

## TOPICS IN ITALIAN AND EUROPEAN POLITICS

**Academic Year: 2010-2011**

**Instructor: Prof. Marco Almagisti (Università di Padova)**

**Number of hours: 40**

### Course Summary:

This course is divided into three distinct yet closely related parts.

Part 1: Introduction to fundamental notions in Political Science. The origins and development of perspectives, approaches and paradigms relative to the scientific knowledge of political phenomena. Methodological references backed by comparative research on the analysis of power, conflict, institutions and political behavior. What is democracy? How democracy changes with time. What are the main questions being addressed in contemporary democracies? Comparing Italy and the United States: similarities and differences.

Part 2: Political change and quality of democracy in Italy. Quality of democracy and social capital. The role of intermediary bodies. The role of political parties after WWII. The issue of territory in Italian History. The turning point in the 1970's. Italy under the eyes of the U.S.: Robert Putnam's research, findings, interpretations. Political parties' transformations and the search for a higher quality of democracy.

Part 3: The *Veneto* and its long transition into an Italian region. Modernization and secularization in the Veneto and Italy. From emigration to immigration in the Veneto and Italy. The reawakening of the territories. The emergence of territorial and autonomous Political parties. Italian politics changes when the main political party in the Veneto changes. The momentous mobilization of the *Lega Nord* party and its relationship with the Italian political system.

### Course Objectives:

- a) acquisition of the fundamental terminology in political studies.
- b) students will learn about the principle comparative studies regarding western democracies, with a special look at the comparison between Italy with the United States
- c) learn about the institutions and the principle actors that make up the Italian political system
- d) learn about the Veneto and its political, economic and social

### Structure:

The lessons are lecture style which will ensure that students will learn the necessary terminology and analytical skills necessary to the study of Political Science. Particular attention will given to learning and understanding the initial notions which is essential in order to understand the study of classical phenomena and to prepare a solid foundation for the study of the Italian political system in comparison to the current American system.

## **Grading criteria:**

The final grade will be calculated using the following parameters:

25% oral Mid-term exam

25% final paper

30% final oral presentation

20% class participation

## **Detailed Course Syllabus**

### **Lesson 1**

Presentation of course objectives, course content, and grading criteria.

Introduction to Political Science and an initial look at specific terminology.

Text: COTTA M., VERZICHELLI L., (2008), *Il sistema politico italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 15-21.

### **Lesson 2**

The origins and development of perspectives, approaches and paradigms relative to the scientific knowledge of political phenomenon. Methodological references backed by comparative research

Text: COTTA M., VERZICHELLI L., (2008), *Il sistema politico italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 22-32.

### **Lesson 3**

Democracy. Definitions, evolution and various forms.

Texts: COTTA M., VERZICHELLI L., (2008), *Il sistema politico italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 33-62.

ALMAGISTI M., (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica*, Roma, Carocci, pp. 12-21.

### **Lesson 4**

The main questions being addressed in contemporary democracies. Elections, political cultures and electorate behavior. Elements for comparison between Italy and the United States.

Instructions for writing the final paper.

Text: COTTA M., VERZICHELLI L., (2008), *Il sistema politico italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 25-26/95-124.

### **Lesson 5**

The quality of democracy. Definitions and extent of variation in empirical research.

Texts: ALMAGISTI M., (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica*, Roma, Carocci, pp.12-55.

ALMAGISTI M., PIANA D. (eds.) (2011), *Le parole chiave della politica italiana*, Roma, Carocci, voci *Legalità e Accountability*.

### **Lesson 6**

Social capital and the role of intermediary bodies.

Texts: ALMAGISTI M., (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica*, Roma, Carocci, pp. 56-93.

ALMAGISTI M., PIANA D. (eds.) (2011), *Le parole chiave della politica italiana*, Roma, Carocci, voce *Capitale sociale*.

### **Lesson 7**

The role of political parties. Evolution of history and comparison of models. American models of political parties, and political parties in Europe and Italy.

The issue of territory in Italian History and mediation proposed by the parties.

To understand democracy lets study it from the ground up: Robert Putnam's research. Interpretations and other reflections.

Group discussion of final paper topics.

Texts: ALMAGISTI M., (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica*, Roma, Carocci, pp. 94-129;

COTTA M., VERZICHELLI L., (2008), *Il sistema politico italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 63-91/155-186.

## Lesson 8

Territorial political subcultures and national political parties. Comparison between the Veneto and Tuscany.

Text: ALMAGISTI M., (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica*, Roma, Carocci, pp. 130-181.

## Lesson 9

The transformation of political parties: the turning point in the 1970's and the unresolved issues. Italy's "long" transition in the 1990's.

Texts: COTTA M., VERZICHELLI L., (2008), *Il sistema politico italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 167-281.

ALMAGISTI M., (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica*, Roma, Carocci, pp. 182-246.

## Lesson 10

The transformation of the territories: the Veneto in an ever changing Italy.

The new functions of the local government.

Texts: ALMAGISTI M., (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica*, Roma, Carocci, pp. 248-300.

ALMAGISTI M., PIANA D. (eds.) (2011), *Le parole chiave della politica italiana*, Roma, Carocci, voci *Decentramento, governance e immigrazione*.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Class notes, slides, and articles taken from the *Bulletin of Italian Politics* and from *South European Politics and Society* will be distributed in class by the instructor.

### Essential Bibliography:

1. ALMAGISTI M. (2011), *La qualità della democrazia in Italia. Capitale sociale e politica. Nuova edizione aggiornata*, Roma, Carocci.
2. ALMAGISTI M., PIANA D. (eds.) (2011), *Le parole chiave della politica italiana*, Roma, Carocci.
3. COTTA M., VERZICHELLI L. (2008), *Il sistema politico italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino.

### Further readings:

- ALMAGISTI M. E GRIMALDI S. (2009), *C'è del nuovo a Nordest: i partiti dopo la parabola del Veneto "bianco"*, in "Democrazia e diritto", XLVI, 3-4, pp. 132-50.
- ALMAGISTI M. E GRIMALDI S. (2010), *Il Veneto*, in B. BALDI, F. TRONCONI (a cura di), *Le elezioni regionali del 2010*, Bologna: Misure/Materiali di ricerca dell'Istituto Cattaneo, n. 32, pp. 97-112.
- FABBRINI S. (2007), *Compound Democracies: Why the United States and Europe Are Becoming Similar*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- MORLINO L. E TARCHI M. (EDS.) (2006), *Partiti e caso italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino.
- MORO G. (2008), *Anni Settanta*, Torino, Einaudi.
- PUTNAM R. D. (1993), *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton (trad. it. *La tradizione civica nelle regioni italiane*, Mondadori, Milano 1993).
- SARTORI G. (1957), *Democrazia e definizioni*, Il Mulino, Bologna.
- SARTORI G. (1993), *Democrazia. Cosa è*, Rizzoli, Milano.
- TONELLO F. (eds.) (2010), *La Costituzione americana*, Milano, Bruno Mondadori.