

Investigative Journalism

Code: 103089
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2501933 Journalism	OT	3	1
2501933 Journalism	OT	4	1

Contact

Name: Pepe Rodríguez Bonfill
Email: pepe.rodriguez@uab.cat

Use of Languages

Principal working language: catalan (cat)
Some groups entirely in English: No
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Teachers

Jesús Martínez Fernández

Prerequisites

The students must have very good knowledge of social news. Students must have a good background in all theoretical and practical aspects of journalistic work. Students must have sufficient capacity to properly locate, deal with and deal with personal sources and to locate, analyze and use documentary sources of all kinds, including those accessible through the Internet. Students must have an advanced user level for computer software. Office automation (spreadsheets and database managers). They have to know how to use the advanced search functions in search engines, and also the most common specific tools to capture information on the Internet and to analyze its contents).

Students must also have a sufficient command of Catalan and Spanish, in which the classes will be taught and most of the teaching materials will be.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Investigative journalism focuses on the methodology of research work in the journalistic context. It pays special attention to the processes of detection of searchable facts, to the operationalization of research, to documentation, to the contrast and validation of data and to the way in which they are transmitted to the public.

Its objective is to train students to carry out research through a set of specialized skills and methodologies, and to be able to practice the professional specialty of investigative journalism.

The methodological training is oriented towards the acquisition of the knowledge, strategies, techniques and specific tools that allow to successfully tackle complex research processes.

Competences

Journalism

- Abide by ethics and the canons of journalism, as well as the regulatory framework governing information.
- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Be familiar with and apply the theoretical and practical foundations of journalistic writing and narrative and its applications in the different genres, media and formats.
- Demonstrate a critical and self-critical capacity.
- Differentiate the discipline's main theories, its fields, conceptual developments, theoretical frameworks and approaches that underpin knowledge of the subject and its different areas and sub-areas, and acquire systematic knowledge of the media's structure.
- Identify modern journalistic traditions in Catalonia, Spain and worldwide and their specific forms of expression, as well as their historic development and the theories and concepts that study them.
- Introduce changes in the methods and processes of the field of knowledge to provide innovative responses to the needs and demands of society.
- Relay journalistic information in the language characteristic of each communication medium, in its combined modern forms or on digital media, and apply the genres and different journalistic procedures.
- Research, select and arrange in hierarchical order any kind of source and useful document to develop communication products.
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Use a third language as a working language and means of professional expression in the media.
- Value diversity and multiculturalism as a foundation for teamwork.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse the sex- or gender-based inequalities and the gender biases present in one's own area of knowledge.
2. Communicate using language that is not sexist or discriminatory.
3. Compare the different traditions in handling specialised information.
4. Conceptualise the theories and techniques of specialised journalism.
5. Consider how gender stereotypes and roles impinge on the exercise of the profession.
6. Critically analyse the principles, values and procedures that govern the exercise of the profession.
7. Demonstrate a critical and self-critical capacity.
8. Demonstrate practical knowledge of specialised journalism.
9. Distinguish theories of journalistic writing and narrative to apply them to the different theme-based information specialisms.
10. Explain the explicit or implicit code of practice of one's own area of knowledge.
11. Identify situations in which a change or improvement is needed.
12. Incorporate the principles of professional ethics in producing information specialised in investigative and precision journalism.
13. Know how to build texts in a third language that adapt to the structures of journalistic language and apply them to the different theme-based information specialisms.
14. Propose projects and actions that incorporate the gender perspective.
15. Relay in the language specific to each communication medium narrative journalism specialised in research and precision.
16. Research, select and arrange in hierarchical order any kind of source and useful document to develop communication products.

17. Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
18. Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
19. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
20. Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
21. Use interactive communication resources to process, produce and relay information in the production of specialised information.
22. Value diversity and multiculturalism as a foundation for teamwork.
23. Weigh up the impact of any long- or short-term difficulty, harm or discrimination that could be caused to certain persons or groups by the actions or projects.

Content

1. Defining and introductory aspects of investigative journalism
2. Conception, organization and operationalization of a research process
3. Process of detecting a news item and sources
4. Data confirmation and validation
5. Areas of basic interest of an objective to be investigated
6. Documentary sources and content analysis
7. Journalistic research strategies
8. Analysis of administrative, legal and economic documents
9. Software to protect and recover data
10. Security of the journalist and his data

The content of the subject will be sensitive to aspects related to the gender perspective.

(*) The content of this subject can be taught in a different order if there are unforeseen changes

Methodology

This subject has a theory group and two practice groups.

The theory and group 11 practices will be in charge of Professor Pepe Rodríguez.

Practice group 12 will be led by Professor Jesús Martínez. This subject has two enrollment groups, G01 and G03.

The agenda, the practical work, the forms to be used, the calendar and the evaluation system will be the same for both groups.

The basis of the teaching methodology is that students acquire autonomous learning. The academic activities supervised by the teaching team will allow the students to assume the competences and objectives of this subject.

The subject is structured around an expository methodology of the defining contents and the specialized techniques and strategies on which investigative journalism is based.

In order to analyze some technical aspects, the workshop methodology is used, with case analysis.

The learning is complemented by individual tutorials or by working groups. These tutorials will be fundamentally virtual, but if the teaching staff considers it necessary, they can be face-to-face. These tutorials complement the training given in the subject and help students to acquire greater maturity in social interactions.

