



DRAFT SYLLABUS

Machiavelli's Italy

Instructor: Priscilla Southwell

Language of Instruction: English

UO Credits: 5

Contact Hours*: 45

Total Hours of Student Engagement (THSE) in all course activities*:

Level: 300

Siena, Italy

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the impact of political conflict in the Tuscany region of Italy during 15th and 16th centuries, roughly corresponding to the rise of the Medici family (1434) and the writings of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527). This volatile period was a time of alternation in power between the Medici family and republican rule. (Machiavelli held both diplomatic and military posts during the latter type.) It was also a time of nearly continuous battles among the French, Spanish, and Austrians for control over the city-states of the northern Italy. Although Machiavelli never returned to government service after the Medici regained power in 1512, he was later accused of pro-Medici leanings. We will examine his writings in the context of the political world around him and discuss the impact of his philosophy of statecraft on modern politics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course will enable students to understand the political context of Niccolò Machiavelli's life and writings, as well as the modern application of his works. We will also examine various scholarly analyses of the impact of his writings on the modern world.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. understand the rise of city-states in northern Italy.
2. be able to assess the impact of religious, social, and political conflict on the lives of Tuscan inhabitants.
3. be familiar with substance and influence of Machiavelli's political philosophy.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

This class will have three class sessions a week, consisting of lectures/discussion. There will also be required day-long excursions to Florence (Firenze) & Bello, San Gimignano & Volterra, and Ferrara & Venice (2 nights), although all are subject to change by the Spring of 2027.

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Students will be evaluated as follows:

- 10% on a short quiz early in the term covering major historical figures as well as key geographic sites
- 25% each on three exams of essay and identification questions
- 15% on brief class presentations on *The Prince & Be Like the Fox & Discourses on Livy*, and class attendance

COURSE OUTLINE

- Week 1: Rise of Northern City-States of Venice, Pisa, Genoa, Milan, Florence; Conflict between the Guelphs and Ghibellines
- Week 2: The Renaissance; Battles among the French, Austrians, and Spanish
MAP/INFORMATION QUIZ
- Week 3: The Medici Dynasty: From Ascendancy (1434) to Duchy of Tuscany (1569);
Florentine Control over Siena under Cosimo I de Medici
- Week 4: The Political Career of Machiavelli: The Influence of Cesare Borgia
FIRST EXAM
- Week 5: Machiavelli's Discourses on Livy
- Week 6: Discourses (continued)
- Week 7: Machiavelli's The Prince
SECOND EXAM
- Week 8: The Prince (continued)
- Week 9: Analyses of Machiavelli's Work
- Week 10: Machiavelli and Modern Politics: Gramsci, Mussolini, et al.
THIRD EXAM

COURSE READINGS

- Benner, Erica. *Be Like the Fox: Machiavelli in his World*, Norton, 2017.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. *Discourses on Livy*. Oxford, 1997.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince*. Yale, 1996.
- Curry, Andrew. "Political Morality?" *The Washington Post*, January 13, 1999, p. 1101
- Holler, Manford J. "Niccolò Machiavelli on Power," in *Niccolò Machiavelli. Brill, 2011, pp. 27-47.*
- Pierpoint< Claudia Roth. "The Florentine Who Taught Rulers to Rule. " *The New Yorker*, September 15 2008.

Academic Misconduct

[The University Student Conduct Code](#) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before attempting an act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism.

Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Reporting

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender-based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment may seek resources and help at [Help for Victims and Survivors](#). To get help by phone, a student can also call either the UO's 24-hour confidential hotline at 541-346-7233 [SAFE], or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator at 541-346-2204. From the SAFE website, students may also connect to [Callisto](#), a confidential, third-party reporting site that is not a part of the university.

Students experiencing any other form of prohibited discrimination or harassment can find information at [How to Get Support](#). You can contact [Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance](#) through this link and at 541-346-3123, or the [Dean of Students Office](#) at 541-346-3216 for help. As UO policy has different reporting requirements based on the nature of the reported harassment or discrimination, additional information about reporting requirements for discrimination or harassment unrelated to sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment is available at [Discrimination & Harassment](#).

The instructor of this class, as a Student Directed Employee, will direct students who disclose sexual harassment or sexual violence to resources that can help and will only report the information shared to the university administration when the student requests that the

information be reported (unless someone is in imminent risk of serious harm or a minor). The instructor of this class is required to report all other forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment to the university administration. Specific details about confidentiality of information and reporting obligations of employees can be found at [Employee Reporting Responsibilities](#).

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GEs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about child abuse to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following links for detailed information about mandatory reporting: [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).