

## **Italian Politics and Society**

PL 215

### **Summary of Course Content:**

This course covers political and social change in the recent history of Italy to the present, focussing on current political life and society. A general historical introduction is provided. Economic, social, and cultural aspects are treated. Political theories, political movements, and ideologies including Liberalism and Communism are covered. Nationalism and the Fascism era are analyzed. Investigation focuses on transitional phenomena, political players, and structural fundamentals. Italy is studied in the context of European Integration and the broader global scenario. Particular attention is dedicated to specific social issues including, corruption, political terrorism, and the Mafia. The Italian educational system, labour movement, and the “Made in Italy” business are treated. The Vatican, Catholic Church, and Freemasonry are analyzed. Identity and ethnicity are addressed including the issues of national identity, regionalism, separatism, and federalism. The program covers Italy as a multinational society analyzing ethnicity, immigration, and integration, with a special attention to the case of the Roma people. Major political and scholarly interpretations of the periods and topics covered will be considered. The class format includes lectures, discussion, teamwork, presentations, and audio-visual materials. The students will be asked to produce a research project, making extensive personal use of information and communication technology. Guest speakers and field trips are planned.

### **Course aims:**

This course attempts to provide the student with a general understanding of Italian politics and society. Priority is given to conceptualization of different phenomena and historical development. Critical thinking and comparative analysis will be applied to achieve a clear understanding of Italian history, society and political change.

### **Learning outcomes:**

Students will develop the ability to critically analyze the background and the present state of Italian politics. They will be able to relate Italian political ideas, events, and players to the broader European and global political context. Experience education, including guest speakers, field trips and teamwork will allow the students to better comprehend Italian realities. Students will develop ability to conduct basic research, organize and present their findings in a logical and independent way.

### **Textbook:**

- Mignone M. B., *Italy Today. Facing the Challenges of the New Millennium*. New York, 2008. ISBN 9781433101878
- Mammone A., Veltri G., (eds.), *Italy Today: The Sick Man of Europe*. London 2010. ISBN 9780415561600
- The Economist, The Guardian, The International New York Times: “On Italy”, 2017-2018.
- Supplementary Reading Materials to be assigned (*assigned readings*)

### **Required reserved readings:**

- Foot J., *Modern Italy*. New York, 2014. ISBN 978023036033
- Newell J. L., *The Politics of Italy*. Cambridge, 2010. ISBN 9780521600460
- Bedani G., Haddock B., *The Politics of Italian National Identity*. London, 2000. ISBN 9780708316221
- Graziano A., *The Failure of Italian Nationhood: The Geopolitics of a Troubled Identity*. London 2010. ISBN 9780230104136

### **Recommended reserved readings:**

- Levy C. (Ed.), *Italian Regionalism. History, Identity and Politics*. Oxford, 1996. ISBN 9781859731567
- Shin M. E., Agnew J.A., *Berlusconi's Italy: Mapping Contemporary Italian Politics*. Philadelphia, 2008. ISBN 9781592137176
- Putnam R. D., *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, 1993. ISBN 9780691037387
- Carter N., *Modern Italy in Historical Perspective*. London 2010. ISBN 9780340759011

## **Program:**

- Unit 1** Introduction. Methodology. Terminology. Definitions.  
(Jan. 15, 17) *(assigned readings)*
- Unit 2** Eras of Historical and Cultural Development. Territory, Economy, and Society. The People and the Nation.  
(Jan. 22, 24) *(Mignone, pp. 1-30; Mammone, pp. 1-16; assigned readings)*
- Unit 3** Political and Social Foundations. Government Structure. The Multi-Party System. Elections. Partitocracy  
(Jan. 29, 31) *(Mignone, pp. 31-60; assigned readings)*
- Unit 4** Decisive Turning Points and Constitutional Transformation. Historic Compromise. The Second Republic.  
(Feb. 5, 7) *(Mignone, pp. 61-84; Mammone, pp. 17-48; assigned readings)*
- Unit 5** Dangers to the State. Plots and Terrorism. Students Revolt. Revolutionary Organizations. Mafias and Crime.  
(Feb. 12, 14, 16) *(Mignone, pp. 85-106; assigned readings)*
- Unit 6** U.S. Italian Relations. Dependent Ally or Independent Partner? American Cultural Penetration.  
(Feb. 19, 21) *(Mignone, pp. 107-122; Mammone, pp. 49-98; assigned readings)*
- Unit 7** The Economic Recovery. Agricultural Reconstruction. Industrialization and State Industries. Recession.  
(Feb. 26, 28\*) *(Mignone, pp. 123-156 ; Mammone, pp. 99-113; assigned readings)*

