



PO 221 CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN POLITICS

IES Abroad Rome

DESCRIPTION:

An examination of the Italian political arena and its changes in time. Special emphasis is put on the Constitutional rules as well as on the political dynamics, involving political parties, social actors and even organized crime. Due consideration is given to the division of powers between institutions (with an eye also on the European and local levels) and to the predominant political cultures, also including the new populist trends. Special attention is devoted to the role of political parties and of main leaders, with a constant look at current affairs.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures
- Seminar discussions
- Students' presentations
- Course-related trips

Moodle will be used as course platform.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Class participation (10%)
- Midterm exam (30%)
- Debates and presentations (25%)
- Final exam (35%)

*Details of required work:

Format of the exams: Both midterm and final exams will consist of multiple choice, true or false, open questions and short essays, based on the topics discussed in class and on the assigned readings.

Presentation: The presentations consist of a critical (and creative) illustration of a political party, its leadership, its history, its platform (done in teams).

Grading Rubric for student participation:

A	Excellent participation The student's contributions reflect an active reading of the assigned bibliography. Skillfully synthesizes the main ideas of the readings and raises questions about the applications and implications of the material. Demonstrates, through questions and comments, that he or she has been capable of relating the main ideas in the readings to the other information discussed in the course, and with his or her own life experience. The student makes informed judgments about the readings and other ideas discussed in class, providing evidence and reasons. He/she respectfully states his/her reactions about other classmates' opinions, and is capable of contributing to the inquiry spiral with other questions. The student gets fully involved in the completion of the class activities.
B	Very good participation The student's contributions show that the assigned materials are usually read. Most of the time the main ideas are identified, even though sometimes it seems that applications and implications of the information read were

	not properly reflected upon. The student is able to construct over others' contributions, but sometimes seems to interrupt the shared construction to go over tangents. He/she is respectful of others' ideas. Regularly involved in the activities but occasionally loses concentration or energy.
C	Regular participation The participant evidences a regular reading of the bibliography, but in a superficial way. He/she tries to construct over others' ideas, but commonly provides comments that indicate lack of preparation about the material. Frequently, contributions are shallow or unarticulated with the discussion in hand.
F	Insufficient participation Consistently, the participant reads in a shallow way or does not read at all. Does not participate in an informed way, and shows lack of interest in constructing over others' ideas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- assess the different values that lay in the Italian Constitution;
- identify the multiple components of the Italian political system;
- evaluate the relevance of organized crime in Italian politics;
- understand the decision-making process in Italian government;
- recognize the actual dynamics of party politics and political communication.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES classes, including field studies. If a student misses more than two classes in this course, 2 percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical emergencies or family emergencies. IES will only consider extreme emergency cases and will strictly adhere to this policy. Do plan your semester accordingly.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction 1. Introduction to the course. Guidelines on attendance, exams, class activities 2. Overview of the Italian political system. The first part of the Constitution: fundamental principles, rights and duties.	READING: <i>The Italian Constitution</i> , articles 1-54
Week 2	The institutions of the Republic 1. The Second part of the Italian Constitution: the organization of the Republic 2. COURSE-RELATED TRIP: Library of the Chamber of Deputies	READING: <i>The Italian Constitution</i> , articles 55-100
Week 3	Historical overview 1. Political parties and transitions, from 1948 to 2013 2. Deadlock in the new Parliament	
Week 4	Electoral laws matter... 1. The electoral laws and the rules of the game	

	2. COURSE-RELATED TRIP: Quirinale (Presidential Palace)	
Week 5	From Rome to Brussels 1. The EU institutional framework 2. Where to get information on Italian politics?	
Week 6	Midterm 1. The EU institutional framework 2. Where to get information on Italian politics?	
Week 7	Mafia Vs Italian State 1. Comments on the midterms. The role of Mafia in Italian politics 2. A history of Cosa Nostra and the fight against organized crime FILM VIEWING: 100 Steps (M.T. Giordana, 2000)	
Week 8	Left and Right 1. The Democratic Party and the left 2. Center-right and far-right parties; Silvio Berlusconi's charismatic power READING: Claudia Mariotti (2010), <i>Berlusconism</i>	
Week 9	M5S and the rise of populism 1. The Five Star Movement (M5S) 2. GUEST LECTURE: The M5S and the Italian political culture	
Week 10	Getting to the floor 1. COURSE-RELATED TRIP: Chamber of Deputies / Senate of the Republic	
Week 11	Real politics 1. Mock elections 2. COURSE-RELATED TRIP: Interviewing a MP	
Week 12	Conclusive overview 1. Review	
	FINAL EXAM	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

1. Visit to the Library of the Senate and the House
2. Visit to the Italian Parliament (Senate / Chamber of Deputies)
3. Visit to Quirinale Presidential Palace
4. Meeting with a Member of Parliament

REQUIRED READINGS (provided on Moodle):

- Italian Constitution
- Paoli, Letizia 'Mafia and organised crime in Italy: The unacknowledged successes of law enforcement', *West European Politics*, 30:4, 854 – 880
- Mariotti, Berlusconi, *Bulletin of Italian Politics*, 2010;
- Mosca, The Five Star Movement: Exception or Vanguard in Europe?, *RSPE*, 23 December 2013
- Bordinon, Matteo Renzi: A 'Leftist Berlusconi' for the Italian Democratic Party?, *South European Society and Politics*, 22 February 2014.

Newspaper articles and other sources will be provided on Moodle.

REQUIRED MOVIES:

- "One Hundred Steps" (Italian: *I Cento Passi*, 2000), Director: Marco Tullio Giordana.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Koff, S.Z. & Koff, S.P., *Italy from the First to the Second Republic*, London & NY, Routledge, 2000
- La Palombara, Joseph, *Democracy Italian Style* (Yale Univ. Press, 1989)
- McCarthy, Patrick, *The Crisis of the Italian State: From the Origins of the Cold War to the Fall of Berlusconi and Beyond*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 1997