S. SCI. RESEARCH METHODS AND CRITICAL ASSESSMENT I

BACHELOR IN POLITICS, LAW AND ECONOMICS
Professor: MARIA PAZ MENENDEZ ESCANDON
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Academic year: 18-19
Degree course: SECOND
Semester: 1º
Category: COMPULSORY
Number of credits: 3.0
Language: English

PREREQUISITES

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION
This course is design to equip students with an understanding of social research which involves research that draws on the social sciences for conceptual and theoretical inspiration. Such research maybe motivated by developments and changes in society but it employs social scientific ideas to shed light on those changes. It draws upon social sciences for ideas about how to formulate research topics and issues and how to interpret and draw implications from research findings.

OBJECTIVES AND SKILLS
This course is designed to:

- Equip participants with an understanding of quantitative research methodologies in the social sciences
- Provide them with skills of literature searching and critical assessment
- Facilitate the development of a soundly structured and clearly justified research proposal in their specialist area

Students will be able to acquire the following knowledge and skills:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding and evaluation of major research designs and their relative strengths and limitations
- Systematically develop and justify a chosen research approach and methodology to investigate a specific topic within their subject
- Produce a research proposal which demonstrates appreciation of scientific methods appropriate to their specialist area
- Critically appraise a variety of research papers across a range of study designs
- Carry out an appropriate, rigorous review of the literature
- Be aware of ethical and governance issues in research
- Develop a research paper
**METHODOLOGY**

This course will introduce flipped classroom pedagogy so students will work in class to take action with in-class hands-on projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching methodology</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>20.0 %</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>20.0 %</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>13.33 %</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>26.67 %</td>
<td>20 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other individual studying</td>
<td>20.0 %</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>75 hours</td>
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PROGRAM

SESSION 1 (FACE TO FACE)
Introduction to the course
The nature and the process of social research
B.C.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 1

SESSION 2 (FACE TO FACE)
Social Research Strategies
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 2

SESSION 3 (FACE TO FACE)
Planning a research project and formulating research questions
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 4

SESSION 4 (FACE TO FACE)
Getting started reviewing the literature
Using existing data
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 5 and 14

SESSION 5 (FACE TO FACE)
Content analysis and critical assessment
Ethics and Politics in social research
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 6 and 13

SESSION 6 (LABORATORY)
Building a code for systematized content analysis and critical assessment

SESSION 7 (LABORATORY)
Mid-term Case Study on Critical Assessment

SESSION 8 (FACE TO FACE)
The nature of quantitative research
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 7

SESSION 9 (FACE TO FACE)
Designing a questionnaire
Asking questions
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 10 and 11
SESSION 10 (FACE TO FACE)
Piloting a questionnaire
Sampling in quantitative research
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 8

SESSION 11 (FACE TO FACE)
Structured observations
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 12

SESSION 12 (FACE TO FACE)
Quantitative Data Analysis
T.N.: Alan Bryman - Social Research Methods - Chapter 15

SESSIONS 13 - 14
Research Project Presentation

SESSION 15 (LABORATORY)
Final exam
**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Your final grade in the course will be based on both individual and group work. The evaluation is based on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>40 %</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Tests</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Portfolio</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING GRADING ELEMENTS**

A. **CLASS PARTICIPATION & PORTFOLIO (20%)**

Please note that this part of the evaluation includes your attendance, how much you participate in the discussion in class, and assignment completion. If you do not attend, for whatever reason, you are forfeiting the opportunity to obtain the participation credit allotted to that session. If you miss more than 8 sessions your maximum participation grade will be a 5 out of 10.

Note that if you miss the class, regardless of the cause for the absence, you will automatically be forfeited the opportunity to earn participation credit allocated for that session.

Main criteria for evaluating Class Participation are as follows:

- **Depth and Quality of Contribution:** The quality of your comment in terms of depth of insight, rigorous use of case evidence, consistency of argument, and realism will be highly appreciated.

- **Moving Your Peers’ Understanding Forward:** Along with the content, the way of conveying your ideas will also be considered. Your way of presentation should be concise and clear, accompanied by a spirit of involvement in the discussion at hand. You will have multiple chances to present, therefore your improvement along the way will be noted.

- **Frequency:** It is encouraged that you participate as much as you can, but this does not mean you should speak for the sake of reaching some critical number. Beyond certain threshold, the quality of your comment is more important.

Recall that listening carefully is as important a component of participation as speaking. Please be aware of your own style of participation: if you find it difficult to speak up in class, push yourself to do so. If you realize you tend to dominate discussions, make a point of listening to others. Your participation grade at the end of the semester will be based cumulatively on your contributions over the course of the semester.

Participation is graded using the criteria below, which are adapted from: http://trc.virginia.edu/Publications/Teaching_Concerns/Spring_1996/TC_Spring_1996_Maznevski.html.
The average level of participation usually satisfies the criteria for a “7”, which would correspond to a “B”.

