UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Local Government

Code: 101110
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 of this document.

Prerequisites

The student has to be interested in the political science approach to the local government with key issues such as local democracy, public policies analysis or public management, focused on the local perspective. We should also be interested in following the information on local government and on local political issues that appear in the media.
The student should has motivations for local issues and should be able to understand academic articles in English.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The main objectives are to learn about the basic elements about local governments: normative principles, structures, actors, policy agenda... in order to analyse the reality of local governments in Catalonia from a critical and well-founded viewpoint, in the context of Spain and the European Union. In addition, the anlysis will also try to propose future alternatives based on current debates on municipalism.
This subject is optional. However, the fact of dealing with the first stage of the political and administrative structure and, at the same time, with a proper reality for each student, gives it a great specific weight. Local governments are also one of the most promising areas for professional practice. For this reason, the course aims to articulate theoretical reflections on local governments with the study and debate of local practices.

Competences

Political Science and Public Management
- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.

- Analysing public policies, both in their elaboration and implementation processes.
- Applying the discipline's main theories and different fields to real practical and professional problems.
- Applying the knowledge of the Public Administrations on its various levels to practical and professional concrete cases.
- Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
- Assess the social, economic and environmental impact when acting in this field of knowledge.
- Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
- Demonstrating the understanding of intergovernmental relationships and identifying the position of Public Administrations in the political system.
- Describing and understanding the functioning of the Public Administration on a state, sub-state and supranational level.
- Designing data collection techniques, coordinating the information processing and meticulously applying hypothesis verification methods.
- Develop critical thought and reasoning and be able to communicate them effectively, both in your own language and second or third languages.
- Develop strategies for autonomous learning.
- 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.
- Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
- Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
- Make changes to the methods and processes of the area of knowledge to provide innovative responses to the needs and wishes of society.
- Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
- Producing and planning researches or analytical reports.
- Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
- Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
- Students must be capable of knowing and applying basic terminology in English related to political sciences.
- Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
- Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Using different tools for the analysis and explanation of the formulation, decision, implementation and evaluation processes in public policies.
- 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
- 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 collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- 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.
- Work cooperatively in multidisciplinary and multicultural teams implementing new projects.

Learning Outcomes

1. Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
2. Analysing public policies, both in their elaboration and implementation processes.
3. Applying the discipline's main theories and different fields to real practical and professional problems.
4. Applying the knowledge of the Public Administrations on its various levels to practical and professional concrete cases.
5. Appropriately using the contributions of Lindblom, Wildavsky, Marsh and Rhodes, Lowi.
6. Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
7. Assess the social, economic and environmental impact when acting in this field of knowledge.
8. Critically analysing the configuration process of the public agenda.
9. Critically assessing some of the public policies carried out by an authority in the State of Autonomies.
10. Demonstrate initiative and work independently when required.
11. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
12. Demonstrating the understanding of intergovernmental relationships and identifying the position of Public Administrations in the political system.
13. Describing and understanding the functioning of the Public Administration on a state, sub-state and supranational level.
14. Designing data collection techniques, coordinating the information processing and meticulously applying hypothesis verification methods.
15. Develop critical thought and reasoning and be able to communicate them effectively, both in your own language and second or third languages.
16. Develop strategies for autonomous learning.
17. Differentiate between the main theories of the discipline and its different fields: conceptual developments, theoretical frameworks and approaches that provide the basis for knowledge of the discipline and its different areas and sub-areas as well as their value for professional practice through case studies.
18. Distinguishing the phases of public politics: formulation, decision, implementation and evaluation.
19. Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
20. Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
21. Make changes to the methods and processes of the area of knowledge to provide innovative responses to the needs and wishes of society.
22. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
23. Producing and planning researches or analytical reports.
24. Properly explaining and describing main theoretical approaches of the analysis of political sciences: cycle of politics, actor-network, institutional approaches, rational choice theory.
25. Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
26. Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
27. Students must be capable of knowing and applying basic terminology in English related to political sciences.
28. Suggesting and explaining a case study of a concrete public policy.
29. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
30. Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
31. Using different tools for the analysis and explanation of the formulation, decision, implementation and evaluation processes in public policies.
32. Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
33. Working autonomously.
34. Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
35. Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

Content

PART 1. Introductory elements

1. Localism and the right to the city.
2. Local democracy and government: the case of Spain
3. Public policy analysis and evaluation: Methodological review and resources for the local arena. Case studies.
4. Gender perspective and local government.

