



PO/SO/HS331 UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY SPAIN: POLITICS, SOCIETY AND HISTORY

IES Abroad Barcelona

DESCRIPTION:

Why are Spaniards exhuming mass graves of the Civil War? How can the country tolerate an unemployment rate of 16 percent? Why does a country with a historic reputation for *machismo* boast such progressive laws on gender and gay marriages? How come political corruption remains so prevalent? Will Spaniards change the constitution in order to placate the increasing demands of separatists in Catalonia and the Basque Country?

Spain remains a country filled with paradoxes. During the Great Recession (2008-2013), it exhibited spiraling rates of unemployment, multiple bank failures, and a cascade of evictions. Yet, unlike other Southern European countries, it maintained political stability, implemented the directives of the European Union, and emerged from the crisis with its central institutions in tact. Recently, however, things have changed. New citizens parties from the right and left have challenged the hegemony of a two-party system, corruption scandals have caused many to lose faith in government, and a secessionist movement in Catalonia has grown so strong that it is unclear whether it can be satisfied without a large scale reform of the constitution. At the present time, the central institutions of the Spanish state are being thrown into question. All of this makes for an interesting time to study politics and recent history.

This course examines political and social issues relevant to Spaniards today. It begins by discussing recent history in order to contextualize the major themes of the past few decades. It then moves to those subjects that emerged out of the transition to democracy – regionalism, terrorism, political amnesties – and still account for many of the peculiarities of the political system. The course then analyzes Spain's Second Transition around the turn of the twenty-first century when two parties alternated in power and confronted a new gamut of issues concerning immigration, Islamic fundamentalism, foreign policy, gender and family relations, historical memory, political corruption, and ultimately an economic crisis. The last third of the class addresses the Catalan independence movement, new political parties, the end of bipartisan politics and the emergence of coalition governments for the first time since the transition. Lastly we will examine the effects of the pandemic and the current global crisis on Spanish politics.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- **Class discussion:** The majority of each class will consist of discussions of key themes. Students will be provided with the texts to read for each class on Moodle, together with a list of reading questions designed to focus their attention on key points and concepts in the texts. These will form the basis of the class discussions.
- **Course-related trips:** There will be one in course-related trip to the Institutions of Catalan Government through the centuries.
- **Lectures:** The professor will supplement class discussions with lectures to help the students interpret the material provided in the class readings, to tie the readings together, and provide summaries of theoretical approaches to the subject.
- **Guest Speaker:** The course will feature a guest speaker who will discuss issues regarding Catalan separatism in Barcelona today.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

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- Mid-term exam - 25%
- First Draft of paper - 10%
- Final Paper - 20%
- Presentation of Final Paper - 10%
- Class participation - 10%
- Final exam - 25%

Mid-term exam: This will use different formats to assess students' progress towards the learning outcomes in the first half of the course. The question formats will include essay questions, multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and justified True/False questions.

First Draft of paper: This consist on a detailed outline of the final paper (including tentative bibliography) due the 5th week of the semester. Students will have to introduce suggestions and changes made by the professor in the final draft of the research paper.

Final Paper: This consists of an original research project, 2000-word long, on a topic to be discussed and agreed upon with the professor and later presented to the class for discussion. The students will be presented with a list of 5 possible topics of research.

Presentation of Final Paper: During the last days of class, students will be required to present their research paper, which will be evaluated independently of the paper itself.

Class participation: Students will be expected to come to class prepared, and to participate actively in class.

Final exam: Like the midterm exam, this will use different formats to assess students' progress towards the learning outcomes.