All communications and work deliveries will be made only and exclusively through the emails of teachers and the specific email of this subject (in no case through the Virtual Campus). The teaching materials will be accessible through the Virtual Campus.

IMPORTANT NOTE 1: The teaching methodology and the evaluation proposed in the guide may undergo some modification depending on the restrictions on presence imposed by the health authorities.

IMPORTANT NOTE 2: All tutorials will be carried out electronically (except if the teacher considers that in some case it must be face-to-face). To request a tutorial, an e-mail must be previously sent to the teacher responsible for each group.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master classes	18	0.72	15, 4, 8, 12, 21
Practices.	18	0.72	15, 8, 12, 21
Seminars.	18	0.72	15, 8, 12, 21
Type: Supervised			
Evaluation.	3	0.12	4, 12, 21
Tutorials	3	0.12	4, 8, 12
Type: Autonomous			
Reading, analysis and synthesis of texts, preparation and realization of works.	87	3.48	4, 8, 12, 13, 21

Assessment

a) The students have to do a research work in report format, made in the real world and with a real case. His weighted weight in the final grade is 45%.

b) Students must make a report of the research following the guidelines indicated by the teachers and explained in the Virtual Campus. His weighted weight in the final grade is 15%.

c) The students have to do a practical job of analyzing published journalism research pieces. His weighted weight in the final grade is 20%.

d) Students have to carry out a practical analysis of documents (10%) and another practical analysis of three published works (10%). Its weighted weight in the final grade is 20% (10% + 10%).

e) The research work will be done as a group. The report of the investigation will be made using a specific form. The practical work of analyzing published journalism research pieces is an individual work. All the works must be delivered in hard copy and also in a digital file.

f) The evaluation is continuous and the attendance to the educational classroom is obligatory. In order to pass the course, it is mandatory to carry out all the practical tests set: the research report (45%), the report (15%) and the three documents analysis works (20% + 10% + 10%). The minimum grade to be able to pass the subject is 5.

g) The research report (45%) can not be retrieved in case of obtaining a grade lower than 5. The research report (15%) can not be retrieved in case of obtaining a grade lower than 5. The three documents analysis works (20% + 10% + 10%). Documents analysis work (20% + 10% + 10%) may be recovered if a grade lower than 5 is obtained but the conditions of point h) are met.

h) To be able to have the right to recover a suspended work (among which is allowed to recover), students must have been evaluated at least 2/3 (66.6%) of the total of the evaluable activities of the subject and have obtained at least 3.5 as the average grade (weighted) of the subject.

i) A job with five spelling errors will get the grade of zero. A job with signs of plagiarism will also get the grade of zero.

j) All the works to be done have rules of style, typography, extension, names and file format and other formal aspects that are very specific and defined. Failure to comply with these formal requirements may result in a penalty of 2 to 3 points on the work report.

k) Any student whose total percentage of evaluated activities is below 50% of the activities scheduled as evaluable in the subject will be considered as not evaluable.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This evaluation system will be the same for the two possible teaching options within the pandemic period (face-to-face teaching or telematic teaching). If mobility problems or difficulties in making personal contacts arise in any job, equivalent practical works will be designed that can be carried out by telematic work.

Recovery:

l) Research work can not be recovered.

m) Students who obtain a grade lower than 5 in the practical work of analysis may take a recovery test, but only if the two conditions of point h) are met.

Reevaluation to raise the note:

n) The student wishing to upload the final grade of the subject may request a re-evaluation test under the following conditions:

1) Have obtained a grade equal to or greater than 8 as the average of the final grade of the subject.

2) The grade obtained in the test that will be reevaluated will be the final grade, whether it is a grade greater than or less than 8.

Review of notes:

s) Since the notes are published (on the bulletin board), students have a week to request, by e-mail, a tutorial with the teacher to analyze and discuss the test score assessed. If the request is made later than one week after the publication of the notes, it will not be admitted.

In the case of a second enrolment, students can do a single synthesis exam/assignment that will consist of an examination of theoretical and practical knowledge. The grading of the subject will correspond to the grade of the synthesis exam/assignment.

Calendar of evaluable tests:

In the teaching programming of this subject, the calendar of evaluable tests is the following:

1.- Search and analyze a journalistic piece, published in a Press or TV format, that can be considered as a research journalism work. The rules for doing this work are specified in the document entitled Expanded Teaching Guide (Virtual Campus). The work (individual) is commissioned in session 2 and is delivered and defended publicly in session 11.

2.- Search and choose two documents that meet the requirement of being "of possible interest for research purposes". The chosen documents may be of judicial, administrative (of any administration, local, regional or state), or commercial (public or private) origin. The rules for doing this work are specified in the document entitled Extended Teaching Guide (Virtual Campus). The work is commissioned in session 4 and is delivered and publicly defended in session 6.

3.- Analyze the press of the week and choose three susceptible subjects to be investigated. In a specific session, the three topics must be presented, justify the reason for their choice and propose a viable research plan. The rules for doing this work are specified in the document entitled Extended Teaching Guide (Virtual Campus). The work is commissioned in session 13 and is delivered and publicly defended in session 13.

4.- Realize a research report in the real world. The rules for doing this work are specified in the document entitled Expanded Teaching Guide (Virtual Campus). The subject of the research work (as a team) must be approved, and work must also begin, in session 6 (as maximum term), and in session 16 the finished work is delivered and defended publicly in the teaching classroom.

5.- Thereport has the same execution and delivery schedule as the report.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE: The