PO 191 Introduction to Political Sciences

Teachers

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Course Overview

Political Science works as an umbrella for several specific areas of social sciences. The objective is to provide students with a basic understanding of the nature and extent of Political Science by empowering them to acquire knowledge of the basics, familiarize themselves with the essential concepts and ideas, approaches and methods, in this globalized and complex world. Politics, in its broadest sense, refers to the activity or process by which groups reach and enforce binding decisions and through which people make, define, and apply the general rules by which they live. We refer to Political Science, as we understand it, as a Polity, when it refers to political systems and institutions; *Politics*, when it refers to the process of running governmental or state affairs; and Policy, when it refers to content and decisions.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course, students will be able to:
1. **Recognize** the nature of and the basic approaches to the discipline of Political Science.
2. **Understand** the most important concepts regarding different areas of Political Science.
3. **Apply** the basic ideas of Political Science in understanding everyday political experiences in a globalized world.
4. **Compare** different political systems in a critical way.
5. **Develop** a critical approach to all the topics discussed during the course with active participation during the classes.

Course structure and calendar

1. **Introduction**. What is Political Science. Basic Political Concepts. Political Science as a system (polity), as a process (politics), as content (polity). Theoretical approaches.
2. **Structures and political institutions.** The state, the nation, institutions, constitutions, parliaments, democracy, authoritarian regimes, electoral systems.
3. **Political mobilization and actors.** Political culture. Ideologies. Political parties. Interest groups. Social movements. Political communication and public opinion.
4. **Comparative government and governance.** Presidential government (USA). Parliamentary government (UK). Semi-presidential government (F). Multi-level governance. Constitutions and Law. From government to governance.
5. **Public policy. Models of policy-making.** Policy instruments. Agenda setting. Regulation. From industrialization to post-industrialism. A multi-polar global order?

LEARNING UNIT I: MAIN POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES. Professor: Miquel Calsina

Description and objectives

The purpose of this Learning Unit is to acquire a basic knowledge about political ideologies: its function in the whole political system; which ones are or have been more important; how they have developed; which social and political movements they have generated and, finally, the structure of its core ideas. This approach is based on political science, but we need to use the political theory and the history of political ideas to complete a global understanding of each ideology. Political ideologies are sets of ideas that nourish the political discourse, and they are always associated with a particular context.

Core issues and Lessons

1. ¿What are political ideologies? Definitions. Left and right.
2. Liberalisms. The idea of liberty. Classical and modern liberalism. Neo-liberalism.
3. Conservatisms. Reactionary conservatism. Christian Democracy. Neo-conservatism.
4. Socialisms. The idea of equality. Labour and Social Democracy. The third way. Communism and post-communism.
5. Fascisms. Neo-fascism and new right. Fundamentalisms.
6. Old and new ideologies. Identifying ideological mainstream, today. Tutorial session

Individual Activities

1. Class exercise on political ideologies and the left-right axis. https://www.politicalcompass.org/test
2. Submission of a 30 lines essay on the concept of freedom that appears in "Liberty and liberties", chapter 1 of *The constitution of liberty*, of Friedrich A. Hayek.
3. Submission of a 30 lines essay on *On being conservative*, of Michael Oakeshott .
4. A 30 lines essay-commentary based on the film *Battleship Potemkin,* of Sergei M. Eisenstein. Submission and discussion at the session: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u13TMl9pnZA.
5. A 30 lines essay-commentary on Leni Riefenstahl 's documentary *Triumph of the Will.* Submission and discussion at the session. http://www.veoh.com/watch/v69522945NrKJdpm3.
6. Comparative analysis of political ideologies: key ideas, vocabulary and political agendas. Practical exercise of ideological analysis. Essay of 60 lines.

LEARNING UNIT II – MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY. Professor: Jaume Suau

Description and objectives

This learning unit is focused on analyzing the strong ties and interrelations between the daily praxis of democracy and news media in postmodern societies. It will study the communicative processes through which citizens gather information about public issues, processes that affect their political choices, influenced by both media and political actors. The learning unit will present the media system of Spain, comparing it with other western democracies and putting it in relation with its political and social context. Finally, the learning unit will analyze the recent transformations within the media environment and the shifting power relations in the media field brought by social and technological change and how this might transform western democracies.

Core Issues and Lessons

The six sessions of the learning unit will be structured around the following three main topics.

- Lessons 1 and 2. Media and politics: political communication and the power of media. The communicative process. The functions of news media and the formulation of public opinion. The influence of traditional news media and journalists in politics.

- Lessons 3 and 4. Media systems and models of democracy. The importance of media law and regulation, but also the social and cultural context in which media operates. Political parallelism, partisanship and polarization of news media.
- Lessons 5 and 6. The limits of media power: the challenges of the new media environment. A digital reformation or a digital revolution? The digital public sphere and the dream of Internet as a democratic agent. How new communication technologies have transformed the political news cycle.

