Course Syllabus: Society & Politics in Contemporary Spain

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Professor:** Andrea Noferini

**Professor's Contact and Office Hours:** Mondays (to be confirmed) – Office 20.100

**Course Contact Hours:** 45 hours

**Recommended Credit:** 6 ECTS credits

**Weeks:** 5

**Course Prerequisites:** This course is oriented to students interested in Spanish politics. The course does not assume prior knowledge of Spanish and/or European politics.

**Language Requirements:** None

**Schedules:** Monday to Thursday, from 11 am to 1.15 pm

**Course Description:**

Brief description of the course. Example:

Once labeled by Newsweek magazine as the “coolest city in Europe,” Barcelona enjoys the reputation of a cosmopolitan city with a great international projection. Like all places, however, it is not without its complexities and contradictions. Behind a glossy and tourist-friendly façade, the city has a complex history. This course introduces the student to the city of Barcelona by studying its past and analyzing its present. This interdisciplinary course covers subject in history, geography, art, architecture, and urban planning. Materials include images, maps, academic and literary texts, videos, field studies, and documentaries. We will also discuss issues relevant to people living within the city of Barcelona today

**Keywords:** Spain, Spanish politics, electoral behavior, political actors, institutions.

**Learning Objectives:**

At the end of this course the students will be able: 1) to understand the development and working of the Spanish political system in the last decades; 2) to comprehend the relationship between democracy and Spanish politics; 3) to become familiar with the key literature on Spanish and European comparative politics.

**Course Workload**

The workload of the course rests on the assigned readings that students are expected to complete prior to coming to class and to contribute to discussion during seminars. That is, during lectures, I will pose questions to encourage students’ participation and developing critical thinking. Students are expected to actively participate along the course with exercise, in-group activities and debates. Finally they will have to make a home midterm exam and also home final exam.

**Methods of Instruction:**

The course is structured in both lecture and seminar formats. Classes usually start with an introductory lecture where the professor will present the most relevant issues of the topic at stake. Topics are grouped into weekly format which include students’ activities oriented to relate concepts, to express original ideas as well as to develop their critical thinking on the topics under study. In addition, we will make a number of selected field studies during the course aimed at visiting the most relevant international and national organization here in Barcelona such as the Parliament of Catalonia and the representation of the institutions of the European Union in Barcelona.
Method of Assessment
The final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Class attendance and participation: 10%
- Group activities: 30%
- Take Home Midterm exam: 30%
- Final exam: 30%

Absence Policy
Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. The impact of absences on the final grade is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absences</th>
<th>Penalization</th>
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<tr>
<td>Up to two (2) absences</td>
<td>No penalization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three (3) absences</td>
<td>1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four (4) absences</td>
<td>2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Five (5) absences or more</td>
<td>The student receives an INCOMPLETE for the course</td>
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The BISS attendance policy does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences. The student is deemed responsible to manage his/her absences.

Emergency situations (hospitalization, family emergency, etc.) will be analyzed on a case by case basis by the Academic Director of the UPF Summer School.

Classroom Norms:
- No food or drink is permitted in class
- Students will have a ten-minute break after one-hour session

Course Contents:

Session 1 - Course description
Introduction to the Course, Objectives, Course format, Principal contents and overview of the course.
No readings

Session 2 – Basics Facts of the Spanish Political System and Spanish Society
Readings:
Chislett, William, 2016, A New Course for Spain: Beyond the Crisis, Real Instituto Elcano:
http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/wcm/connect/4042b2804bb4115fa0a5ba6e9c1af357/Chislett-New-course-for-Spain-beyond-crisis.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=4042b2804bb4115fa0a5ba6e9c1af357
Recommended reading:

Session 3 –The Legacy of History: the Institutional legacy of Francoism
Institutional legacies – The absence of a tradition of democratic stability- From dictatorship to democracy- The Emergence of democratic institutions.
Readings:

**Recommended readings:**
North, ´An Introduction to Institutions and Institutional Change´, in Institutions and Institutional Change and Economic Performance, pp. 3-10.

