POL 372 Contemporary Spanish Politics

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Office Hours: 10:30 – 12:00

Course Information
Fall 2016
Monday and Wednesday
5:40 – 7:00
Ed. 25, room XXX

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

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 current 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 based on a fundamental question (e.g. Is Spain evolving towards federalism?). The professor will provide quantitative and qualitative data about that issue, and an open discussion will conclude each session. 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, pressure groups...).

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 too:


Research Centers
- Real Instituto Elcano: [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org)
- 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)
- 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)
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística: [http://www.ine.es](http://www.ine.es)
- Encuesta de Población Activa: [http://www.ine.es](http://www.ine.es)
- Anuario Social de La Caixa: [http://www.anuariosoc.lacaixa.comunicaciones.com](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
- CdC: http://www.convergencia.org
- ERC: http://www.esquerra.org
- PNV: http://www.eaj-pnv.com
- EA: http://www.euskoalkartasuna.org
- CC: http://www.coalicióncanaria.org
- ChA: http://www.chunta.com
- BNG: http://www.bng-galiza.org
- Podemos: http://podemos.info/
- Ciudadanos: https://www.ciudadanos-cs.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 along with 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. The final grading will be based on the following percentages:
• 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. 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”:
• Wednesday, January 25, 2017: 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: Why did Democracy Fail?”:
• Monday, January 30, 2017: 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 political cleavages are inheritances of the Civil War.
Section 3: “Francoism: What is the real Nature of the Beast?”:
- **Wednesday, February 1, 2017**: 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"?
- **Monday, February 6, 2017**: List of questions and essay about the movie *El laberinto del Fauno*.

Section 4: “How to Dismantle a Dictatorship? The Spanish Transition to Democracy”:
- **Wednesday, February 8, 2017**: 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

- **Monday, February 13, 2017**: 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 a New Format?”:
- **Wednesday, February 15, 2017**: After so many years of stability, the 2008 crisis provoked some change. Is the Spanish political system evolving towards a new balance of political forces?

Section 7: “Spanish Pressure Groups: How to Channel Them?”:
- **Monday, February 20, 2017**: Spanish institutions, as in other European polities, face different pressure groups intending to influence policy-makers. How do Spanish lobbies organize and how do they get their objectives?

Section 8: “Social Movements in Spain: Is Civil Society Organized?”:
- **Wednesday, February 22, 2017**: 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?”:
- **Monday, March 6, 2017**: 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?”:
- **Wednesday, March 8, 2017**: The Spanish public administration has faced several challenges since the transition (e.g. decentralization, welfare state, modernization, new public management). What is the current profile of the Spanish public administration?

- **Monday, March 13, 2017**: 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 defending the freedom of communication?

**Wednesday, March 15, 2017**: Mid-term exam!

**PART III. STRUCTURAL DYNAMICS OF SPANISH POLITICS**

Section 12: “Territorial Political System and Decentralization: Towards Federalism?”:
- **Monday, March 20, 2017**: The Spanish territorial system is a recent creation which was profoundly shaped by decentralization. Is that unstable institutional arrangement evolving towards federalism?

Section 13: “Spain, What Model for a Multicultural Society?”:
- **Wednesday, March 22, 2017**: During the last 15 years, Spain converted into an immigration country by attracting people from around the world. Is this trend over? How does Spain deal with so much variety?

Section 14: “Does Spain Exist? Nationalism(s) in the Peninsula”:
- **Monday, March 27, 2017**: Contemporary Spanish politics has been – and is – largely shaped by center-periphery tensions including terrorism. How do Spaniards deal with their overlapping identities?
- **Wednesday, March 29, 2016**: List of questions and essay about the movie *Lobo*. 
Section 15: “Times They Are a-Changin’. Political Culture in Spain”:
- Monday, April 3, 2017: 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?”:
- Wednesday, April 5, 2017: The current electoral behavior of Spaniards is the product of a 35 years’ evolution that started after the end of Francoism. But how did the current electoral system shape those preferences?

Section 17: “Spain, a sui generis Model of Welfare State”:
- Monday, April 17, 2017: The transition to democracy was also a U-turn towards the creation of a new welfare-state. What model of social policies does Spain belong to?

Section 18: “Transparency and Quality of Democracy: Is Spain a Corrupted Country?”:
- Wednesday, April 19, 2017: The concepts of transparency, accountability, quality of democracy... have become increasingly popular in political science for the last 15 years. Nevertheless, the high number of corruption scandals in Spain occurred in the 2010s seems to indicate that Spain does not comply with those indicators. So, is Spain a corrupted country?

Section 19: “Spanish Foreign Relations. Still an ‘enfant terrible’?”:
- Monday, April 24, 2017: Despite its integration to the European Union, Spain still maintains strong links with other areas like Morocco and Latin America. But is Spain an outsider from the viewpoint of the European foreign affairs?

Section 20: “What’s New Pussycat? Recent Developments in Spanish Politics”:
- Wednesday, April 26, 2017: Gay marriages, debates on abortion, economic crisis, ley de memoria histórica... what lessons can be drawn from the last fifteen years?

Section 21: “Oratory contest about Spanish Politics”:

May, 15-19: Final exam!