



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Storia delle Istituzioni Pol. Sociali I

2021-1-F5701R020

Course title

Modernity and the pursuit of happiness

Topics and course structure

The course is mainly focused on European social, political and cultural history in early modern times (from 1450 to the early 19th century), always selecting monographic subjects that are also relevant to present day concerns. The general purpose is to develop *intellectual and cultural tools for a better understanding of society*.

The culture of early modernity changed the perception of the notion of happiness and in the century preceding the French Revolution the debate on this was so obsessive that some have called that period the «age of happiness». Happiness remains, for us, both a personal and a political notion, strictly linked to the issues of rights, of the relation between the individual and government, of the goals and quality of states and institutions, both national and supranational. At the time of the American and French revolutions the problem of winning spaces for the pursuit of happiness involved new public actors such as the popular classes and women.

Objectives

Working on and with historical facts and historiographical notions, the course helps develop core skills which will enable students to understand different social, cultural, institutional and organizational contexts:

Developing historical awareness and knowledge, as a means of knowing and measuring our own social and political reality (Knowledge and Understanding);

Applying understanding even in *unfamiliar* frameworks and fields (Applying Knowledge and Understanding);

Developing independent judgement, through critical analysis and the integration of sources and information(Making Judgements);

Developing the ability to identify and communicate problems and ideas (Communication Skills).

Methodologies

Lectures, collective debates; discussion of group presentations to develop the application of knowledge and understanding and communication skills.

Due to the Covid situation, the lectures will be delivered remotely. Lectures will be asynchronous, but synchronous events dedicated to discussion and seminars will be scheduled periodically.

Online and offline teaching materials

Presentations, including quotations on slides, images, videos.

Programme and references for attending students

There is only **one text** common to all students who attend the course: A.Trampus, *Il diritto alla felicità. Storia di un'idea*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2008 (also available in e-book).

A **second text** will be selected on an individual or small group basis. The bibliography will be provided in the introductory lectures.

Students not proficient in Italian who attend the course please contact the professor about bibliography

Programme and references for non-attending students

Students who do not attend the course are required to read four books on censorship and freedom of expression in modernity:

1) M. Infelise, *I libri proibiti da Gutenberg all'Encyclopédie*, Roma- Bari, Laterza, 2007 (available in e-book).

or

S. Landi, *Stampa, censura e opinione pubblica in età moderna*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2011.

2) A. Foa, *Giordano Bruno*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2015.

3) R. Darnton, *L'età dell'informazione. Una guida non convenzionale al Settecento*, Milano, Adelphi, 2007.

4) F. Braudel, *Storia, misura del mondo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2015.

Assessment methods

Oral exam on course materials, the common text and a short individual written presentation on the selected second text.

Oral exam on the bibliography for non-attending students.

The candidate should show an ability to organize the themes proposed by the reading list into a solidly coherent personal presentation showing a good awareness of factual data. The evaluation depends upon the overall cohesion of the candidate's thinking and his or her clarity in organizing replies to the questions or themes of discussion proposed by the examiner.

While the Covid emergency persists, the exams will all be remote, through Webex platform. Links to the online exam events will be provided in the e-learning page of the course.

Office hours

During the Covid emergency, office hours will be substituted by online meetings by appointment. Do write an e-mail to the professor to schedule your meeting!

Programme validity

Two years

Course tutors and assistants

dr. Nicoletta Rolla
