

Political Theory

Code: 101117
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

This subject is considered to be of special interest for the student's training, given that its subject constitutes one of the backbones of Political Science. Political theories are the "theories" that future political scientists need to understand in order to be able to base and contextualise the research, studies and phenomena that they will analyse in their professional future.

Starting from the premise that students have already acquired a basic knowledge of the History of Political Ideas in the West (Political Thought), and have dealt with some of its expressions in Liberalism, Conservatism, Nationalism or Socialism, in this subject, we intend to go a step further to approach some of the contributions that, from the field of political theory and philosophy, have been the protagonists of some of the main contemporary theoretical debates.

Our contract.

By enrolling in this course, you and I have agreed to a mutual contract. I will work hard to be prepared, enthusiastic, fair and respectful of each student and their views. I will be accessible and will make every effort to return graded materials within two weeks. By enrolling in the class, you have agreed to (1) attend all classes, (2) participate by asking questions and joining class discussions, and (3) read assigned material and complete written assignments on time. In order for us both to be sure of our commitment, it is imperative that you read the teaching guide and turn it in signed on the first day of class.

Formal prerequisites.

It is advisable to have completed the Political Thought course. It will be assumed that the student has the necessary skills to deal with texts of a certain conceptual complexity, to work on them in an adequate way, to present them in public sessions and to critically discuss their contents.

Recommendations.

As this is a subject designed to provide an overview of the main contemporary debates in political theory and to enhance reading skills, critical analysis, personal reflection and oral and written argumentation. As you feel it

is necessary to debate in public using solid arguments and not merely ad hoc opinions, attendance at all teaching activities is compulsory. In addition, sufficient time must be made available for reading, thinking and writing, both individually and in groups.

Throughout the course, students are advised to regularly follow the treatment of certain current political issues in different media (written and audiovisual), in order to be able to easily follow the different debates, questions and approaches that may arise in class. Likewise, in order to get the best out of this subject, it is recommended that students have basic computer skills (word processing, graphic presentations, Internet browsing and obtaining information, as well as the UAB Virtual Campus).

It is necessary to have an intermediate level of English, which allows the student to broaden the scope of the information that can be consulted, such as research, news and bibliography written in English.

Observations.

No electronic devices may be used in class, neither for communication nor for taking notes. Computers, tablets and mobile phones are forbidden in the classroom. All electronic devices will be placed in a space reserved for this purpose at the beginning of the class and will be collected after the end of the class.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Given the extent and breadth of matter, we have opted to make an incursion into the work and thought of some referent authors of the main currents of contemporary political theory. This course will focus, then:

1. To make an introduction to the main currents and the main debates and arguments of contemporary normative political theory in a contextualist perspective, that is, oriented by the fundamental problems of today's democracies.
2. To complete the empirical perspective of political science with a normative and pluralistic approach to the horizon of values, arguments and assumptions from which research questions and designs are made, whether public policies are implemented and evaluated or institutions are designed.
3. To develop a critical perspective of analysis of the concepts, vocabularies and presuppositions underlying the institutional arrangements and public policies of contemporary democracies as well as political science research programs.
4. To review arguments, ideas and political concepts and enrich the vocabulary that allows an improvement of the capacity of personal reflection, argumentation, exposition and oral and written expression in Political Science.
5. To relate contemporary theoretical-political debates with other intellectual and political dimensions of contemporary cultural life: cinema, painting, music, literature.

Competences

Political Science and Public Management

- Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
- 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 and connecting main contemporary political theories, interpreting classical and current political texts, and arguing from different theoretical positions.
- Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
- Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
- Managing contemporary political theories and understanding its analytical value in internal or international concrete cases.

- 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.
- Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
- Working autonomously.

Contemporary History, Politics and Economics

- Contrast the main contemporary political theories.

Learning Outcomes

1. Arguing about the contrast between communitarianism and libertarianism.
2. Arguing about the rebirth of republicanism.
3. Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
4. Assessing the contribution of movements like feminism, environmentalism or various identity movements.
5. Critically analysing and assessing the alternatives to liberalism.
6. Critically analysing and assessing the appearance of the inter-war fascisms and the reconstruction of the liberal democrat thought after WW II.
7. Critically analysing and assessing the emergence of liberalism.
8. Describing and critically commenting the new approaches of demo-liberal thought, like its individualist foundation or the neutrality of institutional designs.
9. Describing the emergence of the State in the modern sense and explaining the theoretical contributions of Machiavelli, Bodino, Hobbes.
10. Explaining the contribution of John Rawls and the distributive justice, and assessing its impact on the debate of contemporary politic theory.
11. Explaining the impact of the emergence of Christianity on the political thought.
12. Explaining the redefinition of the notion of citizenship in the context of globalization.
13. Explaining the several approaches of the socialist tradition, specially the 1917 breakup and the emergence of communism.
14. Exposing key elements of political thought in the Graeco-Roman past: the individual and the community from Socrates to Aristotle.
15. Identifying and connecting main contemporary political theories, interpreting classical and current political texts, and arguing from different theoretical positions.
16. Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
17. Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
18. Managing contemporary political theories and understanding its analytical value in internal or international concrete cases.
19. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
20. Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
21. Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
22. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
23. Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
24. Working autonomously.

