



Immigration, Politics, and Religion in the Euro-Mediterranean Space

MDES/EURO 3500 (3 credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Tunisia and Italy: Politics and Religious Integration in the Mediterranean

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Description

Mass migration across the Euro-Mediterranean region has refocused the debate on Europe's absorption capacity and immigrant integration. This interdisciplinary seminar takes Sicily as a case study to analyze the underpinnings of EU "open-door" policy and its impact on immigrant and religious "integration" and social cohesions in Europe. Students critically interrogate the viability of the nation-state as an integrative political category, analyze ways in which immigrant religious identity interacts with the idea of a laic Europe, and revisit conceptual articulations of the notions of citizenship and multiculturalism in light of political and cultural hegemonies based on the exclusion and marginalization of "otherness." Lectures and field visits will also allow students to examine pressing issues of language and identity, Islam and religious affiliation as they interact with European secular modernity and impact subjectivity, political engagement, and integration. Contra the assimilationist discourse about exclusion, students are encouraged to think through counter-hegemonic ethics of inclusive solidarities. This seminar is delivered during the program's 3-week excursion to Italy.

Learning Outcomes

The Refugees and the Rethinking of Europe seminar comprises 45 class hours of instruction (3 credits). Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of immigration and integration policies in Italy;
- Show awareness of the challenges facing immigrant integration in Italy and Europe;
- Demonstrate understanding of the complexities surrounding immigrant integration of Islam as a ritual practice and as a public marker of identity in Italy and the EU space;
- Critique the impact of assimilationist and isolationist ideologies on a possible reconfiguration of European space;

- Produce a comparative critical paper analyzing the potential and challenges of an inclusive European space and a design for immigrant integration;

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English. Students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of politics and religion through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

Course Schedule

*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

Module 1: Italy and EU Migration Policy

This module provides an overview of Italy's history with migration and migration policy. Once an emigration country, Italy stands today as an important host of immigrants and refugees from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. The module assesses the strength of the country's immigration and integration policies by incorporating the views of NGOs working directly with immigrants and refugees and examines the stereotyped representation of Southern Italians' emigration to Northern Italy by their fellow northerners. The module also examines the impact of EU general orientation towards the *refoulement* (deportation) of undocumented immigrants, cuts in immigrant benefits, and politicians' desire to make their countries "less appealing to refugees" on immigrant integration and human rights protection.

Sessions include:

- From an Emigration to a Host Country: Overview of Italy's Migration Policy
- The Palermo Accord and Immigrant Protection
- Immigration Laws and Immigrant 'Punishment'
- How Immigrants Are Adapting to the Legal Migration Framework?

Required Readings:

Andrijasevic, Rutvica (2010) From exception to excess: detention and deportations across the Mediterranean space. De Genova, Nicholas and Nathalie Peutz. Eds. *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 147-165.

Marquand, David (2011) *The End of the West: the Once and Future Europe*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, chap. I (Prologue), pp. 8-13.

Triandafyllidou, Anna (2016) Migration and asylum in the twenty-first century. In Triandafyllidou, Anna (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Immigration and Refugee Studies*. New York: Routledge.

Module 2: Muslim Immigrants, Gender, and Secularism in Europe

This module addresses the pressing issues of gender equity and Islam and their interaction with European secular modernity. Europe has maintained an ambivalent relationship with Islam and Muslims over centuries. Muslim immigrant interventions in the public sphere challenge Europe's dominant narratives of secularism, gender equity, and cultural identity. While the debate often embeds forms of xenophobia and Islamophobia, it also opens up Western systems of modernity to alternative forms of representation.

Sessions include:

- Muslims in the Western Imagination: Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism
- Media Representation of Muslim Men in Europe

- Refugee Women and Violence
- Islam and the Public Sphere in Europe
- Gender Equity and Refugee Integration

Required Readings:

Göle, Nilüfer (2015) *Islam and Secularity: the Future of Europe's Public Sphere*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Arjana, Sophia Rose (2015) *Muslims in the Western Imagination*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Ewing, Katherine (2008) *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Module 3: Immigrant Integration and the “Populist Wave”

This module analyzes the rise of radical right and populist ideologies across Europe and examines its impact on the future of Europe as an integrative space and its relation with its southern neighbors and the rest of the world. While the radical right has been gaining momentum as an electorate force since the 1990s, in particular in Italy, the recent mass migration has further propelled populism and assimilationist ideologies as a force to reckon with across Europe. The module will address the impact of radical right agenda on EU immigration public policy and the future of an integrative European space. Students will be encouraged to draw parallels between European populism, the populist platform of Islamist parties, and the rise of right-wing politics in the US.

