

RESEARCH PROJECT

COURSE: FOURTH

SEMESTER: SECOND

SUBJECT TYPE: OBLIGATORY

CREDITS ECTS: 6

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PROFESSOR: [DR. DOLORES RESANO](#)

OBJECTIVES:

Students will learn to design, develop and implement a research project in Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations, where they will apply appropriate tools and statistical sources, will define goals and strategies, will plan actions and will specialize in in-depth analysis of the results.

The specific aims of this course are:

- a) To provide the student with experience of conducting independent research, from formulating a research question to presenting findings in written and spoken form;
- b) To give the student an opportunity to study a topic related to Marketing, Public Relations or Advertising in great depth.

COMPETENCES:

GENERAL

- **CB2** – Students know how to apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and possess the skills that are usually demonstrated through the elaboration and defense of arguments and the resolution of problems within their area of study.

- **CB3** – Students have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their area of study) to make judgments that include a reflection on relevant issues of social, scientific or ethical nature.
- **CG4** – Students are able to design and develop new ideas and projects that incorporate innovative concepts and methodologies.
- **CG5** – Students are able to detect new stimuli and formulate new challenges that allow them to adapt to changes and obstacles in a positive and creative way.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **R1** – The student has the ability to structure, reason and present ideas coherently.
- **R2** – The student masters statistical tools and sources from a research perspective.
- **R3** – The student is able to define objectives and strategy and to plan actions.
- **R4** – The student is able to perform an in-depth analysis.
- **R5** – The student performs an in-depth analysis and demonstrates critical thinking.
- **R6** – The student expresses him/herself correctly orally and in writing.
- **R7** – The student is able to perform in complex situations or situations that require the development of new solutions in the academic, work or professional spheres within the field of study.
- **R8** – The student is able to transmit to all types of audiences (specialized or not) knowledge, methods, ideas, problems and solutions in their field of study with clarity and precision.
- **R9** – Identify their own training needs in their field of study and work or professional environment and organize their own learning with a high degree of autonomy in all types of contexts (structured or not).
- **R10** – Exhibits and defends with clarity and depth a final degree project in its field of study.

CONTENT:

1. The purpose of research in Marketing, Public Relations, and Advertising

- What kind of problems might need a research study?
- The industry of research: Research agencies
- Academic research

2. The research process

- Research methods vs. research methodology
- Formulating and clarifying the research topic
 - Attributes of a good research topic
 - Generating and refining research ideas
 - Turning research ideas into research projects
 - Writing the research proposal

3. Ethics, politics, and research

- Ethics and research
- Politics and research
 - Intelligence and the politics of race
 - Social class and the politics of gender
 - Intelligence, achievement, and the politics of class
- Politics, Ideology, and “Research Style”

4. Research approaches and strategies

- Perspectives of knowledge and research
- Research paradigms
- Quantitative research methods vs. Qualitative research methods
- Analysis of quantitative data
- Analysis of qualitative data

5. Academic research and writing

- Specific characteristics of academic writing
- Publishing practices (open access, paid journals, book volumes, etc.)

- Conferences, seminars and workshops
- Applications for funding
- Progress reports

6. Research Methods for Cultural Studies

- Researching Media Institutions and the Culture Industries
- Cultural consumers
- Cultural producers
- Discourse Analysis

7. Critical review of the literature

- The critical review
- Literature sources available
- Planning the literature search
- Conducting a literature search
- Obtaining and evaluating the literature
- Recording the literature

8. Argument and evidence

- Basic ground rules
- Hidden assumptions
- Interplay between argument and evidence
- Styles of reasoning
- Analysis of arguments
- Patterns of reasoning
 - deductive argument
 - predicate form
 - propositional form

9. Establishing Validity

- Critical analysis in practice
- Validating evidence
 - Counting cases: Measurement and case selection
 - Comparing groups: The logic of design
 - Establishing boundaries in qualitative studies
- Presenting and summarizing evidence

