TEACHING GUIDE - 2026-2027

Spain & Catalonia Today: Recent History, Current Affairs

UGRA_009262

Departments	Department of Society, Politics and Sustainability
Teaching Languages	English
ECTS	5
Teacher responsible	Alejandro Fernández de Castro Krings - alex.fernandezdecastro@esade.edu

Course Goals

The course examines Spain's and Catalunya's recent past, with the objective of making students understand the beliefs, practices and relationships that have shaped Barcelonians, Catalans and Spaniards over time.

Students, who are asked to visit historically significant sites or to discuss recent news related to Spain or Catalunya, work with primary sources themselves, learning how to do the interpretive work that makes meaning out of historical material. As such, students evaluate the uses and the limitations of certain primary sources.

Finally, the course considers how the questions we ask and the sources available to us shape our knowledge of the past and our understanding of its significance.

Previous knowledge

No previous knowledge is needed, although it will help to read any of the recommended books (bibliography section), and to start reading online news about Spanish Politics and Current Issues

Prerequisits

No previous readings or specific courses are need to register and follow this course successfuly

Teaching methodology

In each session, the professor will deliver a lecture connected to the topic, and also highlight some of the most relevant recent news related to Spanish Politics, Economy and Society. Open debates will be planned each week, and some students will present (either individually or as a group) about a recent piece of news that called their attention.

Almost every week, students will be asked to cobntribute an oppinion to a forum posted on moodle

There will be two mini-tests (one mid-term, the second one on the last

session)

Each student will have to write a final essay about one ore more recent news item, or about a character or episode of Recent Spanish History

Description

Course contribution to program

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Finally, the course considers how the questions we ask and the sources available to us shape our knowledge of the past and our understanding of its significance.

Short description

A glimpse at the key events of Recent Spanish History and Current Political Events, in order to better understand and better integrate to Barcelona: Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the Dictatorship of Franco (1939-1975), The Transition Towards Democracy (1975-1982), Spain and the European Union (1982-1996). Burst of the Housing Bubble (2008). Pedro Sánchez's Administration, 2018 onwards. Past, present and future of Catalan Nationalism +
A weekly overlook of Spain's current Political and Social issues

Bibliography

George Orwell, "Homage to Catalonia", Penguin Books. First Edition, 1938. (Book)
Robert Hughes, "Barcelona", Harvill-HarperCollins, 1992 (Book)
Paul Preston, "Franco", HarperCollins Publishers, 1993 (Book)
Mark Kurlansky, "The Basque History of the World", Vintage, 2000 (Book)
John Hooper, "The New Spaniards", Penguin Books, 2006 (Book)
Paul Preston, "Juan Carlos: A People's King", 2004, Harper Collins (Book)
Raphael Minder, "The Struggle For Catalonia: Rebel Politics In Spain", C.Hurst & Co, 2017 (Book)
JH Elliot, "Scots and Catalans: Union and Disunion", Yale University Press, 2020 (Book)

Activities

In-class discussions and debates
Impromtu debates will be initiated by the professor, o ensure maximum dialogue and interaction

Analytical exercises
Students will have to share their opinion about multiple topics through forums of discussion.

Written and/or oral exams
There will be one mid-term and one final mini-test, each of them multiple choice style, 15 minute long, consisting of 50 questions. Three possible answers to each question, only one possible correct answer.

Presentations
Lectures and discussing current news by the professor take about 50% of the time
Students will present once during the course, either individually or as a group, about Spanish Recent History, Politics or Current Issues, as long as each presentation includes valuable insights into Barcelona, Catalunya or Spain

Essays
Participants will have to submit one final essay: 4 pages long, with two sections: a) main take-aways from the course, b) a personal comment/analysis about some current issues/recent news related to Spanish Recent History/Politics

Content

#	Topic
1	Recent and current events in Spain, 2008 to present (part I)
2	Recent and current events in Spain, 2008 to present (part II)
3	Recent and current events in Catalunya, 2008 to present (part I)
4	Recent and current events in Catalunya, 2008 to present (part II)
5	The Second Republic (1931-1939)
6	The Civil War (1936-1939)
7	Francisco Franco (1939-1975)
8	Transition Towards Democracy (1975-1982)
9	Spain in the EU (1986 onwards)
10	The 2007 Law Of Historical Memory + Working With Spanish Professionals

Assessment

Tool	Assessment tool	Category	Weight %
Quizzes/tests	Mini-tests, mid-term and final	Ordinary round	40.00%
Participation in program activities	Individual or group presentation	Ordinary round	10.00%
Participation in program activities	Forums of Opinion	Ordinary round	20.00%
Final individual project	One Final Individual Essay/Paper. As a retake, students will have to write a second final paper	Ordinary round	30.00%
Final individual project		Retake	100.00%

PROGRAMS

AI26-Exchange Program Bachelor in Business and Artificial Intelligence (Undergraduates: Business)
AI26 Year 1 (Optative)

AI26S-Exchange Program Bachelor in Business and Artificial Intelligence (Undergraduates: Business)
AI26S Year 1 (Optative)

B13-Exchange Program Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
B13 Year 1 (Optative)

B13S-Exchange Program Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
B13S Year 1 (Optative)