**Comparative Political Systems**

Prof. Martino Mazzoleni; Prof. Antonio Campati

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course is a comparative study of contemporary political systems with the purpose to provide students with theoretical and methodological tools. The course focuses in particular on democratic systems through an analysis of different models of democracy and their specific defining parameters, democratization and democratic consolidation processes, institutional actors, development of democratic systems over time, current challenges and prospects.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- know the fundamental political-institutional components of contemporary political regimes

- conduct a comparative analysis of different political systems

- (for the 9ECTS course) distinguish the different theoretical models of democracy and identify the main features of democracy crisis

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided into two parts. The first part of the course (40 hours of lectures worth 6 ECTS), will explore the actors and the institutional processes of democratic and non-democratic systems. The second part of the course (20 additional hours of lectures worth 9 ECTS) will concern the analysis of the different democracy models and the challenges that the democratic system is facing.

Part 1 – *Regimes and institutions* (Prof. Mazzoleni)

* + Forms, tools, and methods of comparison.
  + Non-democratic regimes.
  + Democratic systems: defining elements.
  + Processes of regime transition.
  + Forms of government in democratic systems.
  + Democratic institutions: parliaments; executive powers and public administration; supervisory powers; federalism and decentralization.
  + Elections and referendums.

Part 2 – Models of democracy (*Prof. Antonio Campati*)

* + Comparing democracies;
  + Models of democracy.
  + Types of democracy: representative, deliberative, participatory, virtual, illiberal;
  + The challenges of democracy.

***READING LIST***

1. S. Vassallo (ed.), *Sistemi politici comparati,* Il Mulino, Bologna, (last edition).

2. L. Morlino, *La comparazione. Un’introduzione metodologica*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2020.

3. A textbook of students’ choice on a contemporary political system from the list on the Blackboard page of the course and on the personal webpage of Prof. Mazzoleni. Any different text might be arranged with the lecturer.

4. In addition, only for the 9 ECTS exam: M. Sorice, *Partecipazione democratica. Teorie e problemi*, Mondadori, Milano, 2019 and other material assigned during the course and uploaded on Blackboard platform.

Attending students will be informed about which parts of texts 1 and 2 they will have to study.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures and possible occasions for in-depth study.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Written exam. Up to 20% of mark will be determined by closed-ended questions (1 point to each correct answer), the rest by open questions. The evaluation will take into consideration: coherence of answers to questions; accuracy and completeness of content; students’ ability to use relevant concepts and models to answer questions, among those illustrated in class and in exam textbooks.

Attending students will be proposed during the first term to ‘adopt a country’ (different from their country of origin), a democratic or partially democratic one, and follow the evolution of its political life and institutional actors. On this topic, students may write a paper (max 2,500 words) on topics indicated by the lecturer, with the opportunity to present them in class. This will count up until 25% of the final mark. Students will be assessed on consistence, originality and completeness of paper argumentation.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites to attend the course. Any updates to the programme and reading list as well as notices will be published on the Blackboard platform. All students (attending and not attending, current and non-current) are invited to register on the Blackboard course page and keep up to date.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board.