10. Applying and analyzing Data

- Secondary Data
 - Syndicated media (TV, cable, magazines, newspapers, etc.)
 - Online sources
- Primary Data
 - Observation & Diaries
 - Questionnaires
 - Surveys
 - Focus groups
 - Interviews
 - Case studies
- Big Data
 - Defining Big Data
 - Sources of Big Data
 - Data Integration
 - Uncovering Insights
 - Big Data applications in the PR process
 - The limitations of Big Data
 - Case studies

11. Using Theory

- What is theory?
- Types of theory
- Roles of theory
- Characteristics of a good theory
- Developing theories
- Confirmation and disconfirmation of theories
- Theory-driven vs. Data-driven research

12. The Project Report: Reporting research results

- Structure
- Organization of contents
- Writing style
- The need for continual revision
- APA writing style

- Proofreading

13. Using a referencing style (Harvard, APA, Chicago, etc.)

14. Plagiarism

- What is plagiarism and how to avoid it
- Plagiarism detection programs
- Fraud and the role of values in research

EVALUATION SYSTEM:

There are two mid-term exams that represent 50% of the final grade, and that can be retaken. There are two individual assignments consisting of a literature review and a research proposal presentation, as well as a Group oral presentation of the research project which, together, make up 30% of the overall class grade. The final research project will include all components associated with an APA style research paper (i.e., cover page, bibliography, references...). The final paper represents 20% of the overall grade for the class, and it is conditional to the timely presentation of the draft versions on the specified dates, which will not be graded. These are to represent the various efforts and progress made by students through prior assignments and discussions. All assignments will adhere to the APA standard for references and citations. If a final project is not received a grade of zero will be assessed.

Area	Weight
Activity A: Literature Review (individual, written, NO RECUPERABLE)	10% Minimum required: 40%
Activity B: Research Proposal (individual, written, NO RECUPERABLE)	10% Minimum required: 40%
Mid-term Exam (susceptible de recuperación)	25% Minimum required: 50%
End-of-term Exam (susceptible de recuperación)	25% Minimum required: 50%

Area	Weight
Oral presentation of the Project Report (group activity, NO RECUPERABLE)	10% Minimum required: 40%
Group Research project (group activity, NO RECUPERABLE)	20% Minimum required: 50%
Total	100%

In order to obtain a weighted average, the minimum mark of the mid-term exams is 40. In order not to have to sit the complementary exams, the average of the two mid-term exams must be 50 or higher.

In the event that a student, having successfully developed the assignments of the continuous evaluation, suspends one or both of the mid-term exams, he / she will be able to recover them in the complementary period. Recoveries are available only for mid-term exams.

Individual assignments and group activities are not susceptible to recover. In addition to written work, the group (or the student) must make a presentation in class explaining the design process, the methodology applied, as well as the justification of the actions carried out and the final conclusions or the results achieved.

- Example 1: mid-term grade 40 + end-of term grade 60 = average 50, the student passes mid-term exams.
- Example 2: mid-term grade 40 + end-of term grade 50 = average 45, the student suspends and must recover mid-term exam.
- Example 3: mid-term grade 40 + end-of-term grade 40 = average 40, the student suspends and must recover mid-term and end-of-term exams in the complementary period, as long as the student has correctly developed the continuous assessment process.

The student can fail the course for assignments not presented or suspended.

- Example: average of mid-term exams grade 50 + average weight of assignments grade 30 + group project grade 50 = final grade 46, the student is suspended.

Assignment 1, Literature Review: 10%

Compulsory individual task. The student must complete and submit it on the stipulated date in order to prove the correct development of the continuous assessment. This work will consist

of the preparation of a literature review on a specific topic, which could be the potential topic of a research project could be. The review must include a "state of the art" section and what the proposed research will contribute to the field.

