week of class.

Additional readings and web resources will be given during the semester.

General Course Requirements

You are responsible for the weekly readings, the information given to you in class, on handouts **and via email**. Part of your grade will be determined by regular attendance, participation in class discussions and active engagement in all activities of this course. ***Make sure to check your email on a regular basis for updates and additional information.***

Learning Objectives - The main objective of this course is to familiarize students with the development of the mafia as a system deeply rooted in the political, social, economic history of Sicily. Much emphasis will be placed on the relationship between the island with the Italian state as well as on the role of civil society.

Learning Outcomes - At the end of the semester students will be able to critically assess:

- a. the interplay of factors which made possible the genesis and the development of a criminal organization;
- b. the responsibilities of the elite in the lasting of a criminal organization;
- c. how a dictatorship (Fascism) dealt with crime;
- d. the revival of the mafia in a democratic context (post-war Italy);

- e. the changes the mafia underwent in the transition from a rural to an urban environment and then to a globalized arena;
- f. the role of ordinary citizens in the anti-mafia struggle.

Grades and Exams

Your grade will be determined by the following assignments:

(select and list the ones applicable to your course)

- 6 quizzes 60% (10% each)
- 1 PPT 20%
- Class participation 10 %

100-94	A
93-90	A-
89-88	B+
87-83	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

The + and - symbols will be used for grading (except for A+). Specific information about the paper, exams and other projects will be given to you during the semester. Late work will be penalized half a letter grade per late day.

You must complete all work assigned in the course to pass the class.

A Student performance has been outstanding and indicates an exceptional degree of academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements

B Student performance has been at a high level and indicates solid academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements

C Student performance has been adequate and indicates satisfactory academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements

D Student performance has been less than adequate and indicates deficiencies in meeting the learning outcomes and/or course requirements

F Student performance has been unacceptable and indicates a failure to meet the learning outcomes and/or course requirements

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.

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 for more information.

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.

Attendance

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

Missing the midterm or the final exam could result in failure of the course.

During the academic year photocopies and other material may be distributed by the instructors. Students will find posted on Canvas all the additional material.

Cellular phones must be **turned off** or placed on **silent mode** during class.

Important: Exams

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

Copyright and Privacy Laws

Texts, films, videos, and other material used in this course can be reproduced in any format including scanning, electronic downloading or sharing of files, only for class use.

In addition, class lectures, discussions, and activities can be reproduced and used in any format, including electronic, with the 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.

Class Calendar

Week 1 – Feb. 27 (Class held in Florence)

Introduction. The problem of the genesis of the mafia.

Main historical, economic and social features of the phenomenon.

Required readings: Dickie, Intro, 'Men of Honour' and chap. 1.

Optional reading: A.Blok, chap. V. 'Sicilian Society'.

Classes were suspended from March 5 through March 15 and transition to remote-teaching for this class started on March 19.

As we had to cancel our second class, the students will be asked to watch a movie on their own and fill out a questionnaire afterward.

Week 3 – March 19

The genesis of the mafia #2

Dickie, chap. 1.

Week 4– March 26

The Mafia during the Liberal period.

Required readings: Dickie, chaps. 2 and 3.

Week 5 – April 2

Fascism and the mafia.

Required readings: Dickie, chap.4.

Week 6 – April 9

Cosa Nostra: the Mafia settles down in the US.

Required readings: Dickie, chap. 5.

Week 7 – April 16

The end of WWII and the revival of the Mafia. The corleonesi.

Required readings, Dickie, chap. 6.

Week 8 – April 23

The transition from the rural to the urban Mafia.

Review.

Required readings: Dickie, chap.7.

Week 9 – April 30

The first Mafia war and its consequences.

Required readings: Dickie, chap.8.

Week 10 – May 7

The 1980s and the second Mafia war. 1983-1992, the virtuous minority, Falcone and Borsellino.

Required readings: Dickie, chaps.9 and 10.

Week 11 – May 14

A new season of political connections: the mafia and Berlusconi.

Required readings: Dickie, chap. 11.

Week 12 – May 21

The mafia between 1992 and 2003. The 'Ndrangheta.

Required readings: Dickie, chap.12;

Week 13 – Final Exams: May 26 - 29

??*The Camorra.*

R.Saviano, Gomorrah, pp. 282-301.

Class PPT.