NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PROGRAM IN FLORENCE, ITALY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2010/2011
FALL SEMESTER

COURSE:

ITALIAN POLITICS

Instructor:
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Course Content:
This course introduces students to the structure of Italian government and the functioning of Italian politics in practice. It gives a broad overview of the main institutions and players in the Italian system, setting these within a comparative context. The course will emphasise the role of political forces – especially the parties – as well as the formal institutions of the state.

Grading:
Participation grade will be based on attendance and comments during discussions. The Midterm will test the ability to integrate the readings given in the first half of the semester. Students are also expected to write a paper (about ten pages) during the second half of the term. The paper will be presented and discussed in class. A description of possible papers topics will be given by the instructor. The Final is a non-comprehensive exam. Grading: Participation: 10%; Midterm: 30%; Paper: 30%; Final: 30%

Textbook:
- Material distributed in class by the instructor.
- Students are also required to get a course packet (available in the library for photocopying), consisting of the following essays:

Teaching Arrangements:
Tuesday 3:00-5:45 p.m.


**WEEK 1**  
(Sep. 7)

INTRODUCTION: STEREOTYPES AND SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT ITALIAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY

**WEEK 2**  
(Sep. 14)

INTRODUCTION: THE ITALIAN CONSENSUS TYPE OF DEMOCRACY

**WEEK 3**  
(Sep. 21)

THE LONG-TERM TRANSFORMATION OF THE ITALIAN POLITY
- The liberal era: the nation-building process and the foundation of the Italian state (1861-1922)
- Fascist Italy (1922-1943)
- The ‘First’ Republic (1948-1992)
- The peaceful revolution and the transition towards the ‘Second’ Republic (1992 to date)

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 1)

**WEEK 4**  
(Sep. 28)

THE ITALIAN ELECTORAL AND PARTY SYSTEM (I): THE ‘I REPUBLIC’
- The era of proportional representation and partitocrazia
- Elections and voting behaviour: the role of ideology, religion, class and territory
- Christian Democracy (Dc) and Italian Communist Party (Pci)
- The party system: a case of polarized multipartism

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 2, 35-48); Sartori [course packet]

**WEEK 5**  
(Oct. 5)

THE ITALIAN ELECTORAL AND PARTY SYSTEM (II): FROM THE ‘I REPUBLIC’ TO THE ‘II REPUBLIC’
- The disappearance of long-standing traditional parties replaced by myriad of ‘new’ parties
- The electoral reform of 1993: introducing a quasi-majoritarian environment
- New parties and new (pre-election) coalitions

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 2, 48-66)

**WEEK 6**  
(Oct. 12)

THE ITALIAN ELECTORAL AND PARTY SYSTEM (III): THE ‘II REPUBLIC’
- The 1994-2001 general elections
- The party system: the consolidation of the bipolar pattern of competition

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 3)

**WEEK 7**  
(Oct. 26)

MID-TERM EXAM
**Week 8**  (Nov. 2)

The Italian electoral and party system (IV): Towards the 'III Republic'?  
- The electoral reform of 2005  
- The 2006 general election: for a fistful of votes  
- The 2008 general election: a 'new' party system?  
- Current events  

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 3); Chiaramonte [course packet]

**Week 9**  (Nov. 9)

The executive  
- The institutional design  
- The traditional weakness and transformation  

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 4)

**Week 10**  (Nov. 16)

The Parliament  
- Parliamentary government and bicameralism  
- Legislative output: from the 'leggine' to a better quality?  
- The legislators  

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 5)

**Week 11**  (Nov. 23)

Local government  
- The nature of Italian regionalism  
- The Constitutional reform of 2001  

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapter 6)

**Week 12**  (Nov. 30)

Bureaucracy and Judicial power  
- The public sector and its expansion; recent reforms  
- The organization of the judiciary  
- Conflict with politics. The case of 'tangentopoli'  

Readings: Cotta & Verzichelli (Chapters 7 and 8); Sassoon [course packet]

**Week 13**  (Dec. 7)

Review class

**Week 14**  (Dec. 14)

Final Exam
RECOMMENDED READINGS:


USEFUL LINKS:

- Political resources: http://www.politicalresources.net/italy1.htm
- Elections to the Italian Parliament: http://electionresources.org/it/