- **Grade 0-4.9 Criteria**: When present, not disruptive. Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much. Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.
- **Grade 5.0-6.9 Criteria**: Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them. Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class). Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on. Demonstrates sporadic involvement.
- **Grade 7-8.9 Criteria**: Demonstrates good preparation: knows reading facts well, has thought through implications of them. Offers interpretations and analysis of reading material (more than just facts) to class. Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds thoughtfully to other students’ points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion. Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.
- **Grade 9.0-10.0 Criteria**: Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed readings exceptionally well, relating it to other material (e.g., other readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.). Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of class material (e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further). Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc. Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.

The professor will lay the ground rules for participation during Session 1 and will provide a mid-term “grade” after the mid-term exam.

During class time, students will ask to develop some formative activities to gain conceptual understanding of the class lessons. These activities will conform your student's class portfolio.

**B. EXAMS (40%)**

**B.1. MID-TERM CASE STUDY ON CRITICAL ASSESSMENT (15%)**

The Mid-term Exam is designed to provide, both the student and the professor, an idea of the level of understanding of the materials covered up to that session. Details of the mid-term exam will be specified by your teacher during Session 1. The exam will take place during Sessions 15-16. **Re-grade requests have to be submitted in writing explaining why you believe that your answer, as written, was incorrectly graded.** Please note that when you ask for a re-grade, since this considers again the whole exam, the final grade may be increased as well as decreased.

**B.2 FINAL EXAM (25%)**

The final exam, which is compulsory, will demand an individual 4000-word research paper on [European Commission Horizon 2020](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/sc6-social-innovation-prize-2019.html)

Specific Challenge: Innovations are new or significantly improved goods, services, processes and methods which are social when they aim at gains for society rather than for the individual, i.e. when they are good for society and enhance society’s capacity to act. Very often social challenges cannot be met with traditional recipes and approaches.

The European Commission plans to launch a € 2 Million Horizon prize on social innovation in the area of Aging Population to stimulate novel replicable solutions for the benefit of European citizens. By 2025 more than 20% of Europeans will be 65 or over, with a particularly rapid increase in the number of people aged over 80 years.

Objectives:

For selecting the specific challenge to be addressed, the European Commission invited citizens to “vote” through an easy to use on-line system. The general public were invited to cast their vote online via the ec.europa.eu domain from all across Europe on among following five topics:
- Obesity in children
- Aging population
- Immigrants in the labour market
- Women entrepreneurship and women-led enterprises
- Citizens for clean energy

You may select to write your individual paper in any of the above challenges.

Re-grade requests have to be submitted in writing explaining why you believe that your answer, as written, was incorrectly graded.

Please note that when you ask for a re-grade, since this considers again the whole exam, the final grade may be increased as well as decreased.

C. RESEARCH PROJECT (40%)  

This is the main project for this course and a very important part of the course. Presentations constitute an oral exam and attendance is compulsory. Only justified absences will be accepted. Delivery of the project will consist of two formal documents which, together, work as a Research Plan that you will continue on in the following semester.

The class will be divided into 6 groups and each will be given one of the following themes as research topic:
- Populism/Nationalism
- Diversity
- Fake News
- Lost of EU identity
- Climate change
- Corporate Social Responsibility

The two documents will be:
- A 10-15 word document to include all elements of the course.
- A ppt/keynote presentation of about 10 slides that will serve as visual support to the concepts outlined in the word document. This document will serve as presentation document for Sessions 27-28.

Detailed instructions about the project will be provided in class so the rules are clear from the beginning. All grading elements will be clearly outlined.
PROFESSOR BIO

Professor: MARIA PAZ MENENDEZ ESCANDON
E-mail: mpmenendez@faculty.ie.edu

Maria Paz currently works as Regional Manager at the International Baccalaureate (IB) at its Africa, Europe and Middle East Global Centre located in The Hague, The Netherlands. Previously she was Senior Advisor for Development, Marketing and Communications in the IB Foundation Headquarter in Geneva, Switzerland. Maripé has also been Director of Marketing and Communications at Legg Mason-Vetusta in Geneva, Managing Director of the IE Fund in New York, U.S.A., Director of Communications at IE Business School in Madrid and Deputy Director of Communications at Yves Saint Laurent Madrid, Spain.

Prof. Menéndez is a Ph D. Candidate at Universidad Autónoma of Madrid. She holds an International M.B.A. from IE Business School (Madrid, Spain), a Masters of Research in Educational and Social Research from The Institute of Education at the University of London - UCL (U.K.), a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Business Administration from the University of Oviedo (Oviedo, Spain) and has attended several executive programs in Board of Directors Management at Harvard Business School (Boston, U.S.A.).

Maripé Menéndez is engaged with several research activities as a member of the GiPES Research group at Autónoma University of Madrid, Spain. She has written several articles in peer-review journals and has presented research papers at several conferences. She is a member of the Spanish Society of Pedagogy.