Rubrics for all these pieces of assessment available on the Moodle page.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- engage directly in debates concerning events in Spain currently covered in the news.
- articulate the historical context of regional tensions in Spain today.
- analyze the tremendous changes that have taken place within Spanish society and culture over the past three decades.
- demonstrate knowledge of the major issues relevant to Spaniards and Europeans today, including immigration, unemployment, the economic crisis, gender relations, and the European Union.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, attendance is required for all IES Barcelona classes, including course-related excursions. If a student misses more than three classes in any course without justification, 3 percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Seven unjustified absences in any course will result in a failing grade. Absences will only be justified, and assessed work, including exams, tests and presentations rescheduled, in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Required Reading
Session 1	Introduction to the Course	
Session 2	The Construction of the Spanish State	Magone, José M. (2018) The Transformation of Spanish Politics: A Review of the Historical Legacy, in <i>Contemporary Spanish Politics</i>, 3d ed. Routledge, 1-27.
Session 3	The Legacy of the Past: Francoism and Repression	- Richards, M. (1998). <i>A time of silence: civil war and the culture of repression in Franco's Spain, 1936-1945</i> (Vol. 4). Cambridge university press. - Ruiz, J. (2005). A Spanish genocide? Reflections on the Francoist repression after the Spanish Civil War. <i>Contemporary European History</i>, 14(2), 171-191.
Session 4	The Legacy of the Past: Francoism and Development	Shubert, A., & Junco, J. Á. (Eds.). (2018). <i>The history of modern Spain: chronologies, themes, individuals</i>. Bloomsbury Publishing, 97-112 and 450-458.
Session 5	The Transition to Democracy	Radcliff, P. B. (2017). <i>Modern Spain: 1808 to the Present</i> (Vol. 11). John Wiley & Sons, 20-37
Session 6	The Constitution of 1978 and the Political System	Valles, Josep M (2020). The 1978 Constitutional Desing: Assessing its Outcome in Muro, D., & Lago, I. (Eds.). (2020). <i>The Oxford handbook of Spanish politics</i>. Oxford University Press, USA, 171-190
Session 7	The Territorial Distribution of Power and Its Opponents (23-F; ETA)	Encarnación, O. G. (2008). <i>Spanish politics: Democracy after dictatorship</i>. Polity, 91-110
Session 8	COURSE-RELATED TRIP TO VISIT THE CATALAN INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT	Students do research on the institutions of Catalan government since the 13th century.
Session 9	The Socialist in Power and the Modernization of Democratic Spain	Black, S. (2009). <i>Spain since 1939: From Margins to Centre Stage</i>. Bloomsbury Publishing, 109-146.

Session 10	The EEC and the Welfare System	Molina, Ignacio. Spain in the EU: Preferences, Policy Process and Influence in Brussels in Muro, D., & Lago, I. (Eds.). (2020). <i>The Oxford handbook of Spanish politics</i>. Oxford University Press, USA, 683-699.
Session 11	Review for Midterm and Explanation of Final Paper	
Session 12	Midterm Exam	
Session 13	The Popular Party in Power	Black, S. (2009). <i>Spain since 1939: From Margins to Centre Stage</i>. Bloomsbury Publishing, 147-182-
Session 14	The War in Iraq (2003) and the Terrorist Attacks of 2004	Jiménez, M. (2007). Mobilizations against the Iraq war in Spain: background, participants and electoral implications. <i>South European Society & Politics</i>, 12(3), 399-420.
Session 15	The Return of the Socialists to Power: Zapatero's Second Transition Historical memory and the Exhumation of Civil War Graves	- Aguilar, P. (2008). Transitional or post-transitional justice? Recent developments in the Spanish case. <i>South European Society and Politics</i>, 13(4), 417-433. - Ferrándiz, F. (2013). Exhuming the defeated: Civil War mass graves in 21st-century Spain. <i>American Ethnologist</i>, 40(1), 38-54.
Section 16	Feminism and Zapatero The LGTBQ movement and the legalization of Gay Marriage	- Encarnación, O. G. (2009). Spain's new left turn: Society driven or party instigated? <i>South European Society and Politics</i>, 14(4), 399-415. - Valiente, C. (2013). Gender equality policymaking in Spain (2008–11): Losing momentum. In <i>Politics and Society in Contemporary Spain</i> (pp. 179-195). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
Session 17	The financial crisis of 2008-2012	Royo, S. (2020). The Causes and Legacy of the Great Recession in Spain in in Muro, D., & Lago, I. (Eds.). (2020). <i>The Oxford handbook of Spanish politics</i>. Oxford University Press, USA, 683-699.

Session 18	Social consequences of the financial crisis: the Indignant movement.	Hughes, N. (2011). 'Young people took to the streets and all of a sudden all of the political parties got old': The 15M movement in Spain. <i>Social Movement Studies</i>, 10(4), 407-413
Session 19	Political consequences of the financial crisis: the end of bipartisan politics, abdication of Juan Carlos I, changing attitudes towards political corruption.	Orriols, L., & Cordero, G. (2016). The breakdown of the Spanish two-party system: The upsurge of Podemos and Ciudadanos in the 2015 general election. <i>South European Society and Politics</i>, 21(4), 469-492.
Session 20	Secessionism in Catalonia. Guest speaker	- Ruiz Casado, J. A. (2020). Articulations of populism and nationalism: The case of the Catalan independence movement. <i>European Politics and Society</i>, 21(5), 554-569. - Muro, Diego (2018). The Stillbirth of the Catalan Republic. <i>Current History</i> 797, pp 83-88.
Session 21	Spain since 2017: instability, coalitions. Emergence of far-right parties.	Rubio-Pueyo, V. (2019). Vox: a New Far Right in Spain. <i>Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New York.</i>, 20-38.
Session 22	Spain Today: the effects of the pandemic and the global crisis.	Selection of Newspaper articles to be posted online.
Session 23	Students Class Presentations	
Session 24	Students Class Presentation Review for Final Exam	

Final Exam

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Visit to the Catalan Institutions of Government

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Aguilar, P. (2008). Transitional or post-transitional justice? Recent developments in the Spanish case. *South European Society and Politics*, 13(4), 417-433.
- Black, S. (2009). *Spain since 1939: From Margins to Centre Stage*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 109-146 and 147-182.
- Encarnación, O. G. (2008). *Spanish politics: Democracy after dictatorship*. Polity, 91-110.
- Encarnación, O. G. (2009). Spain's new left turn: Society driven or party instigated? *South European Society and Politics*, 14(4), 399-415.
- Ferrándiz, F. (2013). Exhuming the defeated: Civil War mass graves in 21st-century Spain. *American Ethnologist*, 40(1), 38-54.

