



## SO/SL 395 SOCIAL ACTION SEMINAR

IES Abroad Rome

**DESCRIPTION:** This seminar aims at increasing knowledge and awareness of students who engage in a volunteer work experience, helping them understand both the real and theoretical context to which their efforts contribute. A key aspect is to underline the need for closer contact between economics and ethics. In the traditional conflict between supporters of free market and advocates of the State's role in the economy, an intermediate space is openly filled by new actors. The world of volunteer work (in Italy called the "third sector") represents one of these emerging actors, with a growing need for specialized skills and expertise. Students will play an active role, by working with volunteer organizations, sharing hands-on experiences in class, and interviewing local representatives of the "third sector"; they will, in the end, be able to analyze and synthesize their experiences based on the theories and issues studied in class.

**CREDITS:** 3 credits

**CONTACT HOURS:** 45

**LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION:** English

**PREREQUISITES:** No language requirement for the seminar, which is taught entirely in English. Different language requirements for the experiential component, depending on the placement.

### METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures
- Guest lectures
- Class discussions
- Field studies
- Student presentations

### REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Active class participation and assigned readings (20%)
- Field journals (20%)
- Class presentation (15%)
- Final paper or project (20%)
- On-site evaluation by work supervisor (25%)

#### Details of Required Work\*:

- Final paper or project: Students are required to write a 5-page *final paper* following the guidelines provided by the seminar instructor. The paper should integrate theory and personal field experience. Students also have the option to carry out a final project that might be experimental in nature. All options are to be discussed and approved by the instructor.
- Field journals: During the seminar, the participants are required to write 5 weekly *field journals* about their social action experience. Each entry should be around 3 typewritten pages, double-spaced (750 words). The instructor will assign a specific theme for two of them. In general, field journals have to contain both reflections on the experience and connections with the readings and the topics discussed in class.
- Class presentation: Students' presentations will be planned by the instructor in set dates along the semester. Based on the composition of the class and the students' interests, the instructor will assign specific topics for the presentations. Each presentation will be evaluated by the instructor in terms of clearness and quality of content, communication effectiveness, originality.

### Grading Rubric for student participation:

A	Excellent participation
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	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>B</b>	<b>Very good participation</b> 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.
<b>C</b>	<b>Regular participation</b> 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.
<b>F</b>	<b>Insufficient participation</b> 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:

- describe the main features of the Italian welfare state and its recent reforms;
- discuss the main issues in Italian contemporary society and its growing inequality;
- give examples of the complexities of the Italian third sector, of its development in recent history and of its valuable contribution to contemporary Italian society;
- analyze the concepts of social business and identify its possible practical applications;
- connect their experience on the field to the readings and topics discussed in class;
- recognize and describe how their professional competences and social awareness has improved during the social action internship.

#### Placement component:

- Students are required to work at their social action placement for a minimum of 10 hours/week. Placements start at the very beginning of the semester, as soon as each student has passed his/her interview.
- Students meet individually with the Internship Coordinator, who is responsible for training students before their interviews with the placements. The Seminar Instructor, too, is available to discuss, during the first session, students' expectations, interviews, placements and program requirements, intercultural aspects and other issues that might arise.
- IES Rome offers a variety of placements in the following areas: human rights; development and microfinance; public health; immigration, hospitality and social inclusion; environment, food policy and fair trade.
- The placements offered for each semester are described in a *brochure*, attached to the course syllabus; for each opportunity, the following information is included: name, website and description of the organization; intern's tasks and responsibilities; workplace; requirements and preferred skill-set.

#### ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES classes, including field studies. If a student misses more than one class, 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.

