

Course title: Society and Politics in Contemporary Spain

Language of instruction: English

Professor: Óscar García Jaén

Professor's contact and office hours: By email (in-person before the class)

Course contact hours: 45

Recommended credit: 6 ECTS credits

Course prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course

Language requirements:

Recommended level in the European Framework B2 (or equivalent: Cambridge Certificate if the teaching language is English or DELE).

Course focus and approach:

This course uses the tools of political science, sociology, and economics to study the main political, social, and economic characteristics of Spanish contemporary history. The course's main goal is to give students an overview of the key contemporary drivers of current political debates in Spain, with a particular interest on the Catalan case. The course will take an analytical approach to provide students with tools to understand Spanish contemporary history. In addition, the course takes a comparative approach that will allow students to understand why some countries have followed a similar/different path in many important characteristics.

Course description:

This course is divided into three parts. The first part will cover the main events in Spanish contemporary history, paying special attention to the key elements that had an impact on the current institutional, economic, and political configuration. The second part will focus on the institutional characteristics of Spain, such as the role of the Constitution and the main institutions, the electoral system, or the party system. Finally, the third part will examine the main drivers of political behaviour, as well as the role of political culture and political attitudes.

Learning objectives:

At the end of this course the students:

Will have acquired analytical skills to understand the main political, social and economic characteristics of contemporary Spain.

Will be able to distinguish the differences and similarities between Spain's political characteristics and other contexts across contemporary democracies.

Will have developed the ability to interpret complex data, as well as to understand the



most common tools used in political science to analyse the political reality.

Course workload and teaching methodology:

Classes are based on lectures and on in-class simulations and games. Lectures will take a small part of the class and students are expected to actively contribute to the discussion. There will be an assigned reading each week. Students must read the assigned reading/s before the class.

Assessment criteria:

The final grade will be determined as follows.

Midterm exam: 25%

Final exam: 40%

Class participation: 35%

BaPIS absence policy:

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. Missing classes will impact on the student's final grade as follows:

Absences	Penalization
Up to two (2) absences	No penalization
Three (3) absences	1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Four (4) absences	2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Five (5) absences or more	The student receives an INCOMPLETE ("NO PRESENTADO") for the course

The BaPIS attendance policy does not make a distinction between justified and unjustified absences. All absences—whether due to common short-term illnesses or personal reasons—are counted toward the total amount and cannot be excused. Therefore, students are responsible for managing all their absences.

Only in cases of longer absences—such as hospitalization, prolonged illness, traumatic events, or other exceptional situations—will absences be considered for exceptions with appropriate documentation. The Academic Director will review these cases on an individual basis.

Students must inform the Instructor and the International Programs Office promptly via email if serious circumstances arise.

Classroom norms:

- No food or drink is permitted in class.



- Students will have a ten-minute break in two-hour sessions.

Weekly schedule:

Week 1

22/09: Course introduction -- State formation and History's Long Shadow

24/09: History of Spain from Its Formation to 20th Century

Week 2

29/09: The Spanish Second Republic and the Civil War

01/10: The Francoist Regime

Week 3

06/10: The Transition to Democracy

08/10: Mid-term Exam

10/10: On-line Class

Week 4

13/10: The Separation of Powers

15/10: Presidentialist and Parliamentary
Systems

Week 5

20/10: Political Parties and Primary Elections

22/10: Electoral System

Week 6

27/10: Nationalism and Secession

29/10: The Catalan Movement for Independence

Week 7

03/11: Unitary and Federal States

05/11: The Spanish Territorial System

Week 8

10/11: The European Progress of Integration

12/11: The European Union

Week 9

17/11: Nationalism and Secession

19/11: The Catalan Movement for Independence



Week 10

24/11: 15-M, Podemos, and Populism

26/11: Culture Wars in Spain

Week 11

01/11: Visit to the Catalan Parliament

03/11: Exam