### **\* MIDTERM EXAM**

- Unit 8** Industrial Change and Social Transformation. Economic Boom. Underground Economy. The Labor market.  
(Mar. 5, 7) *(Mignone, pp. 157-180; Mammone, pp. 114-142; assigned readings)*
- Unit 9** The two Italies. The Southern Question. Stereotypes and Historical Division. Poor State Planning and Politics.  
(Mar. 12, 14 ) *(Mignone, pp. 180-206; Mammone, pp. 143-170; assigned readings)*
- Unit 10** Emigration, Migration, Immigration, and Social Transformation. Internal Migration and Regional Identities.  
(Mar. 19\*, 21) *(Mignone, pp. 207-230; Mammone, pp. 171-198; assigned readings)*

### **\* PROJECT PROPOSAL**

- Unit 11** Democratizing the Education System. The Transformation of the University System. Barons. Radical reforms.  
(Mar. 26, 28) *(Mignone, pp. 231-262; Mammone, pp. 199-228; assigned readings)*
- Unit 12** Secularization of State and Society. The Catholic Church. Religion as Cultural Pillar. Other religions.  
(Apr. 9, 11) *(Mignone, pp. 263-290 ; assigned readings)*
- Unit 13** Family: Tradition and Change. Women's Movement and Gender Relations. Familism. New Legislation.  
(Apr. 16, 18) *(Mignone, pp. 293-341; Mammone, p. 229-242; assigned readings)*
- Unit 14** Italy, the European Union, and Globalization. Conclusion.  
(Apr. 23 \*) *(Mammone, pp. 243-252; assigned readings)*

### **\* FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT \* PORTFOLIO**

*(Apr. 29 - May 4, t.b.s.\*)*

### **\* FINAL EXAM**

## **Films/Audiovisual Materials Sessions:**

- (1. Feb. (date t.b.s.) at 19:30) "on Mafia"  
(2. Mar. (date t.b.s.) at 19:30) "on Minorities"  
(3. Apr. (date t.b.s.) at 19:30) "on Corruption"

## **NOTE:**

The syllabus schedule may undergo reasonable changes in relation to guest speakers, field trips, make-ups, discussions, events, and other contingencies.

**Course requirements:**

Two in-class Exams (midterm exam and final exam).

A Final Paper (with a Portfolio).

A Presentation and Reports in class.

Regular attendance and participation in class.

**Exams:**

The midterm and final exam have the same format. The exams consist of two parts of equal value. The first part is an essay, the student will choose from one of three proposed themes, and will write a well-organized essay. The second part of the exam consists of ten terms to be concisely defined.

**Final Project:**

The final paper (3,000 words) will be on any topic of the student's choice related to the class program. The topic should be precisely defined and worthy of investigation. An electronic version of the project must be given to the instructor in class, in person, during any of the last four classes. Files sent by email are not accepted. The deadline is the last class. No materials will be accepted past the deadline. To produce the final project, students will receive written instructions in class. During the semester, students will show the instructor their final project work in progress and receive checks. **Portfolio:** In order to produce their final papers, students will keep a portfolio of research materials during the semester. The portfolio will be shared with, and evaluated by the instructor. The production of the final paper is a work in progress during the semester. The portfolio and the paper project are progressive steps toward completion of the final paper. A portfolio containing samples of reference materials must be attached to the final project.

