Contemporary Political Actors and Institutions

Code: 104772
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Communication in Organisations	FB	2

Contact

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Prerequisites

There is not

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this document.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Contemporary Political Actors and Institutions is an introduction to the Catalan and Spanish political system. Analysis of political institutions, political parties and other emerging political actors in Catalonia and Spain. Comparative approach to the diversity of political cultures, from the point of view of the typology of institutions, on a world scale.

It also introduces constant reference to comparative experience in administration, public management, and public policy, with case studies in different political and cultural contexts. Its main objective is that students know these theoretical and empirical references and that they know how to use them in interpreting the dynamics of operation and change in administrations and public policies.

Competences

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Act within one's own area of knowledge, evaluating sex/gender-based inequalities.
- Display thorough knowledge of the contemporary world in its social, economic, political and cultural dimensions.
- Introduce changes in the methods and processes of the field of knowledge to provide innovative responses to the needs and demands of society.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
- 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 have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.

- Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Work in compliance with professional codes of conduct.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse a situation and identify its points for improvement.
2. Analyse and describe the fundamental structure and functions of contemporary political institutions in the Spanish context.
3. Analyse the sex- or gender-based inequalities and the gender biases present in one's own area of knowledge.
4. Appreciate the diversity of the various contemporary political institutions and the role they play in the world's different political systems.
5. Communicate using language that is not sexist or discriminatory.
6. Distinguish the characteristics of contemporary political actors and institutions, in order to develop critical thinking and produce original ideas on the context.
7. Explain the explicit or implicit code of practice of one's own area of knowledge.
8. Identify situations in which a change or improvement is needed.
9. Identify the main inequalities and discriminations in terms of sex/gender present in society.
10. Identify the social, economic and environmental implications of academic and professional activities within one?s own area of knowledge.
11. Interpret and discuss documents on the main theories of political science regarding the system of actors and institutions.
12. Plan and conduct academic studies in the field of political science, especially on the structure and functions of contemporary public institutions.
13. Present a summary of the studies made, orally and in writing.
14. Propose projects and actions that are in accordance with the principles of ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and obligations, diversity and democratic values.
15. Propose viable projects and actions to boost social, economic and environmental benefits.
16. Show respect for the idiosyncrasy of each institution and political actor when analysing their characteristics within the framework of political science.
17. Weigh up the impact of any long- or short-term difficulty, harm or discrimination that could be caused to certain persons or groups by the actions or projects.

Content

1. Historical background on the current Spanish and Catalan political system.
2. The transition to democracy
3. Characteristics and effects of the 1978 Constitution
4. Territorial organization: State of the Autonomies
5. Actors: parties and institutions.
6. Elections 1977-2023
7. Electoral System: operation and possible reforms.
8. Electoral behavior and political culture
9. The independence process in Catalonia

Note: The course content will be sensitive to issues related to gender perspective and the use of inclusive language.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes

Type: Directed			
study and material reading	75	3	2, 6, 4, 13, 11, 12, 16
Type: Supervised			
Master classes and Parcipatory Seminars	50	2	2, 6, 4, 13, 11, 12, 16
Type: Autonomous			
end of course work	25	1	2, 6, 4, 13, 11, 12, 16

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 participatory seminars with oral presentations by students
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. An individual work must 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 teacher.

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.
A detailed schedule outlining the content of each session will be presented on the first day of the course and will be available on the course's Virtual Campus, where students will find all teaching materials and necessary information for effective course monitoring. Should the teaching modality change for reasons of force majeure according to the competent authorities, the teaching staff will inform students of any modifications to the course schedule and teaching methodologies.

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
group work	15%	0	0	2, 3, 1, 5, 6, 4, 7, 13, 10, 9, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17
end of course work	45%	0	0	2, 3, 1, 5, 6, 4, 7, 13, 10, 9, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17
Parcipatory Seminars	40%	0	0	2, 3, 1, 5, 6, 4, 7, 13, 10, 9, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17

Continuous assessment

The continuous assessment system for the subject is based on the following percentages:

A) 40% Knowledge control: final theoretical test. The theoretical test must be approved (5 or more) to pass the subject (essential condition).

