



## SYLLABUS

Fall Quarter

**JOURNALISM IN ITALY**

**Instructor: Alfonso Casella**

**Contact Hrs: 45**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**SIENA, ITALY**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

“Like sailing, gardening, politics and poetry,” journalism is a craft of place; it works by the light of local knowledge’, said James Carey<sup>1</sup>. The pre-structure of Italian journalism is different from that of American journalism and the journalistic tradition, as well as the state of the media of a country has much to tell us about that culture. Media products do not necessarily mirror reality, but the media themselves, as a powerful symbolic agent that creates reality, are an important piece of the mirror image of society. By understanding and pinning down Italian journalism we explore and discover Italy.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVE**

The course is aimed at offering a comprehensive view of journalism and the informative media in Italy. You are expected to gain knowledge of the role and practice of journalism in the Italian context and to be able to compare it with the situation in the United States. The course will encourage critical thinking and will provide you with analytical skills to understand and investigate news discourse and journalism practices.

### **METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)**

30% class active participation

30% mid-term assignment

40% final presentation

Interaction and discussion will be promoted throughout the course and will play an essential part in both the course didactics and in the students’ evaluation. Individual participation is encouraged at all times and group co-operation will be at the basis of the final grading (see assignments’ description below).

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

The first part of the course will provide an historical and cultural overview, with the support of power point presentations, videos, browsing of web resources and hard copies of newspapers. For the second part of the course you will be asked to work on texts, most of the analysis will be done at home as an assignment, but the availability of one laptop (with broadband connection) every 2 or 3 students is required on Week 7.

**Schedule:**

1 Carey, J. W. (2007). A short history of journalism for journalists: a proposal and essay. The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics 12(1): 3-16.

PART I – media contexts

Week 1: INTRODUCTION TO ITALIAN JOURNALISM

- Anglo-Saxon vs. ‘European’ model? Comparing journalistic traditions.
- A popular history of Italian journalism: literary approach, political engagement, pedagogic function.

Suggested readings:

Hallin, D. and Mancini, P. (2004). Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. CHAPTER 5: ‘The Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model’.

Mancini, P. (2005). Is there an European model of journalism? In deBurgh, H. Making Journalists: diverse models, global issues. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 77-93.

Week 2: ITALIAN NEWSPAPERS

- An overview of the Italian press, browsing through the mastheads.
- Ownership, philosophy, point of view and readership of the main Italian newspapers.
- Hands-on comparison of the newspapers’ design, formats and editorial strategies.

Readings:

Hanretty, C. (2009). The Italian media between market and politics. Available online at: <http://www.chrishanretty.co.uk/publications/Han09.pdf>.

Week 3: BROADCAST JOURNALISM IN ITALY

- Public service and private channels.
- Screening of TV news samples and comparison of anchoring and reporting styles.

Suggested readings:

Lombardo, L. (2009). The news presenter as socio-cultural construct. In Haarman, L. and Lombardo, L. Evaluation and Stance in War News. London: Continuum, pp. 48-71.

Week 4: JOURNALISM AND POLITICS

- Screening of PBS-Wide Angle's documentary movie "Citizen Berlusconi"
- Media tycoons from Hearst to Murdoch and the "Italian anomaly". Discussion on the role the media play in politics and the role politics plays in the media (the case study of Italy).

Readings from the Axess Journalism website: 'Italian Journalism in the age of Silvio'  
<http://www.axessjournalism.com/Project/View/italian-journalism-in-the-age-of-silvio-berlu>.

Blatman, S. (2003). A media conflict of interests: Anomaly in Italy. A Reporters Without Borders investigation (Available online: <http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/doc-2080.pdf>).

#### Week 5: FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

- Freedom of the Press 2009 survey classified Italy as 'partially free' and ranked it 73rd in a list of 195 countries. (ref. <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=470>). Taking on from Week 4 we open a comparative discussion on the concepts of press freedom, the right to privacy and censorship.
- Presentation of some Italian 'case studies' (press freedom: the 'Bulgarian edict', privacy: 2009 Italian sex scandals in the Italian and foreign press, censorship: the case of Videocracy [screening of the trailer]).

Reading of Article 21 of the Italian Constitution [Freedom of Communication] introduces mid-term assignment (due for next class): ARGUMENTATIVE ROLE PLAYING (in pairs).

