Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

TEACHING GUIDE

SPANISH FOREIGN POLICY

GRADO EN RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES (INGLÉS)

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
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Publication date: 02-07-2026

I.-Subject Identification	
Type	OBLIGATORIA
Teaching period	2 course, 1Q semester
Nº of credits	6
Language in wich the subject is taught	English

II.-Presentation

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This course introduces students to the study of the Foreign Policy in general (as a sub-area of the International Relations), and to the analysis of the Contemporary Spanish Foreign Policy-Relations in particular, since the Franco Regime (1939-1975) up to now.

According to the design of the International Relations Degree at the King Juan Carlos University, the course has a multidisciplinary character. This implies, that the approach to the subject will take into consideration not only the historical dimension (the evolution) of the Spanish Foreign Policy, but also, the legal, political, sociological, public opinion, and, of course, the International Relations aspects of such policy. In this sense, our approach goes far beyond of the traditional Foreign Policy concept, covering also the "parallel diplomacy" and the public diplomacy, in which not only the States participate, but also the non-governmental actors (public as well as private). Therefore, this course is not only about the study of the Foreign Policy, but also about the study of the “External Relations”.

The contents of this course are divided into three complementary parts. The first part focuses on the structures, instruments and processes of the foreign policy decision-making procedures. The second part applies those instruments to the analysis of the Spanish foreign policy and external relations, which will be studied profoundly from the 1939 till to the present time. The third part will be focused in the analysis of the geographic areas of interest for the Spanish foreign policy.

This comprehensive approach pursues to provide students with useful instruments that make them capable of identifying and analysing the basic features of foreign policy in general, and to be able to critically analyse the Spanish foreign policy-external action in particular, including their domestic and external factors and the dynamics of change and continuity during the analysed period.

The course will have a theoretical and practical approach, whereby explanation in class by the teacher and organised debates are alternated. Students in this course will be expected to engage in sustained readings (monographs, selected texts, case studies, contemporary literature on specific issues and other specific online resources). Course evaluation will be carried out taking into consideration three elements:

1. A written or oral final exam covering all the topics of the syllabus.
2. A final group essay (four students in each group, depending upon the class students’ number). The essay will be oral presented in the classroom (attendance by all students is compulsory). Each student will participate in a group presentation during the term. The class presentation and ensuing discussion should take no more than 20 minutes. Students can make their own choice about essay topics from the questions and themes raised in lectures or any topic of the syllabus, after consultation with the professor. The students will be provided with clear guidelines for the production of academic essays. Fulfilling these guidelines will be a full part of the evaluation. Final essays should be of 9000 words in length, one-and-a-half-spaced (Times New Roman 12), including notes, but excluding bibliography, index and annexes. Final grades will be assigned individually based on the presentation and group assessments. Issues of special seriousness as deliberate plagiarism of previously published materials will imply the immediate failing of the whole subject. In the process of composing the essays, the use of internet based specialised materials is accepted, but not the indiscriminate one of mainstream resources as Wikipedia.
3. The individual students work (readings, seminars, conferences, active participation of the student in organised debates, oral presentations…).

To assign the course final grade, both, the individual and the group work will be taken into consideration.

Important advice for international students! Taking into consideration that, most of the bibliography on Spanish foreign policy is in Spanish, students are strongly advised on the necessity to be able to read and to understand short and long texts (books and articles) in Spanish.

III.-Learning outcomes

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CG01. Students must be able to possess and understand their own knowledge of the area of institutional relations, based on general secondary education.
CG03. Students must have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data in order to make value judgements that include an analysis of the relevant political, legal, social, economic, scientific and ethical issues.
CG06. Students must have developed the learning skills required to deal with further study with a high degree of independence.
CE02. Students must be aware of the historical development of the political, social and cultural processes, ideas and movements that have served as a foundation for modern States and international relations.
CE08. Students must acquire the necessary skills to study and independently analyse the protagonists, relations and institutional framework of the International Society, as well as obtain the necessary resources for such an analysis.
CE11. Students must be capable of identifying the process in which public opinion is formed in the area of international relations and develop skills to analyse the information and pass it on.
CE17. Students must be capable of identifying and analysing the basic features of foreign policy and its main consequences on International cooperation and development policies.

