

Contemporary World Politics

Code: 101099
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Political Science and Public Management	FB	1
International Relations	OB	1

Contact

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Teachers

Ricard Vilaregut Saez

Teaching groups languages

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

Prerequisites

There is not

Objectives and Contextualisation

This subject has a basic training character, aspiring to serve as a foundation for all the contents of the degree in Political Science and Public Management and the degree in International Relations.

The main objective of the subject is to offer explanations of the main phenomena, movements and processes that, on a global scale, have shaped the contemporary world. The essential problems of today's world will be located, and they will show how they have been formed and have evolved. The historical roots of the current world will be analyzed in its different dimensions: politics and democracy, economy and society, inequalities and poverty, collective political action and social movements ...

All these issues will be treated from different points of view and will take into account the contributions from academic disciplines that are dedicated to the study of these phenomena, movements and processes, such as political science, international relations, history, sociology and economy.

With regard to competences, the expected learning outcomes are three: to interpret the historical political and social frameworks as explanatory backgrounds of the current ones, to better understand the world of the present time; analyze information critically; and demonstrate a good level of oral and written expression.

Competences

Political Science and Public Management

- Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
- Distinguishing the discipline's main theories and different fields: conceptual developments, theoretical frameworks and theoretical approaches underlying the discipline's knowledge and different areas and sub-areas, as well as their value for the professional practice through concrete cases.
- Interpreting political and social historical frameworks, as precedents of the actual ones, in order to better comprehending today's reality.
- 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.
- Working autonomously.

International Relations

- Analyse the behaviour of international actors, both state and non-state.
- Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
- 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.
- Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
2. Describe political actors and critically evaluate political behaviour in different socio-political and historical contexts.
3. Describe the main elements of the political process: socialisation, attitudes and political ideologies.
4. Describing and properly using main concepts of the field of study of relationships between politics and society: social conflict regulation, political power and legitimacy, political system.
5. Describing the political actors and critically assessing the political behaviour in several sociopolitical and historical contexts.
6. Explaining the forms of government arising from the different relationships between the powers of the State.
7. Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
8. Interpreting political and social historical frameworks, as precedents of the actual ones, in order to better comprehending today's reality.
9. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
10. Presenting the key elements that explain the emergence of the State and its evolution (from absolute state to welfare state).
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. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
14. Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
15. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
16. Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.
17. Working autonomously.

Content

- 1) Introduction. From Westfalia to World War Two.
- 2) The Cold War: concept and whole interpretation
- 3) The end of the World War Two, towards the Cold War (1944-47)
- 4) The first phase of the Cold War(1947-53)
- 5) From Stalin's death to oil's crisis (1953-73)
- 6) The oil's crisis (1973) and the renewal of the Cold War (1979-85)?
- 7) Gorbachev, the *perestroika* and the end of the USSR (1985-1989/91).
- 8) Decolonization and Cold War in Asia
- 9) Descolonization and Cold War in Africa
- 10) The Third World. The Non-aligned movement
- 11) Vietnam's wars
- 12) Cold War years in Latin America
- 13) The "new culture". Feminism. Civil Rights. Gay Liberation.
- 14) Arab-israeli conflict
- 15) Transitions in Europe. The baltic independences. The "velvet divorce" in Czechoslovakia. The implosion of Yugoslavia.
- 16) The european integration process. From the Common Market to EU.
- 17) The arab world. Islamism.
- 18) The current conflicts

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master classes and Parcipatory Seminars	50	2	1, 11, 9, 8, 12, 15, 17
Type: Autonomous			
Study and reading of materials	91	3.64	16, 1, 5, 2, 3, 4, 10, 6, 11, 9, 7, 8, 12, 14, 13, 15, 17

The dedication to this subject is specified in various types of activities. Its value, 6 ECTS credits, implies a total dedication of 150 hours, which will be distributed as follows:

a.- Directed activities, with the presence of the teacher. They will include lectures and oral presentations by students about different historical documents.

These activities represent approximately 33% of the student's work time.

b.- Supervised activities, carried out outside the classroom, and following the teacher's instructions. The participation in three seminars about compulsory readings will be prepared.

This activity represents approximately 17% of the student's work time.

c.- Autonomous activities, carried out by each student on their own for the preparation of the syllabus, through the readings recommended by the lecturer.

These activities represent approximately 50% of the student's work time.

The process of learning and acquisition of skills will be supervised by the teacher through individual tutorials.

The Moodle classroom will be the space that will convey the information related to the organization of the subject.

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
final examination	40%	3	0.12	16, 1, 2, 5, 3, 4, 10, 6, 11, 9, 7, 8, 12, 14, 13, 15, 17
Seminars	60% (20% each one)	6	0.24	16, 1, 2, 5, 3, 4, 10, 6, 11, 9, 7, 8, 12, 14, 13, 15, 17

The evaluation of the subject will consist of:

- three participatory seminars that have a value of 60% of the final grade.

- In each seminar, the student will have to read one book (or part of it), he/she will have to participate in the debate - a final exam, related to the whole syllabus, according to the instructions of the teacher.

- To approve this subject, the student must pass -at least- the final exam, with a grade equal or bigger than 5/10.

- The procedure to pass the course is to pass the continuous assessment.

- The concurrence to one of the mentioned evaluation activities is incompatible with the qualification of "Not Present".

In accordance with the UAB Academic Regulations, the evaluation of those students who wish to have a single synthesis examination is possible. These students who wish to be evaluated this way should contact the lecturer at the beginning of the semester. The lecturer will set the proceedings to be done in this evaluation, which, in any case, will include the three compulsory readings.

The "unique evaluation" will comprise an examination on the whole syllabus that it will weight 70% of the final grade. On the day of the examination, the student will submit three documents (one for each of the three compulsory readings), with the answers to some questions that will have been put by the lecturer. Each document will weight 10% of the final grade. To pass this subject, the student must pass the final examination, with a grade equal or greater than 5/10.

For the re-evaluation, the following criteria will apply:

1. For the students with "continued evaluation", they will be able to do again the final examination in case they have failed it. This examination will weight 40% of the final grade. Relating to the readings, the only controls of readings that will be able to be re-evaluated will be those which were previously done and they are failed. In this case, the student, on the day of the examination, will have to answer some questions about the concerned readings. Each reading weights 20% of the final grade.
2. For the students with "unique evaluation", they will be able to do again the final examen in case they have failed it. This examination will weight 70% of the final grade. To pass the subject, he/she will have to pass the final examination with a grade equal or greater than 5/10.

Bibliography

Most relevant bibliography:

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FONTANA, Josep (2011), *Por el bien del Imperio*, Barcelona. Ed. Pasado y Presente.

KLEIN, Naomi (2007), *La doctrina del shock*, Barcelona, Ed. Paidós.

Complementary bibliography:

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SHLAIM, Avi (2011), *El muro de hierro. Israel y el mundo árabe*, Granada, Almed.

SPENCE, Jonathan D. (2011), *En busca de la China moderna*, Barcelona, Tusquets.

STIGLIZ, Joseph E. (2010), *Caída libre*, Madrid, Taurus.

WESTAD, Odd Arne (2018), *La Guerra Fría. Una historia mundial*, Barcelona, Galaxia Gutenberg.

Software

No computer programs are used in this subject

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	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(PAUL) Classroom practices	51	Catalan	second semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	51	Catalan	second semester	afternoon