POL 372 Contemporary Spanish Politics

Course Description
This class will introduce students to the important historical, political, social, and economic aspects of contemporary Spanish politics. Firstly, we will examine the legacy of the Franco regime and the transition to democracy in Spain after 1975. Secondly, we will study the new political, social and economic institutions of the democratic regime. Lastly, we will focus on Spanish foreign policy in an era of globalization.

Prerequisites
No prerequisites

Course Goals and Methodology
The aim of this course is to introduce the students to the main debates surrounding the Spanish political system. During the 26 sessions of the course, different aspects of Spanish politics will be tackled.

Firstly, the course will question the historical roots of the current political system in Spain. Features like the Second Republic, the Civil War, Francoism and the Transition to democracy will be analyzed in order to stress their relevance on Spanish contemporary politics.

The second part of the course will deal with the different actors that structure Spanish politics. The role and structure of core institutions, political parties, social movements, lobbies, bureaucracy, mass media and political elites will be assessed.

Thirdly, the course will focus on the dynamics structuring the political system. Those dynamics include the processes of decentralization, Europeanization, internationalization. The rise of the Spanish welfare state, the state and nation building process, the new developments affecting the political culture or the effects of the electoral system will be tackled.

Each session will be articulated around a fundamental question (e.g. Is Spain evolving towards federalism?). Different educational methods and techniques will be applied: debates, presentations, readings, videos and an oratory contest will help students to get the basic knowledge about the Spanish political system.
Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the recent developments in Spanish politics.
2. Debate about the current state of Spanish politics.
3. Make the distinction between the different concepts of political science (state, nation, power, clientelism, patronage, institutions, social movements...).

Required Texts
All the required readings will be sent by Email. You may print out the readings if necessary at the copy center located on the campus. In order to learn more about Spanish politics, students can read the following books:


WEBS:
Research centers:
- Real Instituto Elcano: [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org) (you can also sign up for their bulletins and newsletters produced in Spanish and English).
- Spanish Constitution: [http://narros.congreso.es/constitucion/index.htm](http://narros.congreso.es/constitucion/index.htm)
- Foreign Affairs Journal: [www.foreignaffairs.org](http://www.foreignaffairs.org)
- The Brookings Institute: [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu)
- European Political Science resources: [www.psr.keele.ac.uk/psr.htm](http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/psr.htm)
- European Foreign Policy Unit at LSE: [www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/intrel/EFPUworkingpaperseries.html](http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/intrel/EFPUworkingpaperseries.html)
- Spanish Safe Democracy Foundation: [http://spanish.safe-democracy.org](http://spanish.safe-democracy.org)
- Centro Investigaciones Sociológicas: [http://www.cis.es](http://www.cis.es)
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Instituto Nacional de Estadística: http://www.ine.es
Centro Reina Sofía Estudio de Violencia: http://www.gva.es/violencia
Encuesta de Población Activa: http://www.ine.es
Anuario Social de La Caixa: http://www.anuariosoc.lacaixa.comunicaciones.com

Representative Institutions:
- Constitution: http://www.constitucion.es
- Royal House: http://www.casareal.es
- Congress of Deputies: http://www.congreso.es
- Senate (links to regional parliaments): http://www.senado.es
- Government (links to regional governments): http://www.la-moncloa.es

Political parties:
- PSOE: http://www.psoe.es
- PP: http://www.pp.es
- IU: http://www.izquierda-unida.es
- CiU: http://www.convergencia.org
- ERC: http://www.esquerra.org
- PNV: http://www.eaj-pnv.com
- EA: http://www.euskoalkartasuna.org
- CC: http://www.coalicioncanaria.org
- ChA: http://www.chunta.com
- BNG: http://www.bng-galiza.org

General Course Policies

- **Emails**: All communication between the professor and the students can be made via Email.
- **Attendance and participation**: Students are expected to attend all classes. If there is justifiable excuse for missing class, this information must be provided to the proper authorities as required. Active participation in class discussions is required.
- **Readings**: Students are expected to have a look on the readings before coming to class.
- **Use of cell phones**: Please keep your cell phones turned off during class.

Course Requirements and Grading
Assessment will involve two written exams. The mid-term and final exams will be made of two sections: a multiple choice test and an open question dealing with the topics tackled during the semester. A study guide will be available.

After each movie (Pan’s Labyrinth and Wolf), students will have to answer a series of questions and writing a short essay.

During the whole semester, student will be asked to write short essays about a series of topics. The correction of the homework will allow opening class discussions.
Finally, students will be required to participate to an oratory contest. Each team will fight for imposing its own arguments according to a list of topics.

- Questions and essays about movies: 20 %
- Midterm exam (multiple choice test): 20 %
- Oratory contest: 20 %
- Final exam (multiple choice test): 20 %
- Homework: 20 %

**Attendance and Punctuality**

Students should plan to arrive to class on time. If the door is closed, please do not enter the classroom. Late arrivals count as absences according to the UPO’s policy.

