

POL 372 Contemporary Spanish Politics

Professor: Pablo del Rio Loira
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Office Hours: Via email

Course information:
Spring 2024
Tuesdays and Thursdays
10:30-12:00

Course Description

This class will introduce students to the important historical, political, social, and economic aspects of contemporary Spanish politics. Firstly, it will examine the legacy of the Franco regime and the transition to democracy after 1975. Secondly, it will focus on the new political, social, and economic institutions of the democratic regime. Lastly, it will immerse students in current situation in Spanish politics.

Course Goals and Methodology

The aim of this course is to introduce the students to the main debates surrounding the Spanish political system. During the 26 sessions of the course, different aspects of Spanish politics will be tackled.

Firstly, the course will question the historical roots of the current political system in Spain. Features like the Second Republic, the Civil War, Francoism, and the Transition to democracy will be analyzed in order to stress their relevance on current Spanish contemporary politics.

The second part of the course will deal with the different actors that structure Spanish politics. The role and structure of core institutions, political parties, social movements, lobbies, bureaucracy, mass media and political elites will be assessed.

Thirdly, the course will focus on the dynamics structuring the political system. Those dynamics include the processes of decentralization, Europeanization, internationalization. The rise of the Spanish welfare state, the state and nation building process, the new developments affecting the political culture, or the effects of the electoral system will be tackled.

Each session will be based on a fundamental question (e.g. Is Spain evolving towards federalism?). The professor will provide quantitative and qualitative data about that issue, and an open discussion will conclude each session. Different educational methods and techniques will be applied: debates, presentations, readings, videos, and an oratory contest will help students to get the basic knowledge about the Spanish political system.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the recent developments in Spanish politics.

2. Debate about the current state of Spanish politics.
3. Make the distinction between the different concepts of political science (state, nation, power, institutions, social movements, pressure groups...).

Supporting Texts

Anduiza, E., Cristancho, C., & Sabucedo, J. M. (2014). Mobilization through online social networks: the political protest of the indignados in Spain. *Information, Communication & Society*, 17(6), 750-764.

Gal, J. (2010). Is there an extended family of Mediterranean welfare states?. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 20(4), 283-300. *18th November – Campaigning & elections in a comparative perspective*

Llorens Maluquer, C. (2010). Spain's media concentration policy: A patchwork crucial to the understanding of the Spanish media system. *International Journal of Communication*, 4, 0844-864.

Maurer, L. M. (1999). Parliamentary influence in a new democracy: The Spanish congress. *The Journal of legislative studies*, 5(2), 24-45.

Miley, T. J. (2011). Franquism as Authoritarianism: Juan Linz and his Critics. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 12(1), 27-50.

Montero, J. R., Gunther, R., & Torcal, M. (1997). Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, discontent, and disaffection. *Studies in comparative international development*, 32(3), 124-160.

Pallarés, F., & Keating, M. (2003). Multi-level electoral competition: regional elections and party systems in Spain. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 10(3), 239-255.

Sala, G. (2013). *Federalism without adjectives in Spain. Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 44(1), 109-134.

Sanchez-Cuenca, I. (2007). *The dynamics of nationalist terrorism: ETA and the IRA. Terrorism and Political Violence*, 19(3), 289-306.

Schatz, S. (2001). Democracy's breakdown and the rise of fascism: The case of the Spanish Second Republic, 1931–6. *Social History*, 26(2), 145-165.

Course Requirements and Grading

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Participation: 15%
- Midterm exam: 25 %
- Party manifesto/platform: 20 %
- Electoral debate: 15%
- Inaugural debate: 15%
- Final exam: 10%

Participation

In-class discussions will be encouraged at all sessions. Class participation will therefore be graded according to the students' previous work and reflections about the provided material. Active participation means not only attendance (being there ≠ participation) but discussion with relevant basis (text-based and not just random personal experience and background), asking and answering questions in class, engaging in class discussions and conversations with class mates, questioning information presented and discussed.

Students are also expected to actively participate in in-class exercises and to do some homework. Participation points will be assigned based on the following criteria:

	Exemplary (9-10)	Proficient (8-9)	Developing (7-8)	Unacceptable (0-7)
Frequency of participation in class	Student initiates contributions more than once in each class.	Student initiates contribution once in each class.	Student initiates contribution at least in half of the classes.	Student does not initiate contribution & needs instructor to solicit input
Quality of comments	Comments always insightful & constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions & specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.	Comments mostly insightful & constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.	Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student does not use appropriate terminology; comments not always relevant to the discussion.	Comments are uninformative, lacking in appropriate terminology. Heavy reliance on opinion & personal taste, e.g., "I love it", "I hate it", "It's bad" etc.
Listening Skills	Student listens attentively when others present	Student is mostly attentive when others present ideas, materials, as	Student is often inattentive and needs reminder of	Does not listen to others; regularly

	materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others' remarks, i.e., student hears what others say & contributes to the dialogue.	indicated by comments that reflect & build on others' remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from T.A of focus of comment.	focus of class. Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking.	talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, etc.
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- The dates for exams and presentation cannot be changed under any circumstances.
- Spanish grades run: 10-9.0 (A), 8.9-7.0 (B), 6.9-5.0 (C), 4.9-0 (F)

General Course Policies

Leaving the classroom: Leaving the classroom on repeated occasions is disturbing to both your professor and your classmates and may adversely affect your participation grade. Please make use of the 10 minute breaks in between classes to fill up your water bottle, use the restroom, etc.

