



## **CIEE Global Institute – Rome**

<b>Course name:</b>	Power, Politics and Law: Mafia, Camorra and Gomorrah
<b>Course number:</b>	POLI 3001 ROIT
<b>Programs offering course:</b>	Rome Open Campus (International Relations and Political Science Track)
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>U.S. semester credits:</b>	3
<b>Contact hours:</b>	45
<b>Term:</b>	Fall 2019

### **Course Description**

This course will explore the nature of organized crime by analyzing the development of major Italian organizations of this kind, active in their homeland and abroad, over the last 150 years. The range of our investigations includes social, political, economic and cultural aspects, covering questions such as: what do crime statistics and economic analyses reveal about organized crime? What are these organizations' codes and symbols? What is the relationship of organized crime to politics and other social institutions? A central goal is to challenge the many stereotypes, myths and misconceptions that continue to obscure adequate assessments of the phenomenon. While the principal focus of attention will be on the world's most famous criminal organization – the Sicilian Mafia – we will also look at the origins of the American Mafia as well as two organizations that have become increasingly powerful in Italy in recent decades: the Camorra, which originated in and around the city of Naples; and the 'Ndrangheta, based in the region of Calabria.

In order to fully understand the impact of organized crime on Italian society, the course will also examine the development of the anti-mafia; in other words the countless number of people who have fought organized crime and often died doing so. Rather than remembering the names of mafia bosses or dates of major crimes, the emphasis will be upon understanding the correlations between a series of dynamics, such as shifts in the concentration of illicit activities, different uses of violence and the transformation of national politics, so as to fully make sense of the material discussed in class, but also to be better equipped to comprehend the changes and events that will probably shape organized crime in the years to come.

### **Learning Objectives**

- By the end of the course, students will be able to:
- Understand the fundamental aspects of Italian organized crime and its relationship with Italian society and politics;



- Understand the crucial differences between the three main organizations: Mafia, Camorra, 'Ndrangheta;
- Understand the international reach of Italian organized crime;
- Develop a critical awareness of the stereotypes and myths surrounding the Sicilian Mafia and other criminal organizations;
- Understand the crucial role of the anti-mafia, both in fighting organized crime and in providing us with information about how it functions;
- Critically engage with cultural representations of Italian organized crime in film and literature

### **Course Prerequisites**

No specific prerequisites are needed for this course.

### **Methods of Instruction**

This course will combine lectures, class debates, walking tours, film screening and conversations with guest speakers.

### **Assessment and Final Grade**

Movie assignments:	15%
Mid Term exam:	20%
Oral Presentation:	20%
Final Exam:	25%
Class participation:	20%

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Movie Assignments**

Students will be asked to complete movie assignments by analyzing and interpreting movies on Italian organized crime. Reviews will also include relevant historical and cultural facts, as discussed in class. Professor will provide extensive and precise guidelines.

#### **Midterm Exam**

The Midterm Exam will consist of 5 questions. Answers should be 350 to 450 words each. Answers should demonstrate understanding of the concepts discussed in class.



### **Oral Presentation**

Presentations will be delivered during the weeks of classes. Each student will present on a specific topic related to organized crime in Italy. Formats will be discussed with the professor.

### **Final Exam**

Students will take a final exam at the end of the course. The exam (multiple choice test and short essays) will include all topics analyzed in class.

### **Participation**

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

### **Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1 content classes, or up to 2 language	Participation graded as per class requirements.



	classes	
10 – 20%	2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements; <b>written warning</b>
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 5 language classes	Automatic <b>course failure</b> , and possible expulsion

Please note this schedule is subject to change if opportunities arise to enhance the curriculum

### Weekly Schedule

#### **Week 1**

#### **An overview of Italian organized crime**

Class 1:1

After presenting the course contents, requirements and assessment methods, this session will introduce key approaches to interpreting organized crime and highlight some common stereotypes that hinder a serious understanding of the phenomenon. This session will also provide an overview of the three major Italian criminal organizations: the Mafia (aka Cosa Nostra), the Camorra and the 'Ndrangheta. The course's first film – *The Godfather* (1972) – will be introduced and discussed.

Readings:

Dickie "Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia. London: Hodder, 2007." Chapter 1: The Genesis of the Mafia 1860 - 1876

#### **Week 2**

#### **The origins of the Sicilian Mafia and its migration to the US**

Class 2:1

We will examine the rise of the Sicilian Mafia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and will tackle a key historical dispute: did the presence of the Mafia reflect the backwardness of Sicilian society or was it actually a product of the island's modernization? The second focus is the emergence of the Mafia in the United States at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at a time of mass transatlantic migration from Italy. We will consider how the American offshoot turned into a markedly different criminal organization, albeit one that would maintain influential links with its 'homeland'.

Readings:



Dickie "Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia. London: Hodder, 2007." Chapter 5: The Mafia Establishes Itself in America 1900–1941 (pp. 161-190)

Class 2:2

This session will address the post-war period, as the Sicilian Mafia becomes heavily involved in activities with which it is still often associated today: public works, building speculation and drugs. The postwar era also provides insight into the tensions that existed inside the organization and the subsequent strategy put in place to curb violence and safeguard business.

**Walking tour to the Italian Parliament**

**Due date for Submission of 1 Assignment Questions on *The Godfather***

**Week 3**

**The rise of the modern Mafia in postwar Sicily**

Class 3:1

Students will examine the impact of the Second World War and US occupation of Sicily as well as the birth of the new Italian Republic on the growth of the Mafia, following its apparent dormant state under the previous Fascist regime. It is during the 1950s – partly due to connivance among the ruling political class, partly due to influence from its US cousins – that the Sicilian Mafia becomes heavily involved in activities with which it is still often associated today: public works, building speculation and drugs. The postwar era also provides insights into the tensions that existed inside the organization and the subsequent strategy put in place to curb violence and safeguard business.