PART 2. Challenges for local governments

5. Cities and territories in a global-local. Network cities.

6. Models of local government in Europe in comparative perspective.
7. The rural-urban dichotomy and metropolitan governance

PART 3. Politics and local government

8. The rules of the game of local democracy: Electoral system, formation of governments and the map of local political actors.
9. New municipalism and dynamics of change in the local political arena.
10. Powers, competences and financing of local governments.
11. Participatory democracy at local level. Citizen participation and co-production: spaces, instruments and processes.

PART 4. What do municipalities do?: local public policies

12. Social, economic and enviromental changes and their impact on local policies.

13. Local policies for social inclusion, economy, public space and territory.Local response to locial inequalities and segregation.

14. Transversal axes of local public policy. Climate crisis and ecological transition policies. Feminisms and gender policies.

15. Demographical, ecological and technological transicions and local policies.

16. Emerging areas in local policies.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Directed	40	1.6	30, 7, 8, 2, 4, 6, 14, 18, 21, 34, 31, 32
Type: Supervised			
Supervised	35	1.4	2, 11, 13, 17, 23, 25, 19, 29, 31, 32
Type: Autonomous			
Autonomous	75	3	10, 27, 11, 16, 15, 25, 22, 26, 29, 33

The course will combine a well-founded theoretical approach with practical exercises that allow a direct approach to the reality of local government.

The theoretical foundations will be exposed in the classes and open at all times to the participation of students, for clarification and debate.

The foundations of the theory will be based on autonomous study, from the material exposed in the classes and other material that will be indicated.

The study work will be complemented by three individual text analysis exercises and debate that will take place between the students, led by the teacher. These exercises will be given between the months of October and December.

The practical work will consist of applied research on a municipality chosen by the students. The various topics covered in the subject will be exemplified in the case of the chosen local government. The work will be carried out in teams.

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
Applied team research with oral and written presentation	30	0	0	1, 2, 4, 3, 6, 27, 12, 11, 13, 16, 15, 17, 14, 18, 23, 24, 25, 22, 19, 20, 26, 29, 34, 33, 35, 31, 32
Case analysis, readings and class debates	20	0	0	30, 7, 8, 2, 4, 6, 10, 27, 12, 11, 13, 15, 14, 18, 25, 22, 19, 20, 26, 28, 29, 33, 35, 5, 31, 32
Exam	50	0	0	30, 7, 8, 2, 6, 27, 12, 11, 13, 15, 18, 24, 20, 21, 28, 29, 9

The evaluation of this course consists of the following parts:

- Text analysis papers, with class discussion, and the analysis and resolution of practical cases that will be raised and discussed in class, 20% of final mark.
- A work, in teams of two students, of applied research, with presentation in class, 30%.
- A final exam, 50%.

Important considerations:

Students who fail the continuous evaluation can have a compensatory evaluation.

To pass the course, it is necessary to pass both the practical work and the exam. To pass the practical work, it is necessary to have attended the corresponding presentations and debates.

The exam will be held at the end of the term, on a day to be fixed by the Faculty.

Students who have not passed all the practical work may take a new, individual examination, determined by the professor, to obtain the necessary mark.

Students who have not passed the exam will have the opportunity to take advantage of compensatory activities.

FINAL EXAM+ ESSAY ASSESSMENT ONLY

Students opting for a final exam and assessment only will have to pass an exam at the end of the term and will also have to hand out a long essay on a subject to be agreed at the beginning of the term (60%+40% and both compulsory).

Non-assessable students. When it is considered that the student has not been able to provide sufficient evidence (50% of the work) of assessment in the report, this subject will be recorded as non-assessable.

Bibliography

The most relevant readings will be indicated throughout the course and will be the basis for preparing the course. Other readings will be indicated to prepare seminars and debates in class.

There are some readings that can be used as reference manuals:

- Bonet, J. i Ubasart, G. (2010): "Guia de Govern Local"; Icaria Editorial, Biblioteca de recursos veïnals, Barcelona. Descarregable a: http://auditoriabdn.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/guia-de-govern-local-catalc3a0.pdf
- Font i Llobet , T. (dir.) (2023) Repensar el govern local: perspectives actuals, Generalitat de Catalunya. Institut d'Estudis de l'Autogovern.

- Subirats, J. (2016) El poder de lo próximo. Las virtudes del municipalismo, Catarata, Barcelona.
- Martí-Costa, M. Tomàs, M. (coord.) (2019) Governança metropolitana; IERMB: UAB Bellaterra.
- Mir, J. (2015): "Ajuntament fàcil més transparent"; Federació de Municipis de Catalunya.

