

Communication and Public Opinion

Code: 101074
 ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Political Science and Public Management	OT	3
Political Science and Public Management	OT	4
Contemporary History, Politics and Economics	OT	3
Contemporary History, Politics and Economics	OT	4

Contact

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

There is not

Objectives and Contextualisation

The main objective of the subject is to introduce the student to the concept, but also to the importance in current politics, of political communication and, derived from this, of public opinion (and published opinion).

This is a subject that proposes learning based on reflection on political communication, strategy and public opinion. Exposing the main concepts and the necessary 'theory', but also linking this with current politics and also cases that have already happened.

While the classic public debate space was the Parliament, where the government and the opposition faced each other, now, although this Parliament remains essential, politics has taken a turn towards a democracy of opinion, where even the polls are important but where, above all, the relationship between government and opposition has crossed the legislative chambers and is transferred to the media.

Precisely another of the main objectives of the subject is to understand the importance of these means of communication (including social networks) and, beyond that, to know how political parties and their leaders can take advantage of these means to influence the public opinion

In short, public opinion and published opinion are two concepts that we will see during the course as they evolve to become a debate about communication. A political communication that we will also learn how it has evolved in political marketing, where the candidate's smile is more important than the ideas he expresses.

Despite everything, the question we must ask ourselves is whether politicians, communication experts, journalists and pollsters, partly as published opinion, are really the ones who build Public Opinion, the ones who set the political agenda and, therefore, they are responsible for the political debate in the public space.

Public opinion, and more specifically voters, perceive politics as a struggle, not so much about party programs but as the visualization of the public image of the leaders who represent the party and their ideas, through the media communication

The political agenda is planned based on its media impact and the impact it will have on public opinion. This would be a classic case of communication planning manual. The subject of debate is when the media and published opinion are attributed the role reserved for parliament and become a fundamental part of the political system without having the democratic legitimacy granted to the executive and legislative power by the citizens.

Competences

Political Science and Public Management

- 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 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.
- Managing the different theoretical contributions about actors and actor's networks, as well as the characteristics of collective action.
- 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.

Contemporary History, Politics and Economics

- Identify the main actors, structure and functioning of political systems in the internal and international sphere from a theoretical or applied perspective.

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. Critically summarise the different historiographical explanation for the rise of political regimes in the Contemporary Era.
5. Demonstrate the capacity to continue working in the future autonomously gaining a deeper understanding of the knowledge acquired or embarking on new areas of knowledge.

6. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
7. Explaining political, individual and collective attitudes and behaviours, as well as the education process and expression of political preferences.
8. Identify the main actors in the political system, examine their interactions and evaluate their behaviour in their environment and in the political system from a theoretical and applied perspective.
9. Identifying and distinguishing the functioning of the electoral processes.
10. 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.
11. Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
12. Identifying the social, economic and political structures of the contemporary world.
13. Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
14. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
15. Managing the different theoretical contributions about actors and actor's networks, as well as the characteristics of collective action.
16. Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
17. Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
18. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
19. Use different theoretical contributions on actors and networks of actors as well as the characteristics of collective action.
20. Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
21. Working autonomously.
22. Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
23. Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

Content

1. Chicago School
2. Paul Lazarsfeld: The reinforcement hypothesis
3. Walter Lippmann: Public opinion and stereotypes
4. Elisabeth Noelle-Neuman. The spiral of silence
5. Message Box: technique of writing a speech.
6. Surveys: reading and political interpretation
7. Published Opinion. Public Opinion
8. Electoral behavior
9. Image and Politics: Advertising
10. Agenda Setting and television debates
11. Democracy of Opinion
12. Electoral campaigns
13. Electoral strategy
14. Candidates and parties: politician-educator-politician-seducer

15. The power of the Media.

16. Big Data

17. Case analysis: Catalan elections 2024

Readings with essay and subsequent Seminar:

G Sartori. Homo Videns

C. Casajuana The laws of the castle

seminars: Practical classes and documentarys analysis

a/ Polls

b/ Campaign debates and speeches

c/ 72 hours. From March 11 to 14

d/ The War Room. B Clinton 1992 campaign

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
study and reading of material	75	3	1, 2, 3, 6, 15, 7, 14, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 22, 21, 23, 20
Type: Supervised			
master classes and participatory seminars	50	2	1, 2, 15, 7, 10, 11, 13, 18, 23
Type: Autonomous			
end of course work	25	1	1, 2, 15, 7, 10, 23

The methodology of the subject forces the student to reflect on their knowledge acquired from the first year. The basis of the course will be a reflection on the issues of politics and communication and the construction of public opinion.

