

Gap Semester Programme
CONTEMPORARY SPAIN: POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Course contact hours: 45

Number of sessions: 27

Recommended credits: 6 ECTS – 3 US credits

Professor:

Objectives

This course shows how modern-day Spain can be understood by studying the social and political changes that have occurred since 1975 with the transition from Dictatorship to Democracy. Students study the evolution of a new democratic constitution, the devolution of political power and the growth of local, regional and European identities.

Students see how developments in all areas of life are the result, and cause of deep social changes that helped transform a narrow-minded nation into a modern and dynamic society in constant change.

Learning outcomes

General:

- Develop capacities and strategies for independent learning including becoming actively responsible for the learning process, developing the ability to self-assess progress and manage time.
- Enhance teamwork skills by adopting a collaborative methodology to complete tasks, projects and presentations.
- Adapt to working in an international context, understanding the intercultural make-up of the class / group and developing empathy.
- Use different media to support their learning, communication and presentation skills.

Specific:

- Be able to analyze the vocabulary and wording of Spanish politics.
- Display a critical view of Spanish politics and of the key players (leaders, political parties and institutions) that have shaped contemporary politics.
- Make informed and critical judgements about the nature and dynamics of Franco's regime and the role it continues to play in contemporary political developments.
- Identify and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of post-Francoist democracy and its current developments.
- Display a critical awareness of the central political problems and major tensions and conflicts that have shaped the contemporary Spanish political arena.
- Display critical awareness of the problems and possibilities of cultural diversity within the European Union.

Contents

Week 1. - Introduction to Spanish Political and Social Vocabulary

Week 2. - Spain: Political Institutions

Week 3. - Spain: Who is who in the Political Arena

Week 4. - Political Parties and Ideologies

Week 5. - DEBATE. Spain in the European Union

Week 6. - DEBATE. Nationalism(s) in Spain

Week 7. - PRESENTATIONS. Spanish Issues: Immigration and the rise of Extremism

Week 8. - PRESENTATIONS. Spanish Issues: Structural Unemployment and Brain Drain

Week 9. - PRESENTATIONS. Spanish Issues: Gay Marriage, Abortion, Domestic Violence and the transformation of the Spanish Family

Week 10. - PRESENTATIONS. Spanish Issues: the rise of Populism(s)

Week 11. - PRESENTATIONS. Spanish Issues: Inequality and Social Rights

Week 12. - DEBATE. Prospects for Spain

Week 13. - FINAL ASSESSMENT

Teaching methodology

The professor uses different modern educational techniques and technologies to enable students to succeed in a wide range of fields and methodologies. These include lectures, discussions, exploration, hands on experience, field trips and invited experts. Participation is valued through collaboration, presentations and activities in which students are responsible for researching and interpreting the topics studied and analyzed.

Assessment criteria

25% Mid Term Exam

20% Final Exam

20% Presentation

20% Research Paper

15% Debates and Discussions

Bibliography

Maria Elena Cavallaro, Kostis Kornetis. *Rethinking Democratisation in Spain, Greece and Portugal*. Springer International Publishing; Palgrave Macmillan. 2019.

William Chislett, *Spain. What everyone needs to know*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013.

Paul Preston. *A People Betrayed: A History of Corruption, Political Incompetence and Social Division in Modern Spain 1874-2018*. Liveright. 2020.

Paul Preston, *The Triumph of Democracy in Spain*. London, Methuen, 1986.

Paul Heywood, *The government and politics of Spain*, London, Macmillan, 1995.

Jason Webster. *Violencia: A New History of Spain: Past, Present and the Future of the West*. Little, Brown Book Group. 2019.