



SYLLABUS

WINTER SESSION

POLITICS IN ITALY: BETWEEN HISTORY AND SOCIETY

Instructor: Mariasole Onofri

Contact Hrs: 45

Language of Instruction: English

SIENA, ITALY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

'Man is a social animal'. Humanity, resulting from the natural instinct to socialize, has decided to give herself rules and laws which regulate and control the relationships between men, thus providing a social order which governs the way power is organized: through politics. Politics is both the outcome of the society, determining and deciding the social dynamics, while also being the sum of its history and cultural influences. Therefore, a political system of a country is always something deeply complex, fruit of a typical social and historical development, varying from nation to nation. In this course, students will be introduced to Italian politics, from the Middle Ages and Renaissance through the World Wars up to current day, focusing on its peculiar characteristics and explaining some differences between Italian (and European) political system and the American one.

COURSE METHODOLOGY

The course will be developed mostly in class by:

- a) Explanations of the most important topics about Italian history, society and political system.
- b) Reading passages of essays and texts which deal extensively with the subjects treated during the lessons.
- c) Newspapers analysis.
- d) In class debates and discussion.
- e) Excursion at sites of interest in Siena.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Students are expected to be actively present and diligent: every single one of them would choose a subject to examine closely by writing a short essay on material assigned during the lessons as well as on an independently selected and researched topic, and reporting his/her research to the rest of the class. The evaluation of these "homeworks" will be based on the quality of the writing as well as contents, analytical and observation abilities and methods of information collection.

Essay	33%
Class participation in class discussion	33%
Final exam	33%

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Know and understand politics in Italy and its relationships with Italian society, history, culture and mentality.
2. Be able to analyze differences between Italian and European political system and the American one.

COURSE CONTENT

Week 1:

- History of Italy and of Italian political Institutes in Middle Age and Renaissance: Free-cities, Republics and Principalities.
- Siena, clear example of free-city: Excursion at the most important sites of the political and institutional life in the town.

Week 2:

- The Italian “Risorgimento” and “Unità d’Italia”: The process of political unification in Italy.
- Politics and culture: Lessons of democracy in Mazzini and others writers.

Week 3: Italy from unification until the First World War

- The first parliament in Italy between traditional political parties and new ideologies and political theories.
- A backward country with big aspirations.

Week 4: The Fascism

Week 5: The so called “First Republic” (1948-1992)

- Construction of new state and political order.
- “The Italian Anomaly”.

Week 6: The scandal of “Tangentopoli” and the crisis of Italian political system

Week 7: The actual politics in Italy

Week 8: Europeanization and the Italian political system

Week 9: Italian foreign policy: the alliance with the USA

Week 10: A little bit of history of political theory

- Socialism and Welfare State
- Communism and Fascism
- Democracy: Between individual liberties and collective rights

Week 11: Students’ essays and final test

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