

SEVI 425 SPAIN TODAY

Professor: Dr. Rafael Cid

Course description

Relying on the capacity of the historian to interpret the present, this course aims to contribute to the knowledge of present-day Spain. In this sense, we understand historical time as a continuous past-present-future without ruptures, where it is possible to establish relationships between different events.

Objectives

This approach will permit us to delve into questions of current day events with the confidence of being able to trace through the past, the origin, cause and unleashing of these occurrences. Without a doubt, the expansion of the chronologic frame of our investigations until the present moment - immediate history- implies an important conceptual advancement of the role of the historian as interpreter of reality.

Methodology

Immediate history, or history of present time, requires an interdisciplinary methodology. Along with traditional investigation based on documentary sources that are conserved in archives and libraries, the study of present time also demands the analysis of other types of informative resources of textual, resonant and iconographic nature. For this reason, historical discipline requires, in a balanced form, the techniques and focuses employed by other sciences (ethnography, sociology, politics, economics, literature, etc.). Throughout this course, students will have the opportunity to learn different investigative techniques based on the use of statistics, press kits, commentary of historical and journalistic texts, the employment of television (live history), personal interviews, film and the elaboration of a bibliographic investigative work.

Course Content

Block I: Spanish Reality

This portion of the course aims to enhance basic knowledge about the recent history of Spain, as well as its different economic, social, cultural and political components. Finally, it is necessary to not lose sight of the international context that helps to explain the internal phenomena of our immediate history. The topics developed in this block conclude with a segment dedicated to show the techniques of a historian's work accompanied by simple practices.

- **Political and territorial organization of Spain.** The Constitution of 1978. Spain as a parliamentary monarchy. The territorial organization: municipality, provinces and autonomous communities.
- **Political parties and the electoral system in Spain.** Regional, national and local political parties. Ideologies. Bipartisanship and nationalism. Spain's new political reality. The electoral system. Work technique: interview in depth (oral history).
- **The Spanish population.** Historical evolution. The present day demographic regime. Spatial distribution. Migratory movements. The structure of the population.
- **Emigration and immigration in Spain.** Exterior migrations (America and Europe). Interior migrations (from the countryside to the city). Spain from a country of immigrants. The new Spanish emigrants (young and prepared). Work technique: film as a source of information.

- **Characteristics of the Spanish economy.** A modern economy. The primary sector. The secondary sector. The present day crisis. The third sector. Work technique: elaboration of a press kit.
- **Evolution of the role of women in Contemporary Spanish society.** Spanish society at the beginning of the 20th century. The situation of women during the Republic of the Spanish Civil War. Franco's dictatorship or the return to the past. Women in present day Spain. Work technique: Investigation in archives and libraries.
- **Spain in the world.** Spain in a global context. Spain and the European Union. Relations with the United States. Relations with Latin America. The Mediterranean basin. Work technique: the employment of television.

Block II: History and Debate

This section will focus on the present, a reality that we will attempt to analyze attending to the historical roots of the events that continue occurring. This way, after a brief demonstration by the professor, the students will have the opportunity to put into practice the acquired knowledge and make their own contributions. Later, all of this will permit us to establish enriching expositions and debates in class, where the students will be able to express and defend their conclusions. Below are some of the possible topics that will be developed during this block:

