UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

	2023/2024
Democracy and Citizenship	
Code: 42270	
ECTS Credits: 10	

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313335 Political Science	OB	0	1

Contact

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Teaching groups languages

You can check it through this link. To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject. Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2023.

Teachers

John Robert Etherington

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Enrique Hernandez Perez

Marta Gallina

Luisa Faustini Torres

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:

- Held, D. (various editions) *Models of Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Diamond L. & M. F. Plattner, eds., (2009), *Democracy. A Reader*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Dahl, R.A., Shapiro, I., Cheibub J.A. (2003), eds., *The Democracy Sourcebook*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: The MIT Press. Available here.

Objectives and Contextualisation

In many ways, political science can trace its origins back to the attempts by thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle to come to terms with the concepts of democracy and citizenship as they emerged in the Ancient Greek poleis, particularly that of Athens.

While modern liberal democracy functions in quite a different way from its ancient predecessor, the normative, theoretical and empirical preoccupations of the Ancients have continued to inform modern debates on democracy and citizenship, concerned as they are with questions such as regime change, political participation, citizen rights, and institutional arrangements. In addition, other questions, such as the increasing democratic demands of citizens, have become central to debates surrounding the functioning of liberal democratic systems.

The purpose of this module, then, is to present some of the main debates and approaches to understanding liberal democracy and citizenship as these have developed over time in the West, and to this end the module is divided into six parts. The first analyses the historical social, economic and institutional conditions that have allowed liberal democracy to develop and flourish in some places and not in others. The second part deals with the quality of democracy at the aggregate level. In the third, fourth, fifth and sixth parts, we explore some the challenges faced by contemporary democratic political systems such as corruption, economic performance, external migration, the rise of populism, increasing democratic discontent, and the effects of digital media on citizen engagement.

At the end of the module, students are expected to be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of a wide range of theoretical, methodological and empirical approaches to the study of themes related to the concepts democracy and citizenship.

Competences

- 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. Democracy and Citizenship: questions new and old (J. Etherington)

The aim of this introductory class is to give an overview of the study of democracy and citizenship in order to provide context for the themes that we shall be studying in this module. The session then presents the different parts of the module, before discussing the formal aspects involved.

Part 1. Capitalism and Democracy (J. Etherington) (4 sessions).
• Capitalism and Democracy: conceptual, theoretical and historical considerations.
• The democratic control of capitalism after 1945
• The challenge of neoliberalism for democracy from 1970
• Capitalism and democracy: current trends

Part 2. Does Democracy Really Work? The citizens' perspective (E. Hernández) (5 sessions)
• Study citizens' attitudes towards democracy: the concept of political support.
• Support for democracy and growing discontent: Is democracy still the only game in town?
• A changing paradigm: from loyalty to critical / assertive citizens.
• Long-term impact of institutions: historical legacies.
• Short-term impact of institutional performance: corruption, economy and winners and losers.

Part 3. The Democratic Paradox: do citizens know about politics? (M. Gallina) (2 sessions)
• Political sophistication and its electoral consequences
• Do parties and voters speak the same language?

Part 4. Democratic Regression and the External Dimension of Democratization (L. Faustini and E. Østergaard) (6 sessions)
• Democratic regression: definition and measurement.
• Democratic regression: theoretical views and empirical trends.
• Democratization and transnational links: how transnational relations influence democratization processes.
• Migrations and democratization
• Diasporas and transnational voting rights

Part 5. Democracy and Climate Change (J. Etherington) (4 sessions)
• Climate change and democracy: theoretical and empirical considerations
• The consequences of climate change for democracy and democratization

• Authoritarian responses to climate change
• The performance of democracies regarding the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change

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.

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

Assessment

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 essay. Evaluation is based on the following criteria:

- Capacity to synthesize 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 Students Guide, we are committed to avoiding plagiarism, and as such every effort is made to detect and punish such cases. Anti-plagiarism software will be used to check every submission.

The evaluation is divided into the following elements:

a) Short essays (45%): during the period students will write 3 short essays (maximum 1200 words each). Students must write a short essay for Part 1, a short essay for either Part 2 or Part 3, and a short essay for either Part 4 or Part 5. Short essay questions will be posted on the Virtual Campus before the end of each part of the module along with submission deadlines.

b) Final essay (35%): At the end of the course the instructors will post a set of research questions related to each part of the module. Students will have to answer one of these questions in an essay of not more than 2500 words.

c) In-class participation (20%): Students are expected to have prepared the assigned readingsbefore coming to class and to take an active part in the sessions. It is compulsory to attend to a minimum of 80% of the sessions in order to pass thismodule.

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 submit your short essays and final essay through the Campus Virtual tasks section, where all graded submissions will be analyzed by the anti-plagiarism software.

Grading: All submissions will be graded with a numeric grade ranging from 0 to 10, being 10 the best grade.

Late submissions policy: A -1 point grade penalty will be applied for each day that a student is late with a graded submission.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Final Essay	35%	2	0.08	1, 2, 17, 18, 3, 4, 5, 16, 7, 9, 11, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 14, 13
In-class participation	20%	0.1	0	1, 15, 14, 13
Short essays	45%	0.4	0.02	1, 2, 17, 18, 3, 4, 5, 16, 7, 9, 11, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 14, 13

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Software

None