Readings:

Dickie *Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia*. London: Hodder, 2007." Chapters 7 and 8: "God, Concrete, Heroin, and Cosa Nostra 1950–1963" and "The 'First' Mafia War and its Consequences 1962–1969" (pp. 217-258)

Class 3:2

**Film screening and discussion: *The 100 Steps* (2002)** directed by Marco Tullio Giordana. Extract of the novel ***Day of the Owl*** by Leonardo Sciascia (first published in Italian in 1960) to be provided by the professor.



Following a group reading and discussion of the *Day of the Owl* extract, we will concentrate on the development of the anti-mafia – the generic term used for those who fight against organized crime in Italy – both within public institutions and in civil society. Depending on the weather, part of this lesson may be conducted in Rome’s ‘anti-mafia park’, which commemorates major figures who opposed the Mafia, many of whom were ultimately murdered by the organization.

Class 3:3 Mid term Exam

**Week 4 The Mafia vs. the Italian state**

Class 4:1 We will focus on the most dramatic chapter in the history of the Sicilian Mafia: the ascendancy of the Corleonesi family in the 1970s and 1980s, which coincided with a period of intense violence both within the organization itself and against the Italian state. The goal will be to understand why this violence escalated and how the response of the state ultimately led to the downfall of the Corleonesi. Attention will also be paid to major anti-mafia trials and legislation during the period and how these made a crucial contribution to our current understanding of the organization.

**Guest lecture by a member of the DIA, Antimafia Investigation Department**

Readings:  
Dickie *Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia*. London: Hodder, 2007.” Chapters 7 and 8: “God, Concrete, Heroin, and Cosa Nostra 1950–1963”

Class 4:2 The fallout following the state’s (bloody) defeat of the Corleonesi will be considered in terms of the current state of the Sicilian Mafia and the situation of anti-mafia initiatives.

**Field trip to the anti-mafia store and headquarters of the anti-mafia association Libera**

**Due date for Submission of 2 Assignment Questions on *The 100 Steps***

Readings:



Dickie *Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia*. London: Hodder, 2007." Chapter 8: "The 'First' Mafia War and its Consequences 1962–1969" (pp. 217-258).

## **Week 5**

### **The Camorra: the rise of a different criminal organization**

Class 5:1

We will examine the rise of the criminal organization located in and around Naples, and consider the extent to which it now eclipses the Sicilian Mafia in terms of wealth and influence. Long overlooked in popular culture, it has recently become the focus of film, literature and TV, especially since the success of the 2008 book and international bestseller ***Gomorrah***.

Readings:

Dickie "*Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia*. London: Hodder, 2007." Chapter 9: "The Origin of the Second Mafia War 1970–1982" (pp. 259-293)

Class 5:2

We will examine the relationship between gender and organized crime. In contrast to *Cosa Nostra*, women in the Camorra have often played a leading role in criminal activities. Does this make the Camorra a champion of equal rights or does it tell us something specific about the context in which the organization emerged? Screening of an episode of the internationally acclaimed TV series ***Gomorrah*** that focuses on the female figure of Imma, the head of the Savastano clan.

Readings:

Dickie "*Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia*. London: Hodder, 2007." Chapter 10: "Terra Infidelium 1983–1992" (pp. 293-311).

Screenings: Garrone M., *Gomorrah* (Film), 2008.

## **Week 6**

Class 6:1

### **Review Session**

Class debate on *Gomorrah's* representation of the Camorra and female involvement in organized crime.

Revision of the course's key themes for final exam

Class 6:2

### **Oral presentations**



Class 6:3

Final Exam

NOTE: this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.

### **Readings**

- Behan T. *See Naples and die. The Camorra and organized crime*. London: Tauris, 2002.
- Calderoni F, "Where is the mafia in Italy? Measuring the presence of the mafia across Italian provinces", *Global Crime*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2011.
- Dickie J. *Cosa Nostra. A history of the Sicilian Mafia*. London: Hodder, 2007.
- Fiandaca G. *Women and the Mafia: female roles in organized crime structures*. New York: Springer, 2007.
- Gambetta D. *Codes of the Underworld: how criminals communicate*. Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Ginsborg, P. "Corruption and the Mafia", in: Ginsborg P., *Italy and its discontents*. London: Penguin, 2001.
- Jamieson A. *The Antimafia. Italy's fight against organized crime*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- Lupo S. *The Two Mafias: A Transatlantic History 1888-2008*. New York: Palgrave, 2015.
- Paoli L. *Mafia Brotherhoods: organized crime, Italian style*. Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Saviano R. *Gomorra. Italy's other Mafia*. New York: MacMillan, 2007.
- Schneider P. T., Schneider J., *Reversible Destiny: Mafia, Antimafia, and the Struggle for Palermo*. Berkeley: UCP, 2003.
- Sciascia L. *The Day of the Owl*. New York: NYRB Classics, 2003.
- Varese, F. "Mafia movements: a framework for understanding the mobility of mafia groups", *Global Crime*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 2011.

Further reading materials will be assigned on a week-by-week basis.

Professor will provide a complete list of complementary readings, media sources and articles published in national and international media in order to stimulate class debates and activities.

### **Film and TV Resources**

- Coppola F. F., *The Godfather* (Film), 1972.
- Garrone M., *Gomorra* (Film), 2008.
- Giordana T., *100 Steps* (Film), 2000.
- Lattuada A., *Il Mafioso* (Film), 1962.



Newell M., *Donnie Brasco* (Film), 1997.  
Pif, *The Mafia Kills Only in Summer* (Film), 2013.  
Sollima S., *Gomorrah* (TV Series), 2014.