Office hours by appointment: mpmenendez@faculty.ie.edu

OTHER INFORMATION

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS

This subject does not require the use of a laptop / tablets except in cases when students take notes. I will take note of which students do so and follow up closely.

- Laptops / tablets will be used to spark certain discussions, and are thus necessary for some sessions but the use will be controlled. Students who take notes on their laptops should inform the Professor at the beginning of the course.

- There is no need for laptops outside these two instances (specific class work and/or note taking). Any other use which is not strictly academic is forbidden and may result on class expulsion of the individual using the laptop.

- Use of any other mobile device (mobile phones) is strictly forbidden (as per Code of Conduct, read below). Mobile devices should be put on Airplane Mode during class and its use will result on immediate expulsion from the class.

RE-SIT / RE-TAKE POLICY

Each student has 4 chances to pass any given course distributed over two consecutive academic years: ordinary call exams and extraordinary call exams (re-sits) in June/July. Students who do not comply with the 70% attendance rule during the semester will fail both calls for this Academic Year (ordinary and extraordinary) and have to re-take the course (i.e., re-enroll) in the next Academic Year.

Evaluation criteria will be subject to the following rules:
- Students failing the course in the ordinary call (during the semester) will have to re-sit the exam in June / July (except those not complying with the attendance rule, who will not have that opportunity and must directly re-enroll in the course on the next Academic Year).
- The extraordinary call exams in June / July (re-sits) require your physical presence at the campus you are enrolled in (Segovia or Madrid). There is no possibility to change the date, location or format of any exam, under any circumstances. Dates and location of the June / July re-sit exams will be posted in advance. Please take this into consideration when planning your summer.
- The June / July re-sit exam will consist of a comprehensive exam. Your final grade for the course will depend on the performance in this exam only; continuous evaluation over the semester will not be taken into consideration. Students will have to achieve the minimum passing grade of 5 and the maximum grade will be capped at 8.0 (out of 10.0) – i.e., “notable” in the in the re-sit exam.
- Re-takers: Students who failed the subject on a previous Academic Year and are now re-enrolled as re-takers in a course will need to check the syllabus of the assigned professor, as well as contact the professor individually, regarding the specific evaluation criteria for them as re-takers in the course during that semester (ordinary call of that Academic Year). The maximum grade that may be obtained in the retake exam (3rd call) is 10.0 (out of 10.0).

After ordinary and extraordinary call exams are graded by the professor, you will have a possibility to attend a review session for that exam and course grade. Please be available to attend the session in order to clarify any concerns you might have regarding your exam. Your professor will inform you about the time and place of the review session.

- Students failing more than 18 ECTS credits after the June-July re-sits will be asked to leave the Program. Please, make sure to prepare yourself well for the exams in order to pass your failed subjects.
- In case you decide to skip the opportunity to re-sit for an exam during the June / July extraordinary call, you will need to enroll in that course again for the next Academic Year as a re-taker and pay the corresponding extra cost. As you know, students have a total of 4 allowed calls to pass a given subject or course, in order to remain in the program.
CODE OF CONDUCT IN CLASS

1. **Be on time:** Students arriving more than 5 minutes late will be marked as “Absent.”
   Only students that notify in advance in writing that they will be late for a specific session may be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).

2. **If applicable, bring your name card and strictly follow the seating chart.** It helps faculty members and fellow students learn your names.

3. **Do not leave the room during the lecture:** Students are not allowed to leave the room during lectures. If a student leaves the room during lectures, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter and, therefore, will be marked as “Absent.”
   Only students that notify that they have a special reason to leave the session early will be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).

4. **Do not engage in side conversation.** As a sign of respect toward the person presenting the lecture (the teacher as well as fellow students), side conversations are not allowed. If you have a question, raise your hand and ask it. If you do not want to ask it during the lecture, feel free to approach your teacher after class.
   If a student is disrupting the flow of the lecture, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom and, consequently, will be marked as “Absent”.

5. **Use your laptop for course-related purposes only.** The use of laptops during lectures must be authorized by the professor. The use of Social Media or accessing any type of content not related to the lecture is penalized. The student will be asked to leave the room and, consequently, will be marked as “Absent”.

6. **No cellular phones:** IE University implements a “Phone-free Classroom” policy and, therefore, the use of phones, tablets, etc. is forbidden inside the classroom. Failing to abide by this rule entails expulsion from the room and will be counted as one absence.

7. **Escalation policy: 1/3/5.** Items 4, 5, and 6 above entail expulsion from the classroom and the consequent marking of the student as “Absent.” IE University implements an “escalation policy”: The first time a student is asked to leave the room for disciplinary reasons (as per items 4, 5, and 6 above), the student will incur one absence, the second time it will count as three absences, and from the third time onward, any expulsion from the classroom due to disciplinary issues will entail 5 absences.