#### CONTENT:

Session	Content	Assignments
<u>Sessions 1-2</u>	<b>The Italian welfare system</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Italian model of welfare;</li> <li>2. Recent trends: rationalization, privatization and regionalization of the welfare system;</li> <li>3. The pillars of the Italian welfare system: health care, education, pensions.</li> </ol>	<i>Required readings (on moodle):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goldberg, <a href="#">Rosenthal</a>, <i>Diminishing welfare</i>. Chapter 8: "The Italian case" (pp.245– 270).</li> <li>• European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (2014), <i>Italy – Health System Review</i>.</li> <li>• Eurydice (2013). <i>Italian Education System. Overview</i>.</li> </ul>
<u>Session 3</u>	<b>Unequal Italy</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inequality and poverties in the 7<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world;</li> <li>2. Aging population, longer life expectancy and low birth rates;</li> <li>3. Intergenerational immobility and intergenerational conflicts;</li> <li>4. Gender issues and the role of women.</li> </ol>	<i>Required readings (moodle):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COPE (2014), Combating poverty in Europe. National report: Italy</li> </ul>
<u>Session 4</u>	<b>Education as a form of social action</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Italian education system, its historical development and its founding principles;</li> <li>2. The model of "inclusive education".</li> </ol>	<i>Required readings (on moodle):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gobbo, Ricucci, Galloni (2009), <i>Inclusion and education in European countries</i>. Italy</li> </ul>
<u>Session 5</u>	<b>Educating human potential</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maria Montessori's revolution: history, method and worldwide diffusion.</li> </ol>	<i>Required readings:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greene (2005), <i>Dear Maria Montessori</i></li> </ul>
<u>Session 6</u>	<b>Mid term class presentations.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will present their social action experiences to the class.</li> </ol>	
<u>Session 7</u>	<b>Between state and market</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The role of non-profit organizations in Italy;</li> <li>2. Fundamental stages of evolution of the Italian third sector (1850–1960; 1970–1980; 1980–1990; 1990–2000);</li> <li>3. Different forms of non-profit organizations in Italy. Economic and social relevance of the non-profit sector in Italy.</li> </ol>	<i>Required readings (on moodle):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patané (2003), <i>The third sector in Italy</i>.</li> </ul>
<u>Session 8</u>	<b>Field study</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The instructor will organize a field visit to a social action placement. Before the visit, the class will receive an overview of the organization.</li> <li>2. Each student will prepare questions, based on his/her knowledge of the Italian third sector and on personal research about relevant social issues.</li> </ol>	

	<p>3. The weekly journal will consist of a report of the field visit: reflections, analysis of the organization, critical evaluation of its approach and efficacy.</p>	
<u>Session 9</u>	<p><b>Business can be social</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Grameen Bank: a concrete example that business can achieve social outcomes;</li> <li>2. The development of micro-credit projects in Italy and in the world;</li> <li>3. Other examples of successful social business ideas.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Required readings (insructor's handouts):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yunus, Jolis, <i>Banker to the poor</i>. Chapter 4: "The Stool makers of Jobra village" (pp. 45-58). Chapter 5: "A pilot project is born" (pp. 61-83). Chapter 7: "A bank for the poor is born" (pp.117-130).</li> <li>• Yunus, Weber, <i>Creating a world without poverty. Social business and the future of capitalism</i>. Chapter 1: "A new kind of business" (pp.3-19). Chapter 2: "Social business. What it is and what it is not" (pp.21-40).</li> </ul>
<u>Session 10</u>	<p><b>Simulation: becoming social entrepreneurs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Each group/student will present their social business idea;</li> <li>2. An expert of social business will be invited to hear and comment on the students' works.</li> </ol>	

#### REQUIRED READINGS:

- (Ed. By) Gertrude S. Goldberg, [Marguerite G. Rosenthal](#) (2002), *Diminishing welfare: a cross-national study of social provision*. Chapter 8: Enrica Morlicchio, Enrico Pugliese, Elena Spinelli, "Diminishing Welfare: The Italian case".
- COPE (2014), *Combating poverty in Europe*. National report: Italy.
- Patané (2003), *The third sector in Italy*.
- Gobbo, Ricucci, Galloni (2009), *Inclusion and education in European countries*. Italy. In *INTMEAS Report*, N.7
- Paula K. Greene (2005), *Dear Maria Montessori*. Downloaded from <http://www.eric.ed.gov>
- Muhammad Yunus, Alan Jolis, *Banker to the poor* (1998). Chapter 3: "Back in Chittagong". Chapter 4: "The Stool makers of Jobra village". Chapter 5: "A pilot project is born". Chapter 7: "A bank for the poor is born".
- Muhammad Yunus, Karl Weber (2008), *Creating a world without poverty. Social business and the future of capitalism*. Chapter 1: "A new kind of business". Chapter 2: "Social business. What it is and what it is not".

#### RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Muhammad Yunus, Alan Jolis, *Banker to the poor* (1998).
- Amartya Sen, *Development as freedom* (2000).
- Serge Latouche, *The invention of the economy* (2005).
- Erin Gruwell, The freedom Writers, *The Freedom Writers Diary* (2007).
- David Bornstein, *How to change the world: social entrepreneurs and the power of new ideas* (2007).