

Political Behaviour

Code: 101075
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500259 Political Science and Public Management.	OB	3	1

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: catalan (cat)
Some groups entirely in English: No
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Teachers

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Jordi Garcia Muniesa

Prerequisites

Students should have acquired basic concepts of Political Science and Research Methods. They must be able to read English texts and work with spreadsheets.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The course has three objectives:

- To know the basic elements that characterize political and electoral behaviour in democratic contexts
- To be able to use theories and variables that explain how citizens think and act in politics
- To know and be able to use the main methods and data available for the analysis of political behaviour

Competences

- Analysing the behaviour of the political actors, both individually and collectively (parties, interest groups, social movements, etc.).
- Analysing the electoral processes, including campaigns, parties' electoral strategies, political scenarios and analysis and interpretation of electoral results.
- Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
- Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
- Demonstrating the comprehension of citizen behaviour and democratic values, particularly in internal or international concrete cases.
- Explaining political, individual and collective attitudes and behaviours, as well as the education process and expression of political preferences.
- Identifying and distinguishing the functioning of the electoral processes.

- Identifying main actors of the political system, inspecting their interactions and assessing their behaviour in their environment and in the political system from a theoretical and practical perspective.
- Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
- Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
- Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
- Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
- Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
- Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
- Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
- Working autonomously.
- Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
- Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analysing the behaviour of the political actors, both individually and collectively (parties, interest groups, social movements, etc.).
2. Analysing the electoral processes, including campaigns, parties' electoral strategies, political scenarios and analysis and interpretation of electoral results.
3. Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
4. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
5. Explaining political, individual and collective attitudes and behaviours, as well as the education process and expression of political preferences.
6. Identifying and distinguishing the functioning of the electoral processes.
7. Identifying main actors of the political system, inspecting their interactions and assessing their behaviour in their environment and in the political system from a theoretical and practical perspective.
8. Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
9. Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
10. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
11. Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
12. Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
13. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
14. Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
15. Working autonomously.
16. Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
17. Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

Content

Part 1. Theory

1. Political participation. Modes of participation. Who participates, how and why? Consequences of participation.
2. Attitudes and values: Attitudes: origin, coherence and change. Values and Political Culture: Origin, stability and change.
3. Surveys and experiments. Surveys, inference, error and sampling. Types of surveys. Survey experiments.
4. Elections. Functions. Electoral indicators. Electoral change. Electoral campaigns.

5. Socioeconomic variables and the vote. The sociological model. Columbia. Cleavage theory. Class, religion, origin and vote.

6. Values, ideology and the vote. The psychological model and the vote. Michigan. Party identification.

7. Rational choice and the vote. Rationality and voting. Spatial models. Economic voting.

Part 2. Prácticas

P1. Attitudes and values.

P2. Why do surveys fail?

P3. Dual voting and differential abstention.

P4. Electoral indicators.

P5. Vote choice explanations: social class.

P6. Vote choice explanations: values.

P7. Vote choice explanations: rational choice models.

P8. Political attitudes.

P9. Attitudes toward redistribution.

P10. Median voter.

P11. Graph interpretation.

Part 3. Cases

C1. 8M Women protest.

C2. Populism in Europe.

C3. Old and new parties.

Methodology

Classroom sessions are divided in three types

Part 1. Theory classes where the professors present content. (7 sessions)

Part 2. Practical application of theory content either in the usual classroom or at the lab. Based on previous reading, each session evolves around a practical exercise to be handed in at the end of the session. These sessions are the basis of the continuous evaluation and one of them is further developed into the essay. (12 sessions)

Part 3. Sessions where both theoretical and practical elements are used to analyze a specific case. (6 sessions)

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
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Type: Directed

Lectures and presentations	36	1.44	3, 4, 11, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14
Practical sessions and seminars	16	0.64	3, 10, 8, 12, 13, 16, 15, 17, 14
Type: Supervised			
Evaluation	2	0.08	1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 7, 6, 12, 13, 15
Tutorials	15	0.6	3, 10, 7, 6, 12, 13, 15, 14
Type: Autonomous			
Compulsory readings and readings related to the practical sessions	30	1.2	7, 8, 6, 9, 13, 15
Study of the theory presented in class	30	1.2	1, 3, 10, 7, 6, 9, 13, 15, 14
Writing of practical exercises	15	0.6	10, 13, 16, 15, 17, 14

Assessment

Exam (50%). The exam involves a test of 30 questions (30%) and a short essay on a table or graph (20%)

Exercices in the classroom (40%). The result of the work during the class will be handed in. No late submissions will be accepted. There will be 11 exercises to hand in, the final grade consisting on the average mark of the best 9.

Final essay (10%). The final essay will consist in the development of one of the practices. Details will be explained in class.

In accordance to article 117.2 of the UAB rules, students that are re-taking this course may be evaluatad with a single exam. If you want to follow this kind of evaluation inform the professors at the beggining of the academic year.

To pass the course students need a minimum overall grade of 5/10, with a minimum grade of 4/10 in the exam.

Compensatory evaluation

Students will have the right to a compensatory evaluation only if the following conditions are met:

- Having a grade of 3/10 or above in the exam test.
- Having a grade of 5/10 or above in the evaluated classroom exercises.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Classroom exercises	50%	3	0.12	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 10, 7, 8, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 15, 17, 14
Final exam	50%	3	0.12	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 7, 6, 12, 13

Bibliography

Basic

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Dalton, R. (2008) Citizen Politics in Western Democracies, Londres: Chatman House.

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Additional

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