**Session 4 - Transition from Dictatorship to Democracy I: Theories of Democratization**
The democratic moment- What democracy is ... and is not-Democracy´s Third and Fourth Waves – Dangers and dilemmas of democracy – Explanatory factors for the consolidation of a democracy.

**Reading:**

**Recommended reading:**

**Session 5 – Transition from Dictatorship to Democracy II: The Spanish Case**

**Reading:**

**Recommended reading:**

**Session 6 - The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy I: Parlamentarism versus Presidentialism, the Central Government, the executive and the Monarchy**

**Readings:**
Lijphart, ´Parliaments: Concentration vs. Sharing of Legislative Power´, in Democracies, pp. 90-105.

**Recommended readings:**
Eaton, Ken, ´Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism`, Comparative Politics 32 : 355-376.

**Session 7 – The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy III- The structure of the Spanish state: The Autonomous Regions (Comunidades Autónomas)**
From authoritarian centralism to the Estado de las Autonomías – Theoretical models of decentralised power -Institutionalizing the Estado de las Autonomías – The natura of the sytem – The problems and the consequences of the system.

**Reading:**

**Recommended readings:**

**Session 8 - The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy IV: Political Parties and Party System in Spain**

**Reading:**

**Recommended reading:**

**Session 9 – Simulation session**

**Session 10 - The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy V: Legislatives in Spanish Politics**

**Reading:**

**Recommended readings:**

**Session 11 – Midterm (take home exam)**

**Session 12 – The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy VI: The judiciary within the Spanish Political System**

**Reading:**
Heywood, The Judiciary and the State of the Law, pp. 103-120.

**Recommended readings:**
Maravall, El Estado de Derecho como arma política, in ´El Control de los Políticos´, pp. 168-222.
Session 13 - The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy VIII: The Spanish Media as political actors
Mass media and democracy – Regulating the media (the public service model/ the market model) – Theories of mass media – The impact of the media in the legislative, the executive and the judiciary in Spain – Ownership and control of the media in Spain.

Reading:

Recommended readings:

Session 14 – The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy IX: The Electoral System in Spain
Types of electoral system – Plurality and majority systems – Proportional representation in Spain – Why the electoral system matter.

Reading:

Recommended reading:

Session 15 – Elections, political competition and the Spanish voter

Reading:

Recommended reading:

Session 16 – Political culture and political participation in Spain
Cultural legacies: a tradition of discontinuities – Political attitudes in Spain - Dissatisfaction and Disaffection – Moderation and (Center) Leftism – Materialism and postmaterialism - Regional subcultures – Regionalist and nationalist identities.

Reading:

Recommended reading:

Session 17 - Visit to the Parliament (to be confirmed)
Session 18 – The Europeanization of the Spanish Political System
The European integration process – Europeanization and institutional analysis – Effects of the Europeanization process in the Spanish political system – The merger between the domestic and the European policy processes.

Reading:

Recommended reading:

Session 19 – visit to Eu institutions in Barcelona (to be confirmed)

Session 20 – General Conclusion: The Spanish Democracy. Majoritarian or Pluralistic?
Formal conclusions of the course with respect to the main political and institutional characteristics of the Spanish political system within a comparative perspective.

Reading:

Recommended reading:

Session 21 – Final conclusions of the course (by students)

Session 22 – Final exam

Required Readings:


**Recommended bibliography:**

Chislett, William, 2016, A New Course for Spain: Beyond the Crisis, Real Instituto Elcano:

http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/wcm/connect/4042b2804bb4115fa0a5ba6e9c1af357/Chislett-New-course-for-Spain-beyond-crisis.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=4042b2804bb4115fa0a5ba6e9c1af357


Eaton, Ken, ´Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism`, Comparative Politics 32 : 355-376.


STONE-SWEET, A., 2000, Governing with judges: Constitutional politics in Europe, Oxford University Press, pp. 31-60.


Last revised, February 2018