Content

1. Types of liberalism.
2. Socialism
3. Anarchism

4. Communism
5. Analytical Marxism
6. Critical Theory
7. Republicanism
8. Nationalism
9. Federalism
10. Cosmopolitanism
11. Populism
12. Neocons
13. Christian Democracy and the Christian Right
14. Radical Right
15. Islam
16. Multiculturalism
17. Feminism
18. Ecology
19. Pacifism
20. Anti-globalism
21. Communitarianism
22. Postmodernism

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master Classes	24	0.96	7, 6, 5, 2, 1, 4, 8, 9, 18, 12, 13, 14, 10, 11, 15
Seminars	47	1.88	7, 6, 5, 3, 2, 1, 4, 8, 18, 12, 13, 10, 20, 15, 17, 21, 22, 23
Type: Supervised			
Works	28	1.12	16, 15, 17, 22, 23
Type: Autonomous			
Study of the subject matter	40	1.6	7, 5, 2, 1, 4, 8, 18, 12, 10, 19, 15, 17, 22, 24, 23

The methodology of study and evaluation of the subject will use a varied set of instruments to achieve an optimal knowledge of the contents of the subject. On the one hand, there will be continuous evaluation exercises consisting of critical reviews of scientific articles, problem solving, execution of pot type exercises, or practical case studies. Discussions on current issues will also be raised in the debate space to apply the analytical instruments of the subject.

The teaching of the subject will be organized in master classes, the least, given that the idea is to turn the educational method around and that it is the students who prepare the topics, related in the contents, to be debated in class, in an open and collaborative way by all the classmates (including the teacher).

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

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Attendance and participation	25%	3	0.12	7, 6, 5, 3, 2, 1, 4, 8, 9, 18, 12, 13, 14, 10, 11, 15, 21, 22
Essays	25%	3	0.12	3, 19, 16, 15, 17, 22, 24, 23
Final Exam	35%	3	0.12	7, 6, 5, 3, 2, 1, 4, 8, 9, 18, 12, 13, 14, 10, 11, 19, 15, 21, 22, 24
Oral presentation	10%	1	0.04	3, 18, 20, 19, 16, 15, 17, 21, 22, 23
Reading control	5%	1	0.04	3, 4, 18, 10, 19, 15, 17, 22

The evaluation of this subject consists of the following parts:

-Attendance and participation. In addition to the obligatory nature of attendance, the attitude of those students capable of relating the different currents of thought and theoretical-conceptual approaches of the subject with the different current political and social issues of the moment will be especially appreciated.

- A final exam, composed of four short questions with a value of 1.5 points each and a question to be developed with a value of 4 points. It is a necessary condition to pass the subject pass the partial examination with a minimum grade of passed.

- Two reading controls: These controls will be carried out during school hours and without prior notice. In order to pass the subject, it is essential to have passed a reading test.

- A course work on a subject that will be chosen jointly by the teacher and the student.

- An exposition in class on one of the contents of the subject.

Important Notes on the Evaluation System

- The exam date will be set by the faculty. Under no circumstances will individual exams be offered. ERASMUS students who purchase return tickets for a date prior to the final exam and therefore miss it will be marked as "not presented."
- Passing the final exam with a minimum passing grade is a necessary condition for passing the course.
- All submissions must be made through the Virtual Campus in the designated space. Any submission outside the specified time or platform will be considered "not presented."
- Once a student has completed more than 30% of the assessed coursework, they may no longer request to withdraw from the course.
- All oral and written assignments must be completed in Catalan or Spanish. Submissions in any other language will not be accepted.
- Plagiarism and other irregularities: According to academic regulations, any irregularity (e.g., reusing work from previous years, copying from websites or books) that significantly alters the grade of an assessment will receive a grade of 0. If multiple irregularities occur in the same course, the final grade for that course will be 0.
- Use of Artificial Intelligence: The use of AI technologies is not allowed at any stage of the coursework. Any assignment containing AI-generated content will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and may result in partial or full penalties, or more serious disciplinary actions in severe cases.