- Hughes, N. (2011). 'Young people took to the streets and all of a sudden all of the political parties got old': The 15M movement in Spain. *Social Movement Studies*, 10(4), 407-413.
- Jiménez, M. (2007). Mobilizations against the Iraq war in Spain: background, participants and electoral implications. *South European Society & Politics*, 12(3), 399-42.
- Magone, José M. (2018) The Transformation of Spanish Politics: A Review of the Historical Legacy, in *Contemporary Spanish Politics*, 3d ed. Routledge, 1-27.
- Molina, Ignacio. Spain in the EU: Preferences, Policy Process and Influence in Brussels in Muro, D., & Lago, I. (Eds.). (2020). *The Oxford handbook of Spanish politics*. Oxford University Press, USA, 683-699.
- Muro, Diego (2018). The Stillbirth of the Catalan Republic. *Current History* 797: 83-88.
- Orriols, L., & Cordero, G. (2016). The breakdown of the Spanish two-party system: The upsurge of Podemos and Ciudadanos in the 2015 general election. *South European Society and Politics*, 21(4), 469-492.
- Radcliff, P. B. (2017). *Modern Spain: 1808 to the Present* (Vol. 11). John Wiley & Sons, 20-37.
- Royo, S. (2020). The Causes and Legacy of the Great Recession in Spain in in Muro, D., & Lago, I. (Eds.). (2020). *The Oxford handbook of Spanish politics*. Oxford University Press, USA, 683-699.
- Rubio-Pueyo, V. (2019). Vox: a New Far Right in Spain. *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New York.*, 20-38.
- Ruiz, J. (2005). A Spanish genocide? Reflections on the Francoist repression after the Spanish Civil War. *Contemporary European History*, 14(2), 171-191.
- Ruiz Casado, J. A. (2020). Articulations of populism and nationalism: The case of the Catalan independence movement. *European Politics and Society*, 21(5), 554-569.
- Shubert, A., & Junco, J. Á. (Eds.). (2018). *The history of modern Spain: chronologies, themes, individuals*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 97-112 and 450-458.
- Valiente, C. (2013). Gender equality policymaking in Spain (2008–11): Losing momentum. In *Politics and Society in Contemporary Spain* (pp. 179-195). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Valles, J. M. The 1978 Constitutional Desing: Assessing its Outcome in Muro, D., & Lago, I. (Eds.). (2020). *The Oxford handbook of Spanish politics*. Oxford University Press, USA, 171-190

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Aguilar, P., & Fernández, P. A. (2002). *Memory and amnesia: The role of the Spanish Civil War in the transition to democracy*. Berghahn Books.
- Barreiro, B., & Sánchez-Cuenca, I. (2012). In the whirlwind of the economic crisis: local and regional elections in Spain, May 2011. *South European Society and Politics*, 17(2), 281-294.
- Cazorla-Sánchez, A. (2008). Revisiting the legacy of the Spanish Civil War. *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 21(3), 231-246.
- Dowling, A. (2014). Accounting for the turn towards secession in Catalonia. *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 27(2-3), 219-234.
- Enders, V. L., & Radcliff, P. B. (Eds.). (1998). *Constructing Spanish womanhood: Female identity in modern Spain*. SUNY Press.
- Guibernau, M. (2004). *Catalan nationalism: Francoism, transition and democracy*. Routledge.
- Muro, D., & Quiroga, A. (2004). Building the Spanish Nation: The Centre-Periphery Dialectic. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 4(2), 18-37.
- Orriols, L., & León, S. (2020). Looking for affective polarisation in Spain: PSOE and Podemos from conflict to coalition. *South European Society and Politics*, 25(3-4), 351-379.
- Resina, J. R. (Ed.). (2000). *Disremembering the dictatorship: The politics of memory in the Spanish transition to democracy* (Vol. 8). Rodopi.
- Sánchez-Cuenca, I., & De la Calle, L. (2009). Domestic terrorism: The hidden side of political violence. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12(1), 31-49.

- Sola, J., & Rendueles, C. (2018). Podemos, the upheaval of Spanish politics and the challenge of populism. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 26(1), 99-111.
- Torcal, M., & Mota, F. (2014). The role of political parties in shaping citizens' political preferences for the territorial organization of the state: the Spanish case. *European Political Science Review*, 6(3), 477-502.