Reference readings:

PART 1 and 2.

- Barres, R.iMartí-Costa,M. "La representación democrática en los gobiernos metropolitanos en Europa: entre el reescalamiento de los sistemas locales y la innovación institucional" a Revista Española de Ciencia Política. Núm. 59. Julio 2022,pp. 43-6
- Bonet, J. i Ubasart, G. (2010):2. El marc legislatiu de l'administració local, pp. 25-29.
- Borja, J. et.al. (2016) Ciudades para cambiar la vida. Café de las ciudades: Buenos Aires.
- Habitat III (2016) Nueva Agenda Urbana; ONU, Habitat: Nairobi

- Harvey, D. (2013) *Ciudades rebeldes. Del derecho a la ciudad a la revolución urbana. Madrid: Akal. Capítol 1. El derecho a la ciudad.*
- IERMB (2017) Repensar la metròpoli: noves claus per a un projecte col.lectiu [Anuari metropolità de Barcelona 2016] https://iermb.uab.cat/ca/iermb/anuari/repensar-la-metropoli-noves-claus-per-un-projecte-col-lectiu-anuari-
- IERM (2020) Resiliència municipal davant la crisi de la covid-19 a la metròpoli de Barcelona.
- IERMB (2022) Cap a la metròpoli 2030. Reptes emergents, coneixemnts innovadors [Anuari metropolità de Barcelona 2021]
- Iglesias, M. et al. (2011): "Políticas urbanas en España. Grances ciudades, actores y gobiernos locales"; Barcelona: Icària; pp. 23-41. Descarregable.
- Jacobs, J. (2023) Mort i vida de les grans ciutats, Virus Editorial.
- Le Galès, Patrick (2021) The rise of Local Politics: A Global Review a Annual Review of Political Science, Vol. 24, 345-63.
- Martí-Costa, M. Tomàs, M. (coord.) (2019) Governança metropolitana; IERMB: UAB Bellaterra.

- Nel.lo, O., Blanco, I., Gomà, R. (eds.) (2022) El apoyo mutuo en tiempos de crisis. La solidaridad ciutadana durante la pandèmia COVID19, Buenos Aires: CLACSO, Barcelona: UAB, IERMB. Disponible on line. (Introducció i conclusions)
- Page, E. (1991) "Localism and centralism in Europe",Londres: Sage
- Pradel, M. i García, M. (coord.) (2018) El momento de la ciudadanía. Innovación socialygobernanza urbana, Barcelona: Los libros de la Catarata
- Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals, n.123, Municipalismo internacional y derecho a la ciudad. Las ciudades en la era de la globalización, Desembre 2019.
- Sorando,D. i Ardura, A. (2016) First we take manhattan: la destruccion creativa de las ciudades, Catarata, Barcelona.
- Subirats, J. (2019) "Movimientos sociales y esfera local. La proximidad como espacio de protección y emancipación" a Desacatos: Revista de Ciencias Sociales, Núm. 61, pp. 162-169.
- Subirats, J. i Martí-Costa, M. (eds.) (2015) Ciudades y cambio de época: discursos sobre políticas urbanas y crisis en España, Bilbao, Universidad del País Vasco (on line)
- Tomàs,M. i Martí-Costa, M. (2011): "La reconfiguración de la agenda urbana: El debate europeo" a Iglesias et al.: "Políticas urbanas en España. Grances ciudades, actores y gobiernos locales", Barcelona: Icària; pp. 23-41.
- Tomàs, M. (2002) El debat sobre l'eficiència i la democràcia local, Diputació de Barcelona.
- Tomàs Fornés, Mariona (ed.) (2023) Metrópolis sin gobierno: la anomalía española en Europa, Tirant lo Blanc (disponible en línia).
- Wollmann, H. (2004): "Local Government Reforms in Great Britain, Sweden, Germany and France: Between Multi-Function and Single-Purpose Organisations", Local Government Studies, Vol.30, No.4, pp. 639-665.
- Ciutats i Persones: Col·lecció Grana de l'Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials https://www.icps.cat/publicacions/materials-cip/colleccio-grana
- Quaderns metodològics feministes (Ajuntament de Barcelona) https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dones/ca/recursos/documentacio/quaderns-metodologicsfeministes