Resits

To be eligible for the resit process, students must have previously completed a set of activities whose total weight represents at least two-thirds of the final grade for the course or module.

To participate in the resit, students must have obtained an average course grade of at least 3,50 out of 10.

The resit will consist of submitting all pending assignments (originally due during the semester) before the resit exam date. After that, a written exam will be administered with the same structure as the final exam.

Single Assessment

Based on my experience, this course cannot be taken in a non-attendance format. The methodology-combining lectures and practical sessions-makes it impossible for the course content to be captured in a single textbook and studied independently.

Before choosing this form of assessment, it is important to consider one key fact: the numbers speak for themselves. In the two years this format has been offered, 7 students have chosen it. None of them passed the course, and only one was able to take the resit exam.

Nevertheless, if you decide to pursue this option, the single assessment will consist of an exam that includes the same final exam taken by students in continuous assessment, plus additional questions on the practical activities and seminars conducted throughout the course. This exam will account for 100% of the final grade.

To be eligible for the resit, you must obtain a minimum score of 3.5 on the exam. The resit exam will be of the same format as the final exam.

Bibliography

Referencias.

Arteta, A., Guitián, E., Máiz R. (eds.) Teoría Política Alianza Editorial 2008

Dryzek, Honig, B Phillips, A. (eds) Handbook of Political Theory Oxford U. Press 2008

Innerarity, Daniel. La política para perplejos. Galaxia Gutenberg 2018

Innerarity, Daniel. La política en tiempo de indignación. Galaxia Gutenberg 2015

Máiz, R. (ed.) Teorías políticas contemporaneas Ed. Tirant Lo Blanch 2009

Mellón, J., Torrens, X. (eds.) Ideologías y Movimientos Políticos Contemporaneos. Tecnos 2016 (LIBRO DE TEXTO DE LA ASIGNATURA)

McKinnon, C. Issues in Political Theory Oxford U. Press, 2012.

Vallespin, F. (coord.) Historia de la teoría política, vols 5 i 6. Madrid: Alianza, varies edicions.

Series:

Utopía (BBC)

Black Mirror (BBC)

Mister Robot (Netflix)

Cinema:

- Citizen Kane, Orson Welles

- Good Night. And Good Luck, George Clooney
 - El Sur, Víctor Erice
 - Paris, Texas Wim Wenders
 - Copying Beethoven, A. Holland
 - Into the Wild, Sean Penn
 - Deserto Rosso, M. Antonioni
 - Gruppo di famiglia in un interno, L. Visconti
 - Trois couleurs: rouge, K. Kieslowsky
 - Sunshine, Itsvan Szabo
 - East is East, Damien O'Donnell
 - It's a Free World..., Ken Loach
 - La pelota Vasca, Julio Medem
 - Ulysses' Gaze, T. Angelopoulos
 - Michael Collins, Neil Jordan
 - Iron Jawed Angels, Katia von Garnier
 - Million Dollar Baby, Clint Eastwood
 - The French Lieutenant's Woman, Karel Reisz
 - The Age of Innocence, Martin Scorsese
 - 4 meses, 3 semanas, 2 días, Cristian Mungiu
 - Todo sobre mi madre, Pedro Almodóvar
 - Milk, Gus Van Sant
 - Mulholland Drive, David Lynch
 - The Hours, Stephen Daldry
 - Thirteen Conversations about One Thing, Jill Sprecher
 - An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore
 - The 11th Hour, Nel Conners
- Novela:
- El viaje del Profesor Caritat, Steven Lukes
 - Contrapunto, Aldous Huxley
 - Invisible, Paul Auster
 - La Peste, A. Camus
 - Pequeña Isla, Andrea Levy

- G, John Berger
- Verano, J. Coetzee
- Microcosmos, Claudio Magris
- Memorias de Adriano, M. Yourcenar
- La Condición Humana, A. Malraux
- Se está haciendo cada vez más tarde, A. Tabucchi
- El lobo estepario, H. Hesse
- La marcha Radetzky, Joseph Roth
- Un armiño en Chernopol, Von Rezzori
- El Mundo de Ayer, S. Zweig
- La muerte de Virgilio, H. Broch
- Auto de Fe, Elias Canetti
- Doktor Faustus, Thomas Mann
- Un Puente sobre el Drina, Ivo Andrich
- La vida está en otra parte, Milan Kundera
- Suite Francesa, Irene Nemirovsky
- El Arco Iris de la Gravedad, Thomas Pynchon
- Elegía para un americano, Siri Husvedt
- Submundo, Don Delillo

Software

Office

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	Spanish	first semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	51	Spanish	first semester	afternoon