**Missed or Late Work**

Missed or late work will not be accepted. Please, speak to your professor in case of any problem.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Students are expected to act in accordance with the University’s standards of conduct concerning plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that requires special academic accommodation, please speak to your professor within the first three weeks of the semester in order to discuss any adjustments.

**Behavior Policy**

Students are expected to show integrity and act in a professional and respectful manner at all times.

**Class Schedule**

**Section 1:** “Introduction: Welcome to Spain”:

- Presentation: students, program, system of examination, add and drop period, readings and schedule.

**PART I. THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF CONTEMPORARY SPAIN**

**Section 2:** “Second Republic and Civil War”:

- It is essential to focus on that period in order to understand the political and social dynamics of contemporary Spain since most of the current cleavages are inheritances of the Civil War.

Section 3: “Francoism: What is the real Nature of the Beast?”:
- Francoism is sometimes presented as a classical dictatorship while some authors think it was the first version of European totalitarianism. What is the real “nature of the beast”?
- List of questions and essay about the movie El laberinto del Fauno.

Section 4: “How to Dismantle a Dictatorship? The Spanish Transition to Democracy”:
- Transition to democracy is frequently presented as a peaceful episode led by a collective movement of political actors. We will examine what really succeeded.

PART II. CORE ACTORS OF THE SPANISH POLITICAL SYSTEM

- At first glance, the Spanish political system is based on a classical parliamentary regime. But who really governs?

Section 6: “Parties and Party System: Towards Stabilization?”.

Section 7: “Spanish Pressure Groups: How to Channel Them?”:
- Spanish institutions, as in other European polities, face different pressure groups intending to get something from their lobbying activity. How do Spanish interest groups organize?

Section 8: “Social Movements in Spain: Is Civil Society Organized?”:
- Who are the social movements in Spain? How do political institutions and civil society combine? How do social claims circulate from the bottom to the top?
Section 9: “Spanish Political Elites: Usual Suspects?”:
- Spanish political elites and their systems of recruitment are criticized since the beginning of the financial crisis. How to describe their social profile and evolution since the end of Francoism.

Section 10: “Spanish Public Administration: Reformism or Inertia?”:
- The Spanish public administration has faced several challenges since the transition (e.g. decentralization, welfare state, modernization, new public management). What is the profile of the current public administration nowadays in Spain? Readings: Lourdes Torres and Vicente Pina, “Reshaping Public Administration: the Spanish Experience compared to the UK”, Public Administration, 82(2), 2004, 445-464.

- The period of Francoism banned unofficial mass media. From the 1980s, big media corporations have grown in Spain. Are they related with political parties? How do they influence voters? Are they a real fourth power fighting against the establishment?

Mid-term exam!

PART III. STRUCTURAL DYNAMICS OF SPANISH POLITICS

Section 12: “Territorial Political System and Decentralization: Towards Federalism?”:
- The Spanish territorial system is a recent creation which has been profoundly shaped by decentralization. Is that unstable institutional arrangement evolving towards federalism?

Section 13: “Spain, What Model for a Multicultural Society?”:
- During the last 15 years, Spain has converted into an immigration country by attracting people from around the world. How does Spain deal with so much variety?

Section 14: “Does Spain Exist? Nationalism(s) in the Peninsula”:
- Spain is one of the oldest European nation-states. Nevertheless, contemporary Spanish politics has been – and is – largely shaped by centre-periphery tensions including terrorism.
- List of questions and essay about the movie Lobo.
Section 15: “Times They Are a-Changin’. Political Culture in Spain”:
- Spanish political culture has evolved in a dramatic way over the last 30 years. Let’s have a look at the most important change.

Section 16: “Elections and Electors in Spain. A Proportional System for a Majoritarian Outcome?”:
- Voting behavior analysis is one of the most consolidated areas of Spanish political science. How Spaniards deal with parties and competitive elections after 40 years of dictatorship?

Section 17: “Spain, a *sui generis* Model of Welfare State”:
- The transition to democracy was also a U-turn towards the creation of a new welfare-state. What kind of social policy system has developed since the 1980s?

Section 18: “Spanish Foreign Relations. Still an ‘enfant terrible’?”:
- Spain is now an important partner in Europe. But beyond the European integration, Spain has always maintained strong links with other countries like Morocco and Southern American states.

Section 19: “What’s New Pussycat? Recent Developments in Spanish Politics”:
- Gay marriages, debates on abortion, economic crisis, *ley de memoria histórica*... what kind of lessons can we draw from the last ten years?

Section 20: “Oratory contest about Spanish Politics”:
- Oratory contest 1.
- Oratory contest 2.
- Oratory contest 3.

**In May:** Final exam!