COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Politics of Contemporary Lithuania	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: lecturer Dominykas Kaminskas	Faculty of Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First	Compulsory

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
In-class	2nd semester (Spring)	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites:	**Co-requisites (if relevant):**

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	125	32	93

Purpose of the course unit

This course aims to provide students with basic knowledge required to analyse current political events in Lithuania, introduce students to the most important features of modern Lithuanian society in a broad cultural, historic and modern context, as well as to broaden the knowledge of Lithuanian state and society. Course will help students develop analytical and problem-solving competencies by providing them with real-world scenarios related to Lithuanian politics, and will encourage them to creatively address issues that modern-day Lithuania is facing by working both individually and as part of a group.

Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will be able to use political science concepts such as democracy, civic society, semi-presidentialism, political participation and others to evaluate and explain political events in modern Lithuania	- Participation in lectures and seminars; - individual study of literature; - written assignment; - carrying out group tasks; - consultations with the lecturer.	Assessment is carried out via these methods: - evaluation of participation in seminars and lectures; - evaluation of written assignments; - evaluation of group assignements. The assessment strategy for this course aims to not only evaluate knowledge and the ability to provide quality content, but also gauge the improvement in general competencies by employing the students to reflect on their ability to distribute and carry out work as part of a group as well as individually.
Students will be able to critically evaluate, compare and interpret academic and everyday sources relating to Lithuanian social and political life.		
Students will be able to provide written and spoken commentary on the questions of Lithuanian political and social reality.		

		Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools may be used in assignments and assessments for this course only for auxiliary purposes (e.g., preparing presentation visuals). In all cases, students are expected to follow the guidelines for the use of GenAI adopted by the Faculty of Philology, as well as the principles of ethical conduct. Students who violate these provisions will be subject to the consequences established by Vilnius University regulations.

Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	**Contact hours, total**	**Individual work**	**Tasks for individual work**
1. Introduction. Political underpinnings of modern Lithuania	2						**2**	**2**	Getting acquainted with course material, evaluation strategy and the programme
2. Interpreting the Soviet past.	2						**2**	**3**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
3. Reform Movement of Lithuania as a source of modern political thought in Lithuania	2						**2**	**3**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
4. Turning to the West: Transatlantic integration, the EU and constitutional norms	2						**2**	**10**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events, group assignment.
5. 90s DNA: Cultural, Social and Economic Transformation	2		2				**4**	**7**	Preparing for the lecture and the seminar, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
6. Lithuanian society: beliefs and values	2						**2**	**3**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on

									recent political events.
7. Political composition of modern day Lithuania	2						**2**	**3**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
8. Institutions of modern day Lithuania	2						**2**	**3**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
9. Semi-presidentialism in Lithuania	2		2				**4**	**7**	Preparing for the lecture and the seminar, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
10. Party politics and political parties: the volatile nature of Lithuanian electoral politics	2						**2**	**10**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events, group assignment.
11. Civic society in Lithuania	2		2				**4**	**7**	Preparing for the lecture and the seminar, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
12. Crises and scandals: the stories that shaped the Lithuanian imaginary	2						**2**	**3**	Preparing for the lecture, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
13. Inflection points: COVID-19, Russia‘s war in Ukraine, and the futures of Lithuania	2						**4**	**7**	Preparing for the lecture and the seminar, compulsory reading, preparing for a discussion on recent political events.
Preparation for the examination and group assignments								**25**	Preparing group assignments by studying relevant literature and other sources and working to produce required material. Preparation for the examination entails revisiting compulsory reading material, lecture material and exam-specific material. the group
Total	**26**		**6**				**32**	**93**	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Active participation in seminars and lectures	40	During the semester	The students are expected to actively participate in lectures and seminars, study compulsory lecture and seminar material, and demonstrate their ability to discuss topics related to Lithuanian social and political life, using the material provided. Evaluation criteria: 1) Preparedness: students will need to demonstrate their ability (orally or in writing) to discuss and critically evaluate the material provided. 2) Active participation: students are expected to participate in group tasks and actively discuss seminar and lecture material
Group assignments	20	Week 3 and Week 9	The students will have to carry out two group assignments. The assignments will require the students to creatively approach problem questions related to Lithuanian social and political life. The students will be evaluated based on the quality of the content, creativity and the ability to work as a group.
Exam	40	During the exam session	The students will have to write an academic essay on the topic of their choosing. The topics will need to be disscussed and confirmed with the lecturer by Week 9. The essay will be evaluated on the quality of the content, ability to adhere to academic requirements, structure and overall brilliance.

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Ainė Ramonaitė	2010	Voting advice applications in Lithuania: promoting programmatic competition or breeding populism?	Policy & Internet 2, no. 1	Wiley
Ainė Ramonaitė	2020	Mapping the political space in Lithuania: the discrepancy between party elites and party supporters	Journal of Baltic Studies 51, no. 4	Taylor and Francis
Mažvydas Jastramskis	2018	Effects of mixed parallel electoral system in Lithuania: the worst of all worlds?	Parliamentary Affairs 72, no. 3	
Charles Clarke (ed.)	2023	Understanding the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania since 1991	-	Hurst
Mažvydas Jastramskis, Vytautas Kuokštis, and Matas Baltrukevičius	2021	Retrospective voting in Central and Eastern Europe: Hyper-accountability, corruption or socio-economic inequality?	Party Politics 27, no. 4	University of California Press
Robert Elgie	2011	Semi-presidentialism: Sub-types and Democratic Performance	-	Oxford University Press

Susanne Jungerstam-Mulders	2006	Post-Communist EU Member States	-	Routledge
Tomas Balkelis	2009	The Making of Modern Lithuania	-	Taylor and Francis
Tomas Janeliūnas	2020	Foreign Policy Analysis of a Baltic State: Lithuania and'Grybauskaitė Doctrine'	-	Routledge
Recommended reading				
Alvydas Jokubaitis	2018	The Other Europe: Identity Problems of Central Europe	Politeja	Jagiellonian University
Neringa Klumbytė	2014	Of power and laughter: Carnivalesque politics and moral citizenship in Lithuania	American Ethnologist	Wiley
Zenonas Norkus	2023	Post-Communist Transformations in Baltic Countries		Springer
Daunis Auers	2015	Comparative politics and government of the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the 21st century	-	Springer

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