Activities

1. Presentation of the different sessions and mandatory readings. Lecture class "Media and politics: political communication and the power of media". Followed by students' questions.
2. Is mandatory to arrive to this session with previously have read chapter 8 (Media and democracy: the third way) of the book "Media and power", by James Curran. The first part of the class students will write a 300 words (minimum) essay about a topic chosen by the professor, basing on topics covered by the lecture class and the mandatory reading. The second part of the session will be a debate moderated by the professor.
3. Lecture class "Media systems and models of democracy". Followed by students' questions.
4. Is mandatory to arrive to this session with previously have read chapter 5 (The Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model) of the book "Comparing media systems", by Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini. The first part of the class students will write a 300 words (minimum) essay about a topic chosen by the professor, basing on topics covered by the lecture class and the mandatory reading. The second part of the session will be a debate moderated by the professor.
5. Lecture class "The limits of media power: the challenges of the new media environment". Followed by students' questions.
6. Is mandatory to arrive to this session with previously have read chapter 7 (Systemic Hybridity in the Mediation of the American Presidential Campaign) of the book "The Hybrid Media System", by Andrew Chadwick. The first part of the class students will write a 300 words (minimum) essay about a topic chosen by the professor, basing on topics covered by the lecture class and the mandatory reading. The second part of the session will be a debate moderated by the professor.

+ Final essay of around 550-650 words. Format: Times New Roman, 12, double space (around two pages). The final essay is a personal reflection about the role of media in society, its limits and relationships with the political arena and how these have been transformed (or not) due to new communication technologies. The essay will draw on the lecture classes and mandatory readings. Students have to quote at least two of the authors of the reading list provided in this document.

Course evaluation

Lecture class represents 60% of the final mark. Each Learning Unit represents 20% of the final mark each. To pass the course it is compulsory to pass the different separated parts (lecture class and each learning unit).

Methodology

- Lectures will constitute the core of the sessions.
- Various texts will be studied during the class.

- Students have to participate and contribute actively, by preparing texts or practical/historical cases, reading relevant books and articles listed in the bibliography etc.

Lecture Class

There will be a final exam on the contents of the program.

- During the classes, the students will also take two exams.
- At the end of the course, the students must turn in a paper about an issue approved by the teacher. This paper must be the project of a group of three students.
- Class attendance is compulsory. During the semester six attendance tests will be given without previous warning. In order to be evaluated and take the final exam, the student must have taken at least 4 of these tests. The tests scores will also influence the final mark in the course.
- The final exam represents 70% of the final mark. Class exercises represent 30% of the mark.

Learning Units

Evaluation (UF 1 y UF 2):

Learning Unit 1:

- 60% Short essays made at class and participation in the following debates.
- 40% Final essay

Is necessary to pass both the short essays and the final essay in order to pass the formative unit.

Learning Unit 2:

- 60% Short essays made at class and participation in the following debates.
- 40% Final essay

Is necessary to pass both the short essays and the final essay in order to pass the formative unit.

Basic Bibliography

LECTURE CLASS

- ALMOND, G; BINGHAM POWELL, R and STROM K. *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*, 9th edition, Longman, 2009
- BOSCH, A/ORRIOLS, Ll. *Ciència política per a principiants.* Editorial UOC, 2011
- COLOMER, J. *The Science of Politics: An Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2011
- HAGUE, R and HARROP, M. *Comparative Government and Politics. An Introduction.* 8th ed., Palgrave Macmillan, 2010
- HEYWOOD, A. *Global politics.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2011
- ROSKIN, M. *Political Science: An Introduction*"
- VALLES, J.M. *Ciencia Política. Una introducción.* 8 edición. Ariel, 2011

LEARNING UNITS: (in Spanish)

Bibliografía general (UF 1 y UF2):

