Political Institutions

Code: 106185
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2504216 Contemporary History, Politics and Economics	FB	1	1

The proposed teaching and assessment methodology that appear in the guide may be subject to changes as a result of the restrictions to face-to-face class attendance imposed by the health authorities.

Contact

Name: Joan Botella Corral

Email: Joan.Botella@uab.cat

Use of Languages

Principal working language: english (eng)

Some groups entirely in English: Yes

Some groups entirely in Catalan: No

Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Prerequisites

There are no pre-requirements

Most of the subjects are taught in English. A B2 level of English of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is required, although no specific test of English proficiency level is held to access the degree.

Objectives and Contextualisation

This course aims at two main goals:

1.- Making students acquainted with the main political institutions in contemporary societies, and the debates around them

2.- Making students familiar with the terminology of political institutions in English language

Competences

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Contrast the main contemporary political theories.
- Describe and analyse the functioning of public administrations on different territorial scales.
- Explain and summarise knowledge acquired in English language at an advanced level.
- Identify the main actors, structure and functioning of political systems in the internal and international sphere from a theoretical or applied perspective.
- Manage and apply data to solve problems.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse and critically evaluate the functions of the different political institutions of the state.
2. Assessing the contribution of movements like feminism, environmentalism or various identity movements.
3. Collect, process and analyse information in a critical manner.
4. Define the concepts of democracy and dictatorship, describe the different models and critically evaluate their functioning.
5. Define the concepts of political science that inform different types of political systems.
6. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
7. Describe and use the main concepts in the field of the relations between politics and society: regulation of social conflict, political power and legitimation, political system.
8. Describe electoral systems and evaluate the political consequences of putting them in place.
9. Describe political actors and critically evaluate political behaviour in different socio-political and historical contexts.
10. Describe the key elements that explain the appearance of the state and its evolution (the absolute state in the welfare state).
11. Describe the main elements of the political process: socialisation, attitudes and political ideologies.
12. Distinguishing between the analysis of political sciences and value judgements on democracy, human rights, social justice and sustainable development.
13. Explaining the forms of government arising from the different relationships between the powers of the State.
14. Propose projects and actions in accordance with the principles of ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights, diversity and democratic values.
15. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
16. Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
17. Write a review of a publication, documentary video or event (conference or seminar) in English adapted to the content of one or more subjects on this course.

Content

1.- What is politics? Clarifying the vocabulary: State, government, regime, public sector... Structure and actors

2.-v The main political structures of today: democracies, semi - democracies, dictatorships.

3.- Types of democracies..Can we measure democracy?

4.- Democracy, State and Law: the *Rule of Law*. Rights, liberties and political power. The division of powers and the types of democratic regimes: parliamentary and presidential regime.

5.- The institutions of democracy: Parliaments, executives, courts. Public administrations as the tools for institutional action.

6.- How to elect office - holders:types and consequences of electoral systems.

7.- Unitary and plural States: centralization and federation.

8.- Subnational government: regional and local structures.

9.-The actors of politics (1) : the citizens. How do they act and what do they think? Political cultures. Cultural change and the impact of mass - media

10.- The actors of politics (2): political parties. Types of parties and political families. The competition between parties: the party - systems.

11.-The actors of politics (3) : the social interests. Pluralism and social conflict: pressure groups, interest groups, social movements.

12.-The outcome of political action: public policies. The size of government. The Welfare State. Bureaucracy, legality, efficiency.

13.-The creation of economic and political spaces larger than nation - States: the case of the European Union.

14.-Democracies under criticism: citizen disaffection, malfunction of institutions, economic globalization. Rodrik's paradox: democracy, sovereignity, internationalization : you can only have two !

La posta en crisi de les democràcies en el segle XXI : desafecte ciutadà, mal funcionament de les institucions, globalització econòmica. La paradoxa de Rodrik: democràcia, sobirania, internacionalització ...només se'n poden tenir 2 !

Methodology

The course will consist of:

- Presentations and discussions in the classroom, led by the lecturer.

- The writing and presentation of two papers by each student

- Individual or group discussion meetings

During the course an interval of 15 minutes will be allowed for students to answer the teaching assessment questionnaire provided by the University.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Assessment	7.5	0.3	6, 16, 15
Lectures	30	1.2	1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 8, 7, 12, 10, 13, 14
Type: Supervised			
Individual and group meetings with lecturer	7.5	0.3	6, 12, 15, 3
Type: Autonomous			
Reading, study and preparation	70	2.8	1, 6, 7, 12, 17, 14, 16, 15, 3

Assessment

The course is based on continuous evaluation : the final exam does not allow, on its own, to get a PASS qualification

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

Students will obtain a "Not assessed/Not submitted" course grade unless they have submitted more than one - third of the assessment items.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

In the event that tests or exams cannot be taken onsite, they will be adapted to an online format made available through the UAB's virtual tools (original weighting will be maintained). Homework, activities and class participation will be carried out through forums, wikis and/or discussion on Teams, etc. Lecturers will ensure that students are able to access these virtual tools, or will offer them feasible alternatives.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Classroom participation	Cca 15 %	3	0.12	2, 6, 12, 14, 16, 15
Final general test	Cca 40 %	2	0.08	6, 16, 15, 3
Preparation of an essay on a contemporary text	Cca 30 %	20	0.8	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 8, 7, 12, 10, 13, 14, 16, 15
Reading and discussion of a classic text	Cca 15 %	10	0.4	6, 12, 17, 10, 16

Bibliography

MAIN TEXTBOOK :

J.Mª. Vallès, *Ciencia Política: Una introducción*. Barcelona (Ariel), various reprints.

REQUIRED READING FOR ALL STUDENTS :

Max Weber, *La política como vocación*. Many editions; lecturer will provide students with an on - line verion, in English.

REQUIRED READING (at student's choice) FOR ESSAYS' PREPARATION:ONE (at least !) AMONG:

Fernando Savater, *Política para Amador*. Barcelona, Ed. Ariel, various editions

Hugh Heclo, *Pensar institucionalmente*. Barcelona (Paidós) 2010

JM Colomer, A. Beale, *Democracia y globalización: Ira, miedo y esperanza*. Barcelona (Anagrama), 2021

JJ.Linz, A. Valenzuela, *Las Crisis del presidencialismo*. Madrid (Alianza Editorial),| 1997

Dani Rodrik, *La Paradoja de la Globalización: la democracia y el futuro de la economía mundial*. Barcelona (Ed. Antoni Bosch), 2011.

Norberto Bobbio, *Derecha e izquierda: razones y significados de una distinción política.* Madrid (Taurus), diverses edicions

WEBSITES WITH DATA, DOCUMENTS, ETC:

English version of Weber's text:

http://fs2.american.edu/dfagel/www/class%20readings/weber/politicsasavocation.pdf

Website of the InterParliamentary Union:

https://data.ipu.org/

"Check - list" of the Venice Commission (Council of Europe) :

http://www.cepc.gob.es/docs/default-source/comisionveneciadoc/criterios-verificacion-estado-de-derecho.pdf?sfv

Additional references and texts will be provided during the semester, if necessary

Software

Students are expected to use normally software for text editing, as well as the ability to conduct on - line searches.