Course Syllabus - Society & Politics in Contemporary Spain

**Language of instruction:** English  
**Professor:** Enric Martinez-Herrera  
**Professor’s contact and office hours:** By email appointment (enric.martinez@upf.edu)  
**Course contact hours:** 45  
**Recommended credit:** 3 US credits-5 ECTS credits  
**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:** English first certificate or equivalent

**Course description:**  
This course is designed to give both political science and non-political science majors a robust overview of key features of Spanish Politics. The core of the course is the study of the nature and functioning of the Spanish democratic system established by the late seventies. It pays special attention to the main political processes, institutions, actors, belief systems and political behaviour in the country, including contemporary political violence and international immigration. At the beginning of the course, some sessions will be devoted to study the previous Spanish democratic experience (1931-1936), its collapse (1936-1939), the authoritarian rule imposed afterwards and the Spanish transition to democracy (1975-1978), episodes that have left their mark on the features of the current Spanish political system.

**Learning objectives:**  
At the end of this course the students will be able:  
1) to understand the dynamics of the current Spanish democracy;  
2) to analyze the historical development of the Spanish political system;  
3) to become familiar with the scholarly 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. Students will also be encouraged to undertake viva voce presentations in the class supported with visual tools such as Power Point. 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. In the first part of each session there will be a lecture where the professor will present the most relevant issues of the topic at stake. In the second part there will be a seminar where students will have the opportunity to relate concepts, to express their ideas as well as to develop their critical thinking on the topics under study. In addition, we will make two field studies during the course. The first one will be a simulation of the National Elections in Spain through which students will be able to know in detail which are the main political parties and which type of ideas they defend across different policy areas. The second field study will be a guided visit to the Catalan Parliament where students will be able to know in detail the political power that the Spanish Constitution has transferred to Autonomous regions in Spain.

**Method of assessment:**  
The final grade will be calculated as follows:  
- Class attendance and participation: 10%
• Presentations: 20%
• Take Home Midterm exam: 30%
• Final exam: 40%

Absence policy:
Attendance to class is mandatory and will be daily monitored by professors. Missing classes will impact on the student’s final grade as it follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absences</th>
<th>Penalization</th>
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<tr>
<td>Up to two (2) absences</td>
<td>Two absences are permitted and not penalized.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three (3) absences</td>
<td>-1 point out of final grade (on a /10 scale)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four (4) absences</td>
<td>-2 points out of final grade (on a /10 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 Study Abroad attendance policy does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences. The student is responsible to manage his/her absences around the two permitted ones.

Emergency situations (hospitalization, family emergency…) will be analyzed on a case by case basis by the Director of UPF Study Abroad Programs.

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

Weekly schedule:
NB: For full references, check with the list of References at the end

WEEK 1

Session 1 - Course description and The Contemporary Background to the Second Republic: An Oligarchic Legacy

Introduction to the Course: Objectives, Course Format, Principal Contents and Overview of the Course. The Contemporary Background to the Second Republic: An Oligarchic Legacy.

Readings: None

Recommended Reading:

Brenan, Gerald. 1960. The Spanish Labyrinth. Parts I, II and Appendices

Session 2 – The Spanish Second Republic and the Spanish War 1936-1939

Readings:


**Recommended Readings:**
Jackson, Gabriel. 1965. The Spanish Republic and the Civil War. At large.

**WEEK 2**

**Session 3 – The Francoist Regime. Its nature and collapse. The institutional legacies of Francoism.**

**Reading:**
Carr, Raymond; Juan Pablo Fussi, Spain Dictatorship to Democracy, pp. 15-48.

**Recommended Reading:**

**Session 4 – The Spanish Transition from Dictatorship to Democracy**

**Reading:**
Gunther, Richard; José Ramón Montero; Joan Botella, Democracy in Modern Spain, pp. 79-107.

**Recommended readings:**
Bunce, Valery, "Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Generalizations."


Preston, Paul, The Triumph of Democracy in Spain, pp. 53-121.

**WEEK 3**

**Session 5 – The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy I: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism**


**Reading:**
Recommended reading:


**Session 6 - The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy II: The head of the state and the central government**


**Reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


**WEEK 4**

**Session 7 – The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy III- The territorial structure of the Spanish state: a federation but in name**

From authoritarian centralism to the Estado de las Autonomías – Theoretical models of decentralised power -Institutionalizing the Estado de las Autonomías – The nature of the system – The problems and the consequences of the system.

**Reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


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


**Reading:**
Gunther, Richard; José Ramón Montero; Joan Botella, Democracy in Modern Spain, pp. 198-237.

Recommended reading:


WEEK 5

Session 9 – The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy V: Legislatives in Spanish Politics


Reading:


Recommended reading:


Session 10 - Simulation session

WEEK 6

Session 11 – The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy VI: The judiciary and the mass-media in the Spanish Political System


Readings:


Recommended readings:


Stone-Sweet, A., 2000, Governing with judges: Constitutional politics in Europe, pp. 31-60.

Session 12 – Midterm (take home exam)

WEEK 7

Session 13 - The Institutions of the Spanish Democracy IX: The Electoral System in Spain [Wed, Nov. 10th]

Types of electoral system – Plurality and majority systems – Proportional representation in Spain – Why the electoral system matter.

Reading:


Recommended reading:


Session 14 – Elections, political competition and the Spanish voter


Reading:


Recommended reading:


WEEK 8

Session 15 – 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 16 – Nationalisms in Spain

Reading:


Recommended reading:

Linz, Juan J.m “From Primordialism to Nationalism”.

WEEK 9

Session 17 – Political Violence and Terrorism in Today’s Spain

Reading:


Recommended readings:

Funes, María José, “Social responses to political violence in the Basque Country: peace movements and their audience.”


Session 18 – Visit to the Parliament

WEEK 10

Session 19 – The Politics of Immigration in Spain

Reading:

**Recommended readings:**


**Session 20 - 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:**

Closa and Heywood, 2004, “Institutional adaptation: reshaping political structures”

**Recommended readings:**

Arregui, Javier, “Europeización y Transformación Institucional del Sistema Político Español,”.

Díez-Medrano, Juan, Framing Europe.

**WEEK 11**

**Session 21 – General Conclusion: The Spanish Democracy. Oligarchic or Democratic? Majoritarian or Pluralistic? Integrative or Divisive?**

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:**

Colomer, Josep Maria, Political Institutions, chapter 1, pp. 1-17.

**Session 22- Final exam**
WEEK 12

Session 23 – Final conclusions of the course (by students)

Required readings:

NB: For required readings, course reading pack prepared by professor.


Carr, Raymond; Juan Pablo Fusi, Spain Dictatorship to Democracy: pp. 15-47.


Heywood, The Judiciary and the State of the Law (103-120)

Heywood, The Electoral System, in The Government and Politics of Spain (pp 165-173)


**Recommended bibliography:**

NB: Recommended bibliography, which is used in student presentations, should be available at the Library of University Pompeu Fabra.


Lijphart, Arend. 1999, Patterns of democracy: government forms and performance in thirty-six countries, Yale University Press. (pp. 185-199)


Preston, Paul, The Triumph of Democracy in Spain, pp. 53-121.

