Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

2017/2018

Democracy and Citizenship

Code: 42270
ECTS Credits: 10

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313335 Political Science	OB	0	1

Contact

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Use of languages

Principal working language: english (eng)

Teachers

Joan Botella Corral

Enrique Hernandez Perez

External teachers

Camilo Cristancho Mantilla

Prerequisites

Students are required to have prior training corresponding to a bachelor in Political Science or other closely related subject.

For students new to Political Science, the following texts provide good background for some of themes that will be dealt with in this module:

- Macpherson, C.W. (various editions) The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy. Oxford. OUP
- Held, D. (various editions) Models of Democracy. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Crick, B. (various editions) In Defence of Politics.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The objective of this module is to discuss the principle contemporary debates in the field of democratic theory, and will address the following: the conditions facilitating the development and stability of democracies; the role of political parties in democratic systems; and the challenges faced by contemporary democracies, such as corruption, economic performance and the rise of populism, and citizen participation in decision-making processes in the digital era.

Skills

- Analyse the behaviour and political attitudes of the public and the political communication processes in which they are immersed.
- Analyse the main economic, social and political challenges facing contemporary democracies.

- Applied theoretical knowledge acquired from the analysis of real situation and using political analysis generate useful orientations for decision-making.
- Demonstration reading comprehension for specialist texts in English.
- Design and write projects and technical and academic reports autonomously using the appropriate terminology, arguments and analytical tools in each case.
- Possess and understand knowledge that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in the development and/or application of ideas, often in a research context.
- Recognise the complexity of politics today, its diversity and the tensions to which it is exposed, with special emphasis on the Spanish and European contexts.
- Student should possess the learning skills that enable them to continue studying in a way that is largely student led or independent.
- Students should be able to integrate knowledge and face the complexity of making judgements based on information that may be incomplete or limited and includes reflections on the social and ethical responsibilities associated with the application of their knowledge and judgements.
- Understand the design, operation and consequences of the political institutions and their relation to processes of governance.

Learning outcomes

1. Analyse the level of democratic quality in a political system.
2. Analyse the way in which advanced democracies changeover time.
3. Demonstration reading comprehension for specialist texts in English.
4. Describe the characteristics of political culture and identify their explanations and consequences.
5. Design and write projects and technical and academic reports autonomously using the appropriate terminology, arguments and analytical tools in each case.
6. Identify the way in which current phenomena such as globalisation, cultural diversity and the development of new technology affect democratic systems.
7. Identify the debates on public opinion, political communication and democracy.
8. Identify the different dimensions of the concept of democracy, its contradictions and the debates accompanying them.
9. Identify the different factors and variables that may be involved in the appearance, stability and crisis of a democratic system.
10. Identify the different practical implications of the theories of democracy.
11. Identify the importance of specific political, economic and institutional contexts for democratic stability.
12. Identify the modes of political participation , the factors that explain them and their consequences for democracy.
13. Possess and understand knowledge that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in the development and/or application of ideas, often in a research context.
14. Student should possess the learning skills that enable them to continue studying in a way that is largely student led or independent.
15. Students should be able to integrate knowledge and face the complexity of making judgements based on information that may be incomplete or limited and includes reflections on the social and ethical responsibilities associated with the application of their knowledge and judgements.
16. Understand the different conceptions of the concept of citizenship and their implications.
17. Understand the different existing models of democracy, their institutional characteristics and their implications.
18. Understand the tensions between participation and representation, the debates on political disenchantment and the crisis of representation.

Content

Introduction (one session)
Part 1: The Social Conditions Necessary for the Emergence and Maintenance of Democratic Citizenship (John Etherington) (six sessions)
Part 2: The Role of Political Parties in Democratic Systems (Joan Botella) (six sessions)
Part 3: Does Democracy Really Work? The citizens' perspective. (Enrique Hernández) (seven sessions).
Part 4: Citizenship and Digital Media (Camilo Cristancho) (two sessions)

Methodology

This course emphasizes active student participation in class, tutorials, continous evaluation through the elaboration and evaluation of assignments related to the different dimensions of the module, as well as a final exam.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures and seminars	63	2.52	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials	50	2	3, 13, 15
Type: Autonomous			
Preparation of assigned readings	100	4	3, 13
Preparation of course assignments	34.5	1.38	5, 13, 14, 15

Evaluation

In this module, the main emphasis is on continuous assessment in order to ensure that the different dimensions and concepts related to the sessions are taken on board by students as we progress through the module. This is complemented by a final take home exam. Evaluation is based on the following criteria:

- Capacity to synthesise the relevant literature;
- Capacity to critically evaluate the relevant literature;
- Coherence of the argument;
- Originality;
- Formal aspects, with special reference to correct citation and academic style.

As noted in the General Programme, we are committed to avoiding plagiarism, and as such every effort is made to detect and punish such cases.

The evaluation is divided into the following elements:

Participation: Students are expected to have prepared the assigned readings before coming to class and to take an active part in the sessions. It is obligatory to assist a minimum of 80% of the sessions in order to pass this module.

Papers (60%): During the term students will write 4 short essays (max 1200 words each): one for Part 1, one for Part 2, one for Part 3i), and one for Part 3ii). The dates for handing in the essays are the following:

- Paper 1: 26th October
- Paper 2: 28th November
- Paper 3: 14th December
- Paper 4: 11th January 2017.

Exam (40%): There will be a take-home exam at the end of the course, with questions on each part of the module. Students will have to answer one of these questions in an essay of not more that 2500 words. The questions will be published on 13th of January and answers must behanded in by 20th of January 2017.

Feedback: Comments on work will be available three weeks at the latest after submission. Please do not hesitate to contact the professors for this feedback.

Submission: Please hand in all work on paper at the Suport Logístic.

Evaluation activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Continuous evaluation	60%	0	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
Exam	40%	2.5	0.1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18

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