Punctuality and tardiness: Arriving late to class is disruptive to both the professor and your classmates. Please be punctual as your professor may count your late arrival as half of an absence or simply close the door, not let any late students in and consider it as one full absence.

Communicating with instructor: Please allow at least 48 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails. The weekend is not included in this timeframe. If you have an urgent request or question for your professor, be sure to send it during the week.

Attendance and Absentee Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all classes. As we understand that you might fall ill or be unable to come to class (e.g. due to a religious holiday, a flight delay, a family wedding/reunion, a graduation, a job interview, etc.) at some point during the semester, you are allowed up to 4 absences. You will be responsible for the material covered and any work missed. You will not need to justify your absences (up to 4) in any way unless you miss

an exam, a presentation, a quiz, etc. In this case, you must present a doctor's note (signed, stamped and dated) to be able to reschedule the exam, etc. It will still count as an absence but you will be allowed to retake the exam, etc. We don't encourage you to use all 4 days unless you really need them as your participation grade may suffer if you are not in class. If used unwisely and you get sick late in the semester, the following penalties will apply:

- On your 5th absence, 1 point will be taken off your final Spanish grade
- On your 6th absence, 3 points will be taken off your final Spanish grade
- On your 7th absence, you will fail the course

For classes that meet once a week, each absence counts as two. For classes that meet daily, the penalties outlined above apply if you go over 6 absences (7th absence=5th absence above). Exams missed due to an excused absence must be made up within a week of returning to classes. Talk to your professor immediately after your return.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Pablo de Olavide University. Cheating on exams and plagiarism (which includes copying from the Internet) are clear violations of academic honesty. A student is guilty of plagiarism when he or she presents another person's intellectual property as his or her own. The penalty for plagiarism and cheating is a failing grade for the assignment/exam and a failing grade for the course. Avoid plagiarism by citing sources properly, using footnotes and a bibliography, and not cutting and pasting information from various websites when writing assignments.

Learning accommodations

If you require special accommodations, you must stop by the International Center to speak to Marta (the Faculty coordinator: mcaroro@acu.upo.es) to either turn in your documentation or to confirm that our office has received it before February 22nd.

Behavior Policy

Students are expected to show integrity and act in a professional and respectful manner at all times. A student's attitude in class may influence his/her participation grade. The professor has a right to ask a student to leave the classroom if the student is unruly or

appears intoxicated. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, that day will count as an absence regardless of how long the student has been in class. Cell phone use is not allowed and animals (except seeing-eye dogs) are not permitted in the classrooms.

Course contents

PART I. THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF CONTEMPORARY SPAIN

PART II. CORE ACTORS OF THE SPANISH POLITICAL SYSTEM

PART III. STRUCTURAL DYNAMICS OF SPANISH POLITICS

Class Schedule

1. INTRODUCTION TO IR THEORY

25th January – Presentation of course/Introduction to Spain

30th January – Second Republic and Civil War: Why did Democracy Fail?

1st February – Francoism

6th February – The Spanish Transition to Democracy: A miracle?

8th February – The 80s and the 90s: The consolidation of democracy

PART II. CORE ACTORS OF THE SPANISH POLITICAL SYSTEM

13th February – Crown, Parliament, Government and Judiciary. Who Governs?

15th February – Parties and Party System: Who is who?

20th February – The Electoral System and elections. 1979-2023 What's new?

22nd February – Social Movements in Spain: Is Civil Society Organized?

27th February – The Fourth Power? Mass Media in Spain and Political Elites

5th March – Territorial Political System: Multilevel governance

7th March – Spain and the EU

12th March - Midterm Review and political campaign presentation

14th March - MIDTERM EXAM

PART III. STRUCTURAL DYNAMICS OF SPANISH POLITICS

19th March– Nationalism in Spain: General Overview

21st March– Screening of Patria and discussion

2nd April – Nationalism in Spain: Catalonia

4th April - Spanish Economy, a new hope?

9th April - Spain, a sui generis Model of Welfare State: Healthcare, Education and unemployment benefits

11th April – Presentation of manifestos/ party platforms

23rd April - Recent Developments in Social Policy: Social rights pioneers?

25th April - Spanish Foreign Relations. US – Spain

30th April - Electoral Debate

2nd May - Transparency and Quality of Democracy: Is Spain a Corrupt Country?

7th May - Inaugural Debate

9th May - What's next? The future of Spanish politics

Holidays

Thursday, February 29 - Puente

Sunday, March 24 – Sunday, March 31 - Semana Santa (Holy Week)

Saturday, April 14 - Saturday, April 20 – Feria de Abril (Seville's April Fair)

Friday, May 1 - Labor Day