



Syllabus

Academic Year	2022/2023
Program	Politics: Philosophy and Economics
Course	Political Science
Term	I semester
Year	2
SSD	SPS/04 - Scienza politica
Credits	8

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS	<p>The course aims at making students familiar with the key problems, concepts and tools of political science, as well as with the empirical results produced by the discipline through the application of its method in comparative perspective.</p>
INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES	<p>Knowledge and understanding: The course will make students familiar with the key conceptual and theoretical tools at the core of the discipline, as well as with the empirical results produced by the discipline through the application of its method in comparative perspective. This will be achieved not only by reviewing the classical approaches to the study of politics, but also by means of an in-depth analysis of the most recent approaches developed to study contemporary politics.</p> <p>Applying knowledge and understanding: At the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Critically review a scientific article;2) Apply theoretical models to make sense of real politics;3) Understand the processes and dynamics of contemporary politics;4) Compare and assess contemporary political processes in comparative perspective. <p>Making judgements: We expect students to be able to assess and understand real political processes in the light of the main theoretical tools and approaches developed by the discipline. Furthermore, they are expected to be able to discuss critical political issues in comparative perspective, as well as to understand why, how and where certain political processes occur and which are the main political actors involved in these processes.</p> <p>Communications Skills: Throughout the course all students are required to offer an in-class presentation in poster sessions, based on their own readings of relevant articles produced by the scientific literature. The poster session is intended not only to give the chance to students to read</p>



scientific articles, but also to improve their critical reading of scientific literature as well as their public-speech skills by means of public presentations. At the end of the course, students will be therefore able to publicly discuss relevant issues at the core of the discipline.

Learning skills:

Students will acquire the tools allowing them to make autonomous and independent evaluations of current political issues in their complexity and specific dynamics. In particular, they will acquire the ability to construct knowledge and arguments based on a variety of materials, ranging from textbooks to actual research articles, to research monographs, to fellow students' presentations, and finally to discussion. These skills will be developed and stimulated by means of group discussions, presentations in class, and critical review of scientific articles and books on current socio-political issues.

Pre-requisites	None.
Course content	<p>Political science is the scientific analysis of political phenomena. As such, it analyzes, through the specific methods that guide empirical research in the social sciences, the processes and dynamics that govern politics, with specific regard to the behavior of political actors and how it is shaped by political institutions. As a result, each topic in the course will feature a review of the main theories and tools, as well as the presentation of recent empirical results.</p> <p>After a short introduction, the course starts by introducing democratic regimes and their characteristics, comparing and contrasting them with non-democratic regimes, and discussing regime change and democratic change. It then proceeds by presenting the process of democratic representation in a democratic political system, in terms of: a) its key actors (citizens, parties, interest groups, social movements); b) the processes of interaction between such actors, in terms of both electoral and non-electoral accountability (elections; interest representation; other processes); c) how both processes are differently shaped by different political institutions. After a specific analysis of the characteristics and interaction processes of political institutions (parliaments, cabinets, public bureaucracies, courts), part of the course is dedicated to public policy, i.e. the actual decisional output of the political system, and how it affects the distribution of power within the system. Finally, contemporary challenges to the very concept of "closed" political system are briefly discussed.</p>
Reference Books	<p>Main reference handbook [required] : Morlino, L., D. Berg-Schlosser, B. Badie (ed.), 2017 (1° ed.), Political Science: A global perspective, London, SAGE</p> <p>Strongly suggested: Caramani (ed.) 2008, Comparative Politics, Oxford, OUP.</p> <p>Other materials distributed through this website (see specific weeks).</p>
Teaching Methods	<p>The course adopts a dynamic and interactive approach which attributes great importance to students' participation and involvement in teaching sessions. The more traditional teaching methods are accompanied by interactive methods and tools that require students to be constantly active not only in class sessions, but also on their own at home.</p>
Assessment	<p>1) Throughout the course:</p> <p>All students are required to offer an in-class presentation in a poster session held prevalently on campus, but also on-line. A poster session will be held in each week of the course and individual presentations made by students will be graded by the instructors on a 0-30 scale.</p> <p>Furthermore, all students will be required to compile online (on the LUISS Learn platform) a structured book review based on some key questions on a book of their choice (the book has to be chosen on a relevant list provided by the instructors). Compilation will take place online on the date and time that will be communicated throughout the course. Completed book review forms will be graded on a 30-point scale.</p>



2) Final written exam:

8 open-ended questions;

Time: 1h20';

The structure of each correct answer is based on one (or more) of the class slides distributed throughout the course;

IMPORTANT NOTE: the content of slides prepared by students for the poster sessions will NOT be part of the exam. Only slides prepared by professors will form the basis for exam questions.

Each question counts equally.

NOTE: students attending the course will benefit from two advantages:

WILDCARD 1: CLASS PRESENTATION IN POSTER SESSIONS (throughout the course)

In-class individual presentations during the weekly poster sessions award a "wildcard": at the exam, students can skip any of the 8 questions, and have it graded with the presentation grade.

WILDCARD 2: BOOK REVIEW

Online book reviews compiled by attending students award a "wildcard": at the exam, students can skip one more of the 8 questions, and have it graded with the book review grade.