- **The question of nationalism in Spain.** For many Spaniards the question of nationalism has converted into one of the main focuses of political instability since Spain recuperated its democracy in 1975. Currently, proposals such as the existence of an independent Basque state associated with the Spanish state-the Ibarretxe plan- or more recently the celebration of a consultation about the future politics of Catalonia in 2014 that defended its independence, occupy the majority of informative headlines in the media. This obliges us to formulate a series of questions: Does Spain need a new constitution that gives an answer to the nationalist incentives? Is the unity of Spain as a country in danger?
- **Relations between the Catholic Church and the Spanish state.** The Spanish constitution of 1978 defends religious freedom and defines Spain as a secular state. However, the Catholic Church, for its social influence and historical weight in our country, it occupies a privileged role within Spanish society. In fact, there are various agreements or concordats between the Church and State that regulate this special situation and affect the teaching of Catholicism in public schools or the economic financing of the Catholic Church by the state. On the other hand, Spain strives to convert itself in one of the most socially advanced countries in regards to matters such as genetic investigation with stem cells to combat illnesses or the legalization of homosexual marriages. The Catholic Church sees in these practices an attack of secularism by the public powers. In addition to this, we must also add the eruption of other religious beliefs in our country that also seek their place and recognition. The polemic is served.
- **New Social Movements: from 15-M to the birth of Podemos.** Spain's economic situation, unemployment data and the numerous cases of corruption that affect politicians, companies and even the Royal Family have produced in Spaniards a loss of confidence in the current political system to find solutions. In this context, we see the appearance of social movements such as 15-M (in regards to the protests celebrated May 15 of 2011) and "Democracia real YA" which channel this social unrest and demand a change in Spanish politics. The achieved success by Podemos- political formation born in the light of these movements- in the European Elections of 2014 and the good omens that foresee the polls in the General Elections of 2015, demonstrate that a change in Spain is possible.

Work Techniques

Throughout the course, students will have the opportunity to work with the following research methodologies:

- Research in archives, libraries and centers of documentation
- In-depth interviews (oral history)
- Film as a source of information
- Elaboration of a press kit
- The use of television

Criteria of Evaluation

The evaluation of student's acquired knowledge will be carried out through a series of practical assignments proposed by the professor, as well as a final exam.

- Participation and class discussion: (10%)
- Research projects employing the different indicated methodologies (interviews, press kit, film analysis, television, etc.)
The professor will work with the students in tutorials to help them plan this assignment and will guide them towards which methodology they should employ, as well as the necessary bibliography (35%)
- Presentations of academic articles related to the course content, which will be provided by the professor at the beginning of the course (20%)
- Final exam: (35%)

Disciplinary Politics of the Program

Three unjustified absences are permitted during the course. After the fourth absence, one point will be deducted from the final course grade for each additional absence.

Bibliography

Basic Manuals

Carr, R. (2009). *España, 1808-2008*. Madrid: Ariel.

Casanova, J., Julia, S., García Delgado, J y Jiménez, J. C. (2003). *La España del siglo XX*. Madrid: Marcial Pons.

William Chislett, W. (2013). *Spain: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hooper, J. (2006). *The New spaniards*. 2ª ed. Penguin Book
Rodríguez Jiménez, J. L. (2008). *Historia de España actual y de nuestro tiempo*. Madrid: Universitas.

Periódicos

El País (www.elpais.es)

ABC (<http://www.abc.es>)

El Mundo (<http://www.elmundo.es>)

La Razón (<http://www.larazon.es>)

La Vanguardia (<http://www.lavanguardia.es>)

Possible Visits

- Archivo General de Andalucía
- Redacción de los periódicos Diario de Sevilla o ABC
- Parlamento de Andalucía
- Instituto de la Mujer
- Fundación Tres Culturas del Mediterráneo
- Hemeroteca Municipal de Sevilla
- Cultural event of the city (conference or exposition)

[Course program](#)

Day 1: Introduction to the course.

Days 2 and 3: Topic 1. Introduction to the history of present day Spain

Day 4: Topic 2. Political and territorial organization of Spain.

Day 5: Topic 3. Political parties and the electoral system in Spain.

Day 6: Topic 4. Spain's population.

Day 7: Topic 5. Emigration and immigration in Spain.

Day 8: Showing of the movie: *Un franco, 14 pesetas* (Carlos Iglesias. España, 2006).

Days 9 and 10: Topic 6. Characteristics of Spain's economy.

Day 11: Showing of the movie: *Los lunes al sol* (Fernando León. España, 2002).

Day 12: Student presentations

Day 13: Partial exam

Day 14: Topic 7. Evolution of women's role in contemporary Spanish society.

Day 15: Topic 8. Spain in the world.

Day 16: Topic 9. The nationalist question in Spain.

Day 17: Visit to the Parliament of Andalucía.

Day 18: Topic 10. Relations between the Catholic Church and the Spanish State.

Day 19: Visit to the Biblioteca Colombina, Seville's Cathedral.

Day 20: Topic 11. New social movements: from 15-M to the birth of Podemos

Day 21: Student presentations

Day 22: General review

Day 23: Final exam