Venice was one of the most important and long-lasting maritime empires and political entities of the Western World. The city was founded around the end of the 7th century under the aegis of the Byzantine empire by groups of *Venetici*, northern Italian populations living in the Veneto and Friuli Venezia-Giulia areas. Venice ruled over several territories, from continental Italy down to the Western coast of the Adriatic sea, Greece, southern Italy and the Middle East. Venice had a very complex and stable government system - an oligarchic Republic led by a Doge (an Italianised term from the Latin *dux*, “leader”) - based on an efficient diplomacy and very strong military structure. At the peak of its power Venice was one of the most important trade centres, a city where different ethnic and religious communities were living together and in peace. The aim of the course is to outline and analyze the most important phases of Venetian history. Although we will study in detail some of the problems concerning the political
and cultural relations between the Venetian Republic and the hosted minorities (particularly the Armenian, the Jewish and the Greek ones), the course is on political and social history.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**MAIN TEXTBOOKS:**

**FURTHER READINGS (SEE COURSE-PACK)**

Field trips are part of the curriculum and participation is mandatory. Lectures are part of the study load, so please take note of the lectures, for some themes and subjects presented in them are not in the textbooks. During the second part of the semester students will be required to a class-presentation in Italian on a subject or topic approved by the professor. Presentations should not last more than 30 minutes.

**ACADEMIC RULES**
Absence will be excused only due to health or other major problems. A medical certificate must be produced in case of absence due to health problems. Absences for other reasons will affect your grade. Punctuality is expected. Class will be divided normally, but not necessarily always, into two sections: a lecture (first hour) and discussion (second hour). Please bring with you paper and pen. The lecturer can be reached by e-mail (gmancuso@bu.edu), by phone (349 6400459) or in his office after class.
SYLLABUS

WEEK 1
FEBRUARY
MONDAY 27
Introduction to the course. Study and research methodologies, class participation and grading criteria.

WEDNESDAY 29
Rialto and the birth of the Republica Serenissima (Most Serene Republic).
Trade and war: Venice and the Crusades.

WEEK 2
MARCH
MONDAY 5
The structures of the Venetian republic: the Doge, the Maggior Consiglio and the hierarchy of power.

WEDNESDAY 7
Venice and Constantinople (1204). The “Serrata del Maggior Consiglio”

WEEK 3
MONDAY 12
The War with Genoa (1378). The “Stato da Terra”: the Serenissima in the Italian inland.

WEDNESDAY 14
The wars against the Turks and the League of Cambrai (1508).
FRIDAY 16
N.B. Trip to Venice. Visit to the Dogal Palace and the Museo Storico Navale. T.B.C.

WEEK 4
MONDAY 19
The peak of the Serenissima and the beginning of the decadence (1517-1628). N.B. Read Henry James’ *The Aspern Papers* (text provided in the course-pack).

WEDNESDAY 21
N.B. MID-TERM WRITTEN EXAM.

WEEK 5
MONDAY 26

WEDNESDAY 28

N.B. 30 MARCH, PROGRAMME FIELD TRIP TO TRIESTE

APRIL
WEEK 6
MONDAY 2
The crisis of the Venetian trade. Lepanto: 1570-1571. PRESENTATION SESSION BEGINS

WEDNESDAY 4
The Last Interdict (part I): 1607. Venice’s fight for spiritual freedom and PRESENTATION SESSION.

N. B. 6-11 APRIL, MID-TERM BREAK

WEEK 7
FRIDAY 13
(MAKE-UP LESSON FOR WEDNESDAY 11 CLASSES). The Last Interdict (part II): Paolo Sarpi’s legacy and the problem of religious freedom in Venice and PRESENTATION SESSION.

WEEK 8
MONDAY 16
The Treaty of Passarowitz (1718) and PRESENTATION SESSION
(Norwich, *A History...*, pp. 575-582)
**WEDNESDAY 18** C Ludovico Manin, the last Doge (1787). Venice under sphere of French influence and **PRESENTATION SESSION**.

**WEEK 9**
**MONDAY 23** 12 May 1797: the end of the Serenissima Repubblic and **PRESENTATION SESSION**.  

**N.B. WEDNESDAY 25, NO CLASS – NATIONAL HOLIDAY - FESTA DELLA LIBERAZIONE**

**FRIDAY 27** (make-up lesson for Wednesday 25 classes). **LAST PRESENTATION SESSION**

**WEEK 10**
**MONDAY 30** Venice, from the French and Austrian dominion to Italian independence 1797-1866. 

**MAY**
**WEDNESDAY 2** An view on Venetian economy. The system of professional “scole” and guilds in Venice.  
(Levorato, *Scuole a Venezia*, pp. 1-54).

**WEEK 11**
**MONDAY 7** Religious holiday (Shavuot) – no class
**TUESDAY 8, H. 3.30-6.30 P.M. (MAKE UP FOR MONDAY 7 CLASS). In conjunction with the course on History of cinema, *Set in Venice. Venice in the background [2]: complete screening of Silvio Soldini’s “Pane e tulipani” (“Bread and tulips”, 1999). A funny view on Venice in the era of mass-tourism – part I.

**WEDNESDAY 9** “Bread and tulips”, part II.

**MONDAY 14** Overview and general discussion about the course.
**WEDNESDAY 16** **FINAL PAPER DUE.**

**MONDAY 21** **FINAL EXAM – (WRITTEN – T.B.C.)**
COMPONENTS OF THE FINAL GRADE

1. Attendance and class participation: 20
2. Midterm exam - written: 25%
3. Class presentation and final paper 30%
4. Final exam: 25%

Terms and Conditions
Promptness and punctuality are expected, and they will affect your participation grade. Attendance at all classes, field trips and class visits is mandatory; you will be docked a minus for missing any session, unless ill (medical certificate necessary). Please notice that weekend trips and family visits are not acceptable reasons for either lateness or absence.

Plagiarism
Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another’s work and presenting it as you own. Dictionary definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as ‘theft’ or ‘steal’. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University’s Code of Student Responsibilities: http://www.bu.edu/lifebook/university-policies/policies-code.html.

Religious Holidays
Boston University’s Office of the University Registrar states: ‘The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.’ See Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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