Public Opinion and Published Opinion are two concepts that we will see during the course as they evolve to become a debate on communication.

Learning in the analysis as part of the reflection on the subject taught.

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.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
end of course work	50%	0	0	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 15, 7, 16, 19, 14, 10, 8, 11, 9, 12, 13, 17, 4, 18, 22, 21, 23, 20
group work and class presentation	15%	0	0	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 15, 7, 16, 19, 14, 10, 8, 11, 9, 12, 13, 17, 4, 18, 22, 21, 23, 20
recovery exam for students who have failed the final course work with a grade below 3.5	100%	0	0	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 15, 7, 16, 19, 14, 10, 8, 11, 9, 12, 13, 17, 4, 18, 22, 21, 23, 20
Seminars	35%	0	0	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 15, 7, 16, 19, 14, 10, 8, 11, 9, 12, 13, 17, 4, 18, 22, 21, 23, 20

The evaluation of the subject will consist of three grades.

Compulsory work (50%). Individually or in pairs (maximum), a research question will be developed on a topic related to the subject, either from an academic research point of view or more of practical application in a case study. The choice of topic is free, but both this choice and the design of the work must be consulted with the teacher during the first four weeks of class. The result of this work will be a written document (but there will be no presentation to the class)

Seminars and practical classes (35%). Several sessions of the subject will be dedicated, in class, to either seminars (through which a series of readings already indicated will be read) or some type of video will be watched or some lesson learned will be applied in practice (such as the interpretation of surveys). The sum of the grades obtained (some are individual and others in groups), as well as proactivity and participation in class, make up this second branch of evaluation.

Group casework (15%). The class will be divided into eight groups, each of which will have a mission at the end of the semester: to analyze how the political communication and electoral strategy of the eight main parties in Catalonia were for the elections to the Parliament in May 2024. This work has NO written part, only a presentation (between 30 and 40 minutes per game) in the final part of the semester. Not only the presentation (content, formality, expression...) but also the questions and comments made to the rest of the groups when one is not presenting will be valued.

The final grade is the set of the three activities.

The final grade can be commented on during the tutorial hours set for this purpose.

The subject cannot be passed without submitting the final course work.

The case of the single evaluation consists of the delivery, on the date assigned by the Faculty for the last class of the subject, of a work of the same characteristics as the compulsory work described above, as well as a critical essay for each of the three readings that are part of the different seminar sessions: *La espiral del silencio, Homo videns i Las leyes del castillo*

Not assessable: If a student does not participate in most of the seminars and/or does not submit the compulsory work or does not do the work associated with the essays, it will be considered as non-assessable.

Artificial Intelligence: For this subject, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is allowed exclusively in support tasks, such as bibliographic contribution, spelling and stylistic correction. The student will have to clearly identify which parts have been generated with this technology, specify the tools used and include a critical reflection on how they have influenced the process and the final result of the activity. Lack of transparency in the use of AI in this assessable activity will be considered a lack of academic honesty and may result in a partial or total penalty in the grade of the activity, or greater penalties in cases of seriousness.

Bibliography

Colomé, Gabriel (2020), Silencio, se vota, Granada (Comares)

Gergen, David-Lewis, Ann-Izurieta, Roberto, (2005), Cambiando la escucha, Buenos Aires (la Crujía)

Lippmann, Walter (2003), La Opinión Pública, Madrid (Langre)

Maarek, Philippe, (2009), Marketing político y Comunicación, Barcelona (Paidós)

Martin Salgado, Lourdes (2002), Marketing Político, Barcelona (paidós)

Morris, Dick (2003), Juego de poderes, Buenos Aires (El Ateneo)

Noelle-Neuman, Elisabeth, (1995), La espiral del silencio, Tecnos (Barcelona)

Software

Java program to view videos via google.

Youtube

Program for data analysis (from Excel to Jamovi, passing through R or SPSS)

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	51	Catalan	first semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	51	Catalan	first semester	afternoon