

THE POLITICAL SYSTEMS OF SPAIN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

General Description

The aim of this course is to teach the basic foundations of contemporary politics and history in Spain while also describing the main elements which constitute the political system of the European Union. Starting with a basic method for interpreting the political reality, a dynamic understanding of the current workings of both Spain and the European Union as a whole is provided.

Content

1. WHAT IS A DEMOCRACY?
 - 1.1 Towards an ideal model of the democratic regime (R. Dahl).
 - 1.2 Majority vs. Consensus (A. Lijphart)
2. SPANISH POLITICAL SYSTEM
 - 2.1 The political history of contemporary Spain
 - 2.2 The political transition to democracy and the Constitution of 1978
 - 2.3 The governments of the Spanish democracy (1977-2004). Political Parties and the electoral system
 - 2.4 Territorial structure of the Spanish State. Decentralisation and the autonomy statutes
3. POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
 - 3.1 Introduction: Countries and other statistics
 - 3.2 History of the creation of the European Union
 - 3.3 The European Constitution and the future of Europe

Activities

An essential part of the course is the presentation of the main themes by the teacher with the active participation of the student in the debates raised. The teacher will hand out or indicate the didactic materials needed to follow and prepare for each of the classes. Likewise, various films and documentaries about the different elements of the Spanish and European Union political systems will be shown. Lastly, and in addition to continued class attendance and the corresponding exams on the dates indicated by the CLM, the student will have to present a weekly commentary, reflecting on news items about Spanish and European current events, which will be provided by the teacher.

Assessment

The final student evaluation of the course "THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN SPAIN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION", within the framework of the Spanish Language and Culture study programme, will take in to account the four following basic factors:

- 1) **Attendance:** In order to qualify, the student must attend at least 80% of the course sessions
- 2) **Participation** during classes
- 3) The weekly presentation of the **text and video commentary**
- 4) The results of the **TWO tests** that will be administered during the course, on the dates indicated by the CLM management.