Mid-term task description: you will be paired and randomly assigned a topic, for example: "Information on everybody's income and properties should be publicly available" or "Paparazzi taking pictures of private moments should be arrested". Independently from personal convictions one of you will argue in favor and one against this statement and you will debate it in front of the class. Both individual performance and co-ordination with your partner will be graded.

#### Week 6: ARGUMENTATIVE ROLE PLAYING sessions

- Mid-term evaluation.

#### PART II – media texts

#### Week 7: THE REPRESENTATION OF THE ITALIAN MEDIA ABROAD

- Training for the final assignments.
- Methodological issues for media research will be presented: going through the research process, from data collection, through news discourse analysis, keeping an eye on the contextual framework.

- Final presentation work description: you will create groups of 3 to 5 people and collect articles from English or American newspapers (or newspapers from other English-speaking countries) dealing with the Italian media (following the instructions given in the training session) and you will analyze how these issues are represented abroad.
- The analysis methodology will be presented in class in Week 7, further theoretical background will be offered during the following lessons.
- If you have questions or doubts on the work in progress, these can be discussed in class next week or you can mail me at any time. Each group will have to prepare a handout and an oral presentation (you can use any technical support you require) and report findings and considerations to the class on Week 10.

#### Week 8: ANALYSING JOURNALISM

- A large spectrum of approaches to news and media analysis will be presented, making reference to sociology, cultural studies and focusing on linguistics and discourse studies. We will address the issue of quantitative vs. qualitative research and of mixed methods, offering insights in new interesting approaches to the study of journalism, by means of examples.

#### Suggested readings:

Cotter, C. (2003). 21. Discourse and Media. In Shiffrin, D. et al. *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*.

Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 416-36.

Marchi, A. and Taylor, C. (2009). If on a winter's night two researchers... A challenge to assumptions of soundness of interpretation. *CADAAD* 3(1) (Available online: [http://www.cadaad.org/2009\\_volume\\_3\\_issue\\_1/54-33](http://www.cadaad.org/2009_volume_3_issue_1/54-33))

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media Discourse*. London: Arnold. CHAPTER 2: 'Approaches to media discourse'.

Zelizer, B. (2004). *Taking journalism seriously: news and the academy*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

#### Week 9: HANDS ON HEADLINES

- Practical exercises on Italian newspapers' front pages and headlines.

#### Week 10: GROUP PRESENTATIONS

- Final evaluation.

Week 11: "THE INGENIOUS ITALIAN JOURNALISM" – INNOCENTS ABROAD (Mark Twain)

- Conclusive discussion on Italian journalism past, present and future: changing roles, changing definitions, blogs, alternative media, citizen journalism, journalism in the global age...
- Students' considerations and appraisal.

Farewell reading:

Mark Twain "Italian without a master", Harper's Weekly 21 January 1904

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Italian\\_Without\\_a\\_Master](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Italian_Without_a_Master)

EXTRA RESOURCES:

Browsing the Italian press:

[www.corriere.it](http://www.corriere.it)

[www.repubblica.it](http://www.repubblica.it)

[www.lastampa.it](http://www.lastampa.it)

[www.unita.it](http://www.unita.it)

[www.ilgiornale.it](http://www.ilgiornale.it)

[www.libero-news.it](http://www.libero-news.it)

[www.ilmanifesto.it](http://www.ilmanifesto.it)

[www.ilmfoglio.it](http://www.ilmfoglio.it)

[www.antefatto.it](http://www.antefatto.it)

Find ALL newspapers you are interested in on: <http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/italy.htm>

Watching Italian TV news online:

[www.tg1.rai.it](http://www.tg1.rai.it)

[www.tg2.rai.it](http://www.tg2.rai.it)

[www.tg3.rai.it](http://www.tg3.rai.it)

[www.tgcom.mediaset.it/tg5](http://www.tgcom.mediaset.it/tg5)

[www.tgcom.mediaset.it/studioaperto](http://www.tgcom.mediaset.it/studioaperto)

[www.tgcom.mediaset.it/tg4](http://www.tgcom.mediaset.it/tg4)

[www.la7.it/news](http://www.la7.it/news)

Stay informed – press agencies:

ANSA (in English) [www.ansa.it/web/notizie/rubriche/english/english.shtml](http://www.ansa.it/web/notizie/rubriche/english/english.shtml)