PART 3. Politics and local government

- Blanco, I. i Gomà, R. (2016) El municipalisme del bé comú, Barcelona, Icària.
- Blanco, I., Castella, C., Simtomer, Y. (ed.) (2019) Pressupostos participatius al món local: el repte d'incorporar la ciutadania en la definició del pressupost públic, Diputació de Barcelona.
- IERMB (2018) El dret a la metròpoli. Anuari metropolità de Barcelona 2017, Bellaterra: Institut d'Estudis Regionals i Metropolitans de Barcelona
- Observatorio Metropolitano (2014) "La apuesta municipalista. La democracia empieza por lo cercano", Madrid: Traficantes de sueños. (Capítol 3)
- Font, J. i Blanco, I. (2003) Polis, la ciutat participativa. Participar en els municipis: qui, com i perquè, Barcelona: Diputació de Barcelona. Pp. 47-73.
- Ubasart, G. (2012) "Candidatures populars i alternatives a Catalunya. Construint democràcia", Barcelona: Icària Editorial
- Canal, R. (2013): "Ciudades y pueblos que puedan durar. Políticas locales para una nueva época", Icaria Editorial, Barcelona. (Bloc V)
- Ibarra, P. et.al. (2018) Nuevos movimientos sociales. De la calle a los ayuntamientos, Icària: BCN.
- Martí, S. Gomà, R. et.al. (2018) Movimientos sociales y derecho a la ciudad, Icària: Barcelona
- Roth, L., Monterde, A., Calleja, A. (eds.) (2019) Ciudades democráticasla revuelta municipalista en el ciclo post-15 M. Barcelona: Icària
- Parés, M., Castellà, C., García Brugada, M. (Direcció) (2015) Repensant la participació de la ciutadania al món local, Diputació de Barcelona.
- Vilaregut, R. (2019) Ajuntaments pel canvi. Menys del que volien, més del que es pensaven, Lleida: Pagès Editors
- Wollmann, H. (2014): *La reciente reforma del gobierno local en España. Reflexiones desde una perspectiva comparada*, Cuadernos Manuel Giménez Abad, nº 8, diciembre.

PART 4. What do municipalities do?: local public policies

- Antxustegi-etxearte, O. (2014) Del suburbi a ciutat. El Pla Popular de Santa Coloma de Gramenet,Edicions Fòrum-Grama.
- Blanco, I.Gomà, R. (2002) Gobiernos localesy redes participativas, Barcelona: Ariel.
- Blanco, I. Gomà, R.(2016) El municipalisme del bé comú, Icària: Barcelona

- Brugué, Q. (2022)Organizaciones que saben, organizaciones que aprenden, Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública: Madrid.

- Brugué, Q. i Gomà, R. (coord.) (1998) Gobiernos Locales y Políticas Públicas. Barcelona: Ariel. pp. 15-35.
- Canal, R. (2013): "Ciudades y pueblos que puedan durar. Políticas locales para una nueva época", Icaria Editorial, Barcelona. (Blocs de I a IV)
- De La Fuente, M. (coord.) (2016) Exclusió social i gènere a l'àmbit local. Transversalitat, interseccionalitat i empoderament, Barcelona: ICPS.
- Fernández de Losada, A. i Abdullah, H. (eds.) (2020) Cities on the frontline: managing the coronavirus crisis, Barcelona: CIDOB.
- Iglesias,M. et.al. (2011): Políticas urbanas en España. Grandes ciudades, actores y gobiernos locales, Barcelona: Icàri
- Klinenberg, E. (2021) Palacios del pueblo. Políticas para una sociedad más igualitaria, Capitán Swing.
- Navarro Yáñez, C.J. et alt (eds.) (2019), Innovación en políticas urbanas. Perspectivas, metodologías y casos, Barcelona: Icaria
- Subirats, J. García Bernardos, A. (2015) Innovación social y políticas urbanas en España, Icària: BCN.
- Subirats, J. i Martí-Costa,M. (eds.) (2015) Ciudades y cambio de época: discursos sobre políticas urbanas y crisis en España, Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco

Software

The necessary to apply quantitative and qualitative techniques in the research project.

In this subject, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is allowed as an integral part of the development of the work, provided that the final result reflects a significant contribution of the student in the analysis and personal reflection. The student must clearly identify which parts have been generated with this technology, specify the tools used and include a critical reflection on how these have influenced the process and the final result of the activity. The lack of transparency in the use of AI will be considered a lack of academic honesty and may lead to a penalty, or greater sanctions in serious cases.

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