B) 30% Completion and presentation of practical exercises. The practices will be done in the classroom.

C) 30% Completion of final project. The work will be done in teams.

Single assessment

The single assessment system for the subject is based on the following percentages:

A) 50% Theoretical test. It must be approved (5 or more) to pass the subject (essential condition) (The exam model is different from that of continuous assessment).

B) 50% Submission of a final project.

Students who have not submitted at least 2/3 of the assignments, have not taken the final exam or have not submitted the final assignment for the subject will be considered "non-evaluable".

Retake: continuous assessment

a) According to regulations, in order to participate in the retake process, students must have previously been assessed for at least 2/3 of the total assessable activities of the subject.

b) Theory can only be retaken if the student has taken the theoretical exam set for continuous assessment and has obtained a grade lower than 4.9. The retake exam will consist of a written test to assess theoretical knowledge.

c) The final assignment for the subject (30%) is an assessable assignment that cannot be retaken if it is failed. The reason is that doing work of this nature is practically impossible to do with the time available for retake.

Retake: single assessment

a) According to regulations, in order to participate in the retake process, students must have previously been assessed on at least 2/3 of the total assessable activities of the subject.

b) The theory test can only be retaken if the student has obtained a grade lower than 4.9. The retake test will consist of a written test to assess theoretical knowledge.

Plagiarism
If the student commits any irregularity that could lead to a significant variation in the grade of an assessment, this assessment will be graded 0, regardless of the disciplinary process that may be instructed. In the event that several irregularities occur in the assessment acts of the same subject, the final grade for this subject will be 0.
Use of Artificial Intelligence
In this subject, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is not allowed in any of its phases. Any work that includes fragments generated with AI will be considered a lack of academic honesty and may entail a partial or total penalty in the grade of the activity, or greater sanctions in serious cases.

Bibliography

Most relevant bibliography:

CROSSMAN, Richard HS (1941), *Biografía del Estado moderno, Madrid, FCE.*

JUDT, Tony (2008), *Postguerra. Una historia de Europa desde 1945*, Madrid, Taurus.

SARTORI, Giovanni (2012), *Partidos y sistema de partidos, Madrid, Alianza Editorial.*

NOELLE-NEUMANN, Elisabeth (2010)*, La espiral del silencio, Barcelona, Paidós.*

Complemantary bibliography:

AJA, Eliseo. (2014) Estado autonómico y reforma federal. Alianza.

AJA, Eliseo. i SOLÉ TURA, Jordi. (1977) Constituciones y períodos constituyentes en España (1808-1936). Siglo XXI.

AMAT, Jordi. (2015) El llarg procés. Tusquets.

ANDUIZA, Eva. i BOSCH, Agustí. (2004) Comportamiento político y electoral. Ariel.

BARTOMEUS, O. (2016) El terratrèmol silenciós. Eumo.

BOSCH, Agustí (2004) Guía del sistema electoral. UAB.

COTARELO, Ramon. (ed.) (1992).- Transición polítia y consolidación democrática. CIS.

EQUPIO PIEDRAS DE PAPEL (2015) Aragón es nuestro Ohio. El hombre del tres

Fundación ALTERNATIVAS.- Informes sobre la democracia.

MOTABES, Juan. i MARTÍNEZ, Antonia. (2019) Gobierno y política en España. Tirant lo Blanch.

PANEBIANCO, A. (2009) Modelos de partido. Alianza.

RENIU, Miquel. (ed.) (2012).- El sistema político español. Huygens.

TOHARIA José Juan (ed.) et al. (2011).- Pulso de España. Un informe sociológico. Fundación Ortega-Marañón.

TORCAL, Mariano Et al. (2005).- España: sociedad y política en perspectiva comparada. Tirant lo Blanch.

Software

Excel computer programs may be 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
(TE) Theory	7	Catalan	first semester	afternoon