- AA.VV. (2008), *Diez textos básicos de ciencia política*. Ariel, Barcelona.
- Barraycoa, Javier (2002), *Sobre el poder en la modernidad y la posmodernidad*. Ensayos sociales, Madrid.
- Barreda, Mikel (2010), *La governabilitat en l'era global*. Editorial UOC, Barcelona.
- Bealey, Frank (2003), *Diccionario de ciencia política*. Editorial Istmo, Madrid.
- Bell, Daniel (2006), *Beyond liberal democracy*. Princeton University Press.
- Hirschman, Albert O. (1991), *Retóricas de la intransigencia*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, México.
- Berlin, Isaiah (1999), *Concepts and categories*. Princeton University Press.
- Bilakovics, Steven (2012), *Democracy without politics*. Harvard University Press.
- Bobbio, Norberto (1993), *Igualdad y libertad*. Paidós, Barcelona.
- Crouch, Colin (2004), *Post-democracy*. Polity Press.
- Dahl, Robert (2008), *La igualdad política*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, Argentina.
- Dahl, Robert (2009), *La poliarquía. Participación y oposición*. Ed. Tecnos, Madrid.
- Dahl, Robert (2011), *¿Quién gobierna?* Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Madrid.
- Dahl, Robert (2012), *La democracia*. Ariel, Barcelona.
- Dworkin, Ronald (2006) *Is Democracy possible here?*. Princeton University Press.
- Esping-Andersen, Gosta (2010), *Los tres grandes retos del estado del bienestar*. Ariel, Barcelona.
- Fukuyama, Francis (1993), *The end of History and the last man*. Penguin.
- Gutmann, Amy (2008), *La identidad en democracia*. Ed. Katz, Argentina.
- Judt, Tony (2012), *Pensar el segle XX*. La Magrana, Barcelona.
- Kymlicka, Will (2001), *Politics in the vernacular. nationalism, multiculturalism, and citizenship*. Oxford University Press.
- Locke, John (2002), *Second Treatise of Government*. Dover Publications.
- Marx, Karl (2007), *El capital* (vols I-VII). Ed. 62, Barcelona
- Rawls, John (2005), *Political Liberalism*, Columbia University Press.
- Requejo, Ferran (2008), *Las democracias. Democracia antigua, democracia liberal y Estado del bienestar*. Ariel, Barcelona.
- Schumpeter, J. A. (2010), *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. Routledge.
- Taylor, Charles (2009), *El multiculturalismo y la política del reconocimiento*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, México.
- Vallès, J.M. y Ballart, X. (Ed.) (2012), *Política para apolíticos*. Ariel, Barcelona.
- Vallespín, Fernando (Ed.) (1990), *Historia de la teoría política* (vols. 2 y 6). Alianza Editorial, Madrid.
- Wolin, Sheldon S. (2008), *Democracy incorporated*, Princeton University Press.

Complementary Bibliography

LECTURE CLASS

- ANDERSON, B. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* Londres: Verso, 1983
- BAUMAN, Z *Liquid times. Living in a Age of Uncertainty.* Cambridge, 2007
- BECK, U. *World at Risk.* Cambridge, 2009
- BOBBIO, N. *Democracy and Dictatorship.* University of Minnesota, 1989
- BOBBIO, N. *Liberalism and Democracy.* Verso Books, 2004
- DAHL, R *On democracy.* New Haven: Yale, 2000.

- HOBSBAWM, E. *Globalization, Democracy and Terrorism.* Little, Brown, 2008
- HUNTINGTON, S.P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* New York, Simon & Schuster, 1996
- GIDDENS, A. *Europe In The Global Age.* Cambridge, 2007
- LIJPHART, A. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* Yale University Press, 1999
- LIPPMANN, E. *Public Opinion.* Free Press, 1997
- SARTORI, G. *The Theory of Democracy Revisited.* Chatham, N.J: Chatham House, 1987
- STIGLITZ, J.E*. Globalization and Its Discontents.* Penguin, 2003
- ZAKARY, F. *The future of freedom: illiberal democracy at home and abroad.* Norton & Company. 2003

INTERNET SOURCES

- **Administrative and Civil Service Reform, World Bank.** Aboutcivil service
  http://www.worldbank.org
- **Comparative Politics.** Sites of working papers in political science
  http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/files/f3oFgI/2007%20LAPOP%20among%20the%20links%20of%20Comparative%20Politics%20Political%20Science%20Sites%20of%20Working%20Papers.pdf
- **Free Press Media Reform Centre.** About media and power
  http://www.freepress.net/
- **ICPS.** A Political Science Center in Barcelona.
  http://www.icps.es/
- **IPSA Portal.** Top sites in Political Science
  http://ipsaportal.unina.it/final.html
- **Inter-Parliamentary Union.** Information about national parliaments
  http://www.ipu.org/english/home.htm
- **Index of Censorship.** For free of speech
  http://www.indexoncensorship.org/
- **Journal of Democracy.** Democracy around the world
  http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/
- **Le Monde.** The most influential French newspaper
  http://www.lemonde.fr/
- **Political Resources on the Net.** Links to politics sites
  http://www.politicalresources.net/
- **Opensecrets.org.** Financing American elections
  http://www.opensecrets.org/
- **The Brookings Institution.** An independent center for research and innovative policy solutions
  http://www.brookings.edu/
- **The Economist.**The most influential English magazine
  http://www.economist.com/
- **Transparency International.** Site on corruption and authoritarian regimes.
  http://www.transparency.org/
- **World Policy Institute.** A center for international relations
  http://www.worldpolicy.org/