- Key for degrees not adapted to RD 822/21: **CB** - basic competences, **CG** - generic competences, **CE** - specific competences, **CT** - transversal competences.
- Key for degrees adapted to RD 822/21: **CON** - knowledge, **COM** - competences, **HAB** - skills.

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IV.-Contents

IV.A.-Syllabus

Topic 1. Contemporary Spanish Foreign Policy.
Topic 2. The History of Spanish Foreign Policy.
Topic 3. Geopolitical Trends as Drivers of Foreign Policy.
Topic 4. European Policy.
Topic 5. The Americas: The United States and Latin America.
Topic 6. Policy towards the Mediterranean, Asia and Africa.
Topic 7. New Forms of Diplomacy.
Topic 8. The Formulation, Implementation and Oversight of Spanish Foreign Policy.

IV.B.-Training activities

Type	Title
Other activities	Final group essay (written and oral presentation).
Prácticas / Resolución de ejercicios	Case Studies and further short readings (see bibliography).
Other activities	Seminars, conferences.
Other activities	Individual presentations.

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V.-Student workload	
Theoretical sessions	20
Resolution of exercises, problems, case studies, etc.	36
Practical sessions in experimental, technological and clinical laboratories, fieldwork, etc.	0
Tests and/or exams	4
Academic tutorials	6
Related activities: conferences, seminars, etc.	12
Preparation of theoretical sessions and self-study	8
Preparation of practical tasks, exercises, case studies, projects, etc.	34
Preparation for tests and/or exams	60
Total student workload	180

VI.-Methodology and academic programme		
Type	**Period**	**Content**
Practical sessions	Week 1 to Week 10	Classroom debates on selected readings
Theoretical sessions	Week 1 to Week 14	Seminars and Conferences
Theoretical sessions	Week 6 to Week 6	Reading Control Exam (see bibliography)
Theoretical sessions	Week 1 to Week 14	Readings, practical cases, class discussions and students oral presentations
Academic tutorials	Week 1 to Week 14	See times of the tutorial hours (Room 126 -Departmental Building)
Theoretical sessions	Week 1 to Week 10	Theoretical Lectures
Academic tutorials	Week 14 to Week 14	Tutorials for final exam

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VII.-Assessment methods

The general assessment method is continuous as established in the *Regulation for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes* of Rey Juan Carlos University.
All the assessment systems established in the degree report must be employed, except for those that have a minimum weight of 0%, which can be used by professors in the academic years they consider relevant. Each assessment system may be applied through one or more assessment activities, consistent with the system. No assessment activity can exceed individually 60% of the overall grade for the subject.
The sum of non re-evaluable activities cannot exceed 40% of the overall grade for the subject and, in general, should not have an established minimum grade (except for practical activities in which, strictly speaking, the conditions of the ordinary call cannot be reproduced in the extraordinary call).
Those students who do not manage to pass the subject in the ordinary call, or do not attend this first call, may attend the extraordinary call only for failed re-evaluable assessment activities.
The distribution and characteristics of the assessment activities are described below.

VII.A.-Description and weight of the assessment activities

Students performance will be evaluated on the basis of:
-A final exam (60%)
-The resolution of practical cases (40%) All tests are reassessable
The extraordinary evaluation will be carried out in the same manner as the ordinary one

VII.B. Assessment of students with academic exemption from class attendance

Having Academic Exemption from Class Attendance (DAAC) does not imply that students are automatically exempt from participating in the continuous assessment activities or in the training activities of compulsory attendance as established in the teaching guide. Once the exemption has been granted, students must contact the subject's teaching staff, who will propose the adaptations he/she may consider relevant, as long as they guarantee the acquisition and adequate assessment of the learning goals established. Students must maintain adequate communication with the teaching staff so that they may provide information on the dates for training and assessment activities, if these are not established in the programme and available for students at the time of achieving the exemption.
Subject with possibility of academic exemption: Yes.

VII.C. Review of assessment activities

In accordance with the Regulation for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes of Rey Juan Carlos University.

VII.D.-Students with a disability or special educational needs

In order to guarantee equal opportunities, non-discrimination, universal accessibility and academic success, students with disabilities or especial education needs may request curricular adaptations to follow their studies. These adaptations will be provided by the Unit of Attention to People with Disabilities of Rey Juan Carlos University, in accordance with the regulation which regulates the service for the Attention of People with Disabilities at the University. This Unit will issue a report for curricular adaptations, so that students with disabilities or special education needs must contact the service (at e-mail discapacidad.programa@urjc.es) in order to provide relevant information for different educational alternatives.