Sessions include:

- Geographies of Xenophobia: Radical Right and the Question of Immigrants
- Immigrant Integration in the Context of Right-Wing Politics
- Right-Wing Politics and Democracy
- Neo-Fascism, Memory, and the Politics of the Present
- Ideology and Transnationalism: Right-Wing Politics in Europe and in the US:

Required Readings:

Arter, David (2011) *Inside the Radical Right: the development of Anti-Immigration parties in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bruter, Michael and Harrison, Sarah (2012) *Mapping Extreme Right Ideology: an Empirical Geography of the European Extreme Right*. London: Palgrave.

Mamonne, Andrea et al (2012) *Mapping the Extreme Right in Europe: from Local to Transnational*. London: Routledge.

Mudde, C. and Kaltwasser, Rovira R. (2013) *Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or Corrective for Democracy?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Module 4: Immigrant Integration and the Politics of Language

This module focuses on the politics of language as they related to immigrant integration. Viewed as an important marker of integration, the language of the immigrant functions as an ambivalent site where the immigrant subjectivities and trajectories are reconstructed as they interact with the language and cultural field of the host community. The immigrant often inscribes in the language of their host culture traces of their own ethnicity, mother-tongue accent, and worldview. Their inscriptions implode the linguistic and cultural field of the host language just as they themselves undergo transformative cultural transformation. Also, while a mastery of the language of the host country is often a required skill for [good] employment, the immigrant's mother-tongue language embodies the immigrant's ethno-cultural identity and ties to the country of origin.

Sessions include:

- Is an Immigrant Integration Possible Without Language Learning?
- The Arabic Language and Immigrant Religious Identity
- Second-Generation Immigrants and Language Use
- Language and Ties to the Country of origin

Required Readings:

Ricucci, Roberta (2014) *Second generations on the Move in Italy: Children of Immigrants Coming of Age*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington.

Laurence, Johnathan (2012) *The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims: The State's Role in Minority Integration*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Module 5: Reimagining Euro-Mediterranean Relations

This module aims to revisit the idea of Europe through the lens of diversity and inclusion not only from within the space of its member states but also from the perspective of its southern neighbors. Students reflect on the viability of the nation-state as an integrative political category and the dominance of the discourse about exclusion (Brexit; economic insolvability; refugees) and think through alternative ethics of solidarity and inclusion. The objective is to map new borderland spaces of inclusion, belonging, and interaction that are emerging from within 'Fortress Europe.'

Sessions include:

- Whose Europe Is it Anyway? Migration and Historical Constructions of Europe
- Immigrant Integration and the Politics of Exclusion and Inclusion
- Cultural Identity and Belonging in a New European Landscape
- Spaces of Diversity and Inclusion: Culture and the Arts

Required Readings:

McNamara, Kathleen (2015) *The Politics of Everyday Europe: Constructing Authority in the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zincone, Giovanna, Penninx, Rinus, and Borkert, Maren (2012) *Migration Policymaking in Europe: The Dynamics of Actors and Contexts in Past and Present*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

Description of Assignments:

- During the semester, students will be required to write one critical paper to discuss aspects of immigrant life in Italy and Europe. The paper should be about 6 pages long.
- Students will also think through a creative approach to immigrant integration. This project can either document an existing program in Italy or the blueprint of a project thought through and proposed by the student.
- Students will provide a 10 to 15 minute presentation of the design for immigrant integration project.
- Attendance during the thematic seminar is mandatory and your grade will reflect your involvement in class and during other activities and excursions.

Assessment:

Critical Paper	50%
Design for Immigrant Integration	30%
Oral Presentation of Immigrant Integration	10%

Grading Scale:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64%	F

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of classmates, lecturers, and local constituents). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.

Academic Policies: SIT prides itself on providing students with an experientially based program; we hold ourselves, and our students, to the highest of academic standards. Students are asked to refer to the **SIT Study Abroad Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process.