**In-class Presentation:**

Students are required to give a short individual or team presentation on a specific topic of their choice, approved by the instructor and related to the class program. The presentation will be well organized, concise, and include (when opportune) audio-visual and electronic materials. A draft presentation must be submitted to the instructor before presenting in class. An electronic version of the presentation must be given to the instructor in class, in person, during any of the last three classes. Files sent by email are not accepted. The deadline is the last class. No materials will be accepted past the deadline.

**Assessment Methods:**

Class participation: 10%

Midterm exam: 20%.

Presentation and other assignments: 15%.

Final exam: 25%.

Final project (with project proposal and portfolio): 30%.

Improvement over the semester will be rewarded.

Letter grades correspond to the numerical scale:

A to A- = 100% to 90%. B+ to B- = 89% to 80%. C+ to C- = 79% to 70%. D+ to D- = 69% to 60%. F = <60%.

**Assessment Criteria:**

**A.** Work of this quality directly addresses the question or problem raised and provides a coherent argument displaying an extensive knowledge of relevant information or content. This type of work demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate concepts and theory and has an element of novelty and originality. There is clear evidence of a significant amount of reading beyond that required for the course.

**B.** This is highly competent level of performance and directly addresses the question or problem raised. There is a demonstration of some ability to critically evaluate theory and concepts and relate them to practice. Discussions reflect the student's own arguments and are not simply a repetition of standard lecture and reference material. The work does not suffer from any major errors or omissions and provides evidence of reading beyond the required assignments.

**C.** This is an acceptable level of performance and provides answers that are clear but limited, reflecting the information offered in the lectures and reference readings.

**D.** This level of performances demonstrates that the student lacks a coherent grasp of the material. Important information is omitted and irrelevant points included. In effect, the student has barely done enough to persuade the instructor that s/he should not fail.

**F.** This work fails to show any knowledge or understanding of the issues raised in the question. Most of the material in the answer is irrelevant.

**Attendance requirements:**

A maximum of four absences are allowed throughout the semester. Any additional absence will result in a penalization of one grade level (e.g.: from B+ to B for five absences, B+ to B- for six absences, B- to C+ for seven absences, etc.). Two lateness count for one absence. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class by calling students' names. Students not answering will be marked absent. Students arrived late will ask the instructor to be marked late at the end of the class, after which attendance records will not be modified.

**Use of Computers in class:**

The use of personal computers and technological devices in class is not permitted except for taking notes, or contributing to class activity during designated times. Students not respecting the rule will be penalized by getting no points in the Class Participation requirement (worth 10% of the final grade). Recording and filming in class is not allowed.

**Library/lab sessions:**

The class will meet sometimes in the library/lab to receive instruction on electronic tools and sources. Individual assistance will be provided to the students for their research. To be announced.

**Guest speakers:**

Guest speakers expert in the fields related to the program may be invited during the semester. To be announced.

**Field trips:**

Field trips may be scheduled during the semester in connection with on-going cultural events of interest in Rome. To be announced.

**Journals:**

*Modern Italy, Italian Politics, Italian Journal, Italica, Italy Economic Studies, Italy Today.*

**Recommended films:**

Some class viewing may be scheduled during the semester. To be announced.

F. Fellini, *La Dolce Vita*. F. Fellini, *I Vitelloni*. B. Bertolucci, *The Conformist*. P. Germi, *Divorce Italian Style*. P. P. Pasolini, *Teorema*. B. Bertolucci, *1900*. L. Visconti, *Rocco and his Brothers*. M. F. Brusati, *Bread and Chocolate*. G. Tornatore, *Cinema Paradiso*. G. Amelio, *Open Doors*. E. Kustirica, *The Time of the Gypsies*. M. Garrone, *Gomorra*. P. Sorrentino, *La Grande Bellezza*. E. Olmi, *Tree of the Wooden Clogs*.

**Academic honesty**

As stated in the university catalog, any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student who is reported twice for academic dishonesty is subject to summary dismissal from the University. In such a case, the Academic Council will then make a recommendation to the President, who will make the final decision.

**Students with learning or other disabilities**

John Cabot University does not discriminate on the basis of disability or handicap. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the website for the complete policy.

**This syllabus is on line:** [www.gabrielesimoncini.it](http://www.gabrielesimoncini.it)

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