

**Course syllabus**

Subject name	Comparative Political Systems
Field of study	Constitutional Law
ECTS credits	3
Semester	2 (Spring)
Language	English
Professor/s	Paloma Biglino Campos, Óscar Sánchez Muñoz
Department	Constitutional, Procedural and Ecclesiastical Law
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1. Description

This course promotes a broader understanding of comparative politics. It begins with the discussion of key concepts and the study of democratic and non-democratic systems as well as the processes of democratization and democratic consolidation, placing a particular emphasis in the notions of rule of law and fundamental rights recognition and protection. In a second part, we will study the structure of government, models of political decentralization, electoral systems and party systems. Finally, we will deal with some of the contemporary challenges to the state.

2. Course learning objectives

Students should be able to:

1. Be familiar with the main theoretical approaches to the study of political institutions in comparative perspective.
2. Acquire a basic knowledge of the political systems typology in contemporary world regarding different aspects, such as functional and territorial distribution of power and patterns of political competition.
3. Use the comparison between countries to achieve a deeper understanding of political phenomena.
4. Understand political change processes, particularly processes of democratization.



3. Contents / Programme

List of topics:

Topic 1: Key concepts.

Topic 2: Political systems typology.

Topic 3: Rule of Law and fundamental rights and liberties.

Topic 4: Forms of government.

Topic 5: Electoral and party systems.

Topic 6: Territorial organization of power.

Topic 7: Contemporary challenges to the State.

4. Bibliography

Principal reference handbook:

O'NEIL, Patrick H. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. 6^a ed., WW Norton & Company, 2017

Other reference works:

BARA, Judith; PENNINGTON, Mark (Eds.). *Comparative Politics*. Sage Publications, 2009.

BOIX, Carles; STOKES, Susan Carol (Eds.). *The Oxford handbook of comparative politics*. Oxford University Press, 2^a ed., 2009.

GANDHI, Jennifer; RUIZ-RUFINO, Rubén (Eds.). *Routledge Handbook of Comparative Political Institutions*. Routledge, 2015.

ISHIYAMA, John T. *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

LIJPHART, Arend. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. 2^a ed., Yale University Press, 2012.

ROSENFELD, Michel; SAJÓ, András (Eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Constitutional Law*. Oxford



5. Workload distribution

Activities	Hours
Classroom-based activities (Lectures, seminars and practical sessions)	22
Online practical activities	15
Guided activities	16
Independent study	20
Exam	2
Total	75

6. Assessment criteria

TOOLS	%	OBSERVATIONS
Ongoing assessment	40%	Class participation, practical exercises, case studies, online activities.
Final exam	60%	Multiple-choice test, short questions, problem-solving activity.