**Political science**

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

This is an introductory course to the analysis of political phenomena. It aims to illustrate the fundamental concepts and processes of politics, with examples drawn from country-specific actors, issues, and dynamics that are designed to illustrate the basic ideas. It addresses both theoretical and empirical issues on a comparative basis, mainly but not exclusively focusing on Europe.

The course aims to provide students with basic knowledge about concepts, models, and theories for the analysis of contemporary politics. On completion of this course, students should achieve the following outcomes:

* with reference to knowledge and understanding, they will be able to grasp the functioning of institutions in the established democracies as well as to recognize the main features and developments of the democratic process.
* As concerns the application of this knowledge, students will be able to use the concepts and analytical tools, illustrated in the course, to autonomously carry out a basic analysis of political systems and actors.

***COURSE CONTENT***

First term: Politics, regimes, and governments

*What is politics?*

* basic political concepts
* the state
* political systems, processes, and functions

*Political regimes*

* authoritarian regimes
* democracy and democratization

*Democratic governments and institutions*

* systems of government
* legislatures
* executives and bureaucracies
* federalism and local government

Second term: Political participation

* political participation
* political parties
* electoral systems
* referendums
* voting behaviour
* interest groups and lobbying
* public policy and policymaking

***READING LIST***

J. McCormick, Comparative Government and Politics. An Introduction (12th Edition). Bloomsbury, 2022.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Active participation is strongly encouraged during the lectures: students are expected to participate constructively with comments and questions. The presentations (slides) of the lectures will be available through the online platform Blackboard.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

There will be a written exam with multiple-choice questions (up to 20% if the grade; 1 point for each correct answer) and open-ended questions. Their assessment will centre on: the accuracy of knowledge shown by students; the congruence of their answers with the open-ended questions; and their capacity to critically use the concepts illustrated in the course and in the textbook in order to provide original answers.

For attending students, the exam may be divided into a mid-term session and a final one.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

This is an introductory course and, hence, no prerequisite is necessary.

All news and updates will be made available on Blackboard. Students are kindly invited to register on the platform and consult it on a regular basis. Further information and office hours can be found on the lecturer's webpage.