VII.E.-Academic behaviour, academic integrity and honesty

Rey Juan Carlos University is fully committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty, so studying at the URJC means assuming and subscribing to the values of integrity and academic honesty set out in the University's Ethical Code. To support this process, the University has Rey Juan Carlos University's Academic Conduct Regulation as well as different tools (anti-plagiarism, supervision...) that offer a collective guarantee for the full development of these essential values.

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VIII.-Teaching resources and materials

Basic bibliography

- (TEXTBOOK!) PEREIRA, Juan Carlos, *Política Exterior de España. De 1800 hasta hoy,* Ariel, Madrid, 2010.
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Consultation bibliography

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- JARQUE ÍÑIGUEZ, Arturo, *Queremos esas bases. El acercamiento de Estados Unidos a la España de Franco,* Centro de Estudios Norteamericanos, Universidad de Alcalá, 1998.
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- MELGAR VALERO, Luis Tomás, *Diplomacia pública: la gestión de la imagen-país. El modelo español,* MAEC, Madrid, 2010.
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Spanish Institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation: www.maec.es; Ministry of Defence: www.mde.es; Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional: www.aecid.es; ICEX: www.icex.es; Instituto Cervantes: www.cervantes.es; Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos: www.ieee.es; Fundación Carolina www.fundacioncarolina.es/.
Spanish Research Centers and Think-Tanks: *CEIPAZ - Centro de Educación e Investigación para la Paz* (www.ceipaz.org); *CIDOB* (www.cidob.org); CITpax – Centro Internacional de Toledo para la paz (www.toledopax.es); *ECFR* – European Council for Foreign Relations (www.ecfr.eu); *FAES* – Fundación para el Análisis y los estudios sociales (www.fundaes.es); Fundación Alternativas / Observatorio de Política Exterior (www.falternativas.org/opex); Fundación Transición Española (www.transicion.org/); Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos, IEEE (www.ieee.es); INCIPE - Instituto de Cuestiones Internacionales y Política Exterior, (www.incipe.org); Instituto Complutense de Estudios Internacionales (ICEI) (www.ucm.es/info/icei); Instituto Universitario de Cooperación y Desarrollo-UCM (www.ucm.es/info/IUDC); Real Instituto Elcano (www.realinstitutoelcano.org); UNISCI-UCM (http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/unisci);
Periodicals/Journals in Spanish: Afers Internationals (CIDOB); Afkar-Ideas (IEMED); Economía y Política Exterior (Estudios de Política Exterior S.A.); Foreign Policy en castellano/esglobal; Quórum; Relaciones Internacionales (UAM) ; Revista Española de Derecho Internacional (REDI); Revista Electrónica de Estudios Internacionales (REEI); Revista Española de Desarrollo y Cooperación, IUDC (UCM); Revista de Estudios Internacionales Mediterráneos (TEIM, UAM).
Yearbooks and other resources: Anuario Internacional CIDOB; Anuario Med, IEMed; Anuario de Asia-Pacífico; Anuario de Iberoamérica, RIE; El español en el mundo. Anuario del Instituto Cervantes; Panorama Estratégico (IEEE-Ministry of Defence).
Foreign Research Centers, Think-Tanks and main Periodicals on Foreign Policy: American Journal of Political Science; American Political Science Review; British Journal of Political Science; Comparative Politics; Cooperation and Conflict Studies; European Journal of International Relations; Foreign Affairs; Foreign Policy; International Affairs; International Security; Journal of Conflict Resolution; Journal of International Affairs; Political Science Quarterly; Review of International Studies; European Council on Foreign Relations; Foreign Policy Research Institute; Chatham House.

IX.-Professors	
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Campus	Madrid - Vicálvaro
Category	Profesor/a Asociado/a
Academic degree	Doctor
Person responsible for the subject	Yes
Tutorial timetable	Para consultar las tutorias póngase en contacto con el/la profesor/a a través de correo electrónico
Number of quinquennia	0
Number of sexennia	0
No. of positive evaluations by Docentia	0

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