Assignment 2, Research Proposal Presentation: 10%

Compulsory individual work. This task will consist in the preparation of a research proposal (commercial or academic), and should perfectly display all the steps that are to be followed in this type of work. The creativity and originality of the work will be positively valued, as well as the oral presentation in class and the additional material that complements that oral presentation. 5% of the grade will correspond to the written project, and 5% to the individual oral presentation.

Group Project: 20% + Oral presentation of the Project Report: 10%

Mandatory written task and mandatory oral presentation.

In small student groups of 4-5, students will conduct secondary research in order to produce professional research, which will be summarized in three group reports and a final presentation and report at the end of the semester. Students will be allowed to do the oral presentation as long as they have made the partial deliveries of project drafts on the stipulated dates, in order to guarantee a proper follow-up and continuous assessment by the teacher. The work will consist in the elaboration of a research project on Public Relations, Marketing or Advertising, or any related area, in which all the concepts explained in class will be applied. The project cannot be a repetition of the project undertaken in the previous course.

The teacher will also take into consideration the evolution, progress, proactivity, effort and development of the continuous assessment of each student; in addition to taking into account attendance and active participation.

METHODOLOGY:

This module is delivered by a blend of core lectures supported by research workshops and forums, as well as invited talks by guest speakers. The course has a markedly practical approach, and aims to help students put in practice the theoretical contents learned. Students will also have to devote some hours of personal study to individual assignments, as well as to

the group project, which will be presented at the end of the course. The teacher will devote some hours of class to monitoring and supervising the project.

This course offers students the opportunity to further their knowledge and gain an in-depth understanding of a specific topic related to Public Relations, Marketing, Advertising, and related areas.

In order to reach these goals, students will be able to:

- 1) Determine where and how to gather information in order to identify and analyze the problem or topic.
- 2) Gather relevant information. Identify sources of information and tools for obtaining data.
- 3) Conduct independent research focused within the main course discipline.
- 4) Identify relevant aspects and reach appropriate conclusions.
- 5) Develop a critical analysis of other possible approaches to the identified problem or topics.
- 6) Present information in a subject-appropriate format.
- 7) Show advanced understanding of the techniques involved in the research process including: advanced writing for research purposes, bibliographic searching, critiquing subject literature, research philosophies, revising and choosing appropriate research techniques, qualitative and quantitative techniques of data gathering and critical analysis.
- 8) Develop a research project, showing command of research and analytical skills in conjunction with awareness of ethical issues in research, by combining disciplined academic study with personal interest.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- [ESERP online library] - O'Gorman, Kevin D. and Robert MacIntosh. *Research Methods for Business and Management*. Goodfellow Publishers, 2015.
- Bell, Judith. *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First Time Researchers*. 6th ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2014.

- Bordens, Kenneth S. and Bruce B. Abbot. *Research Design and Methods. A Process Approach*. 4th ed. Mountain View: Mayfield Publishing, 1999.
- Daymon, Christine and Immy Holloway. *Qualitative Research Methods in Public Relations and Marketing Communications*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Greener, Sue. *Business Research Methods*. Ventus Publishing, 2008.
- Jugenheimer, Donald W. and Larry D. Kelly. *Advertising and Public Relations Research*. Milton Park & New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Phelan, Peter and Peter Reynolds. *Argument and Evidence. Critical Analysis for the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Pickering, Michael (ed.). *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008.
- Rozakis, Laurie. *Schaum's Quick Guide to Writing Great Research Papers*. 2nd ed. London: McGraw Hill, 2007.
- Sapsford, Roger and Victor Jupp (eds.). *Data Collection and Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications, 1996.
- Saunders, Mark, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 7th ed. Harlow: Pearson, 2016.
- Stokes, Jane. *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications, 2013.
- van der Brink-Budgen, Roy. *Critical Thinking for Students*. 4th ed. Oxford: How To Books, 2010.
- Weiner, Mark and Sarab Kochhar. *Irreversible: The Public Relations Big Data Revolution*. Gainesville: Institute for Public Relations, 2016.
<http://www.instituteforpr.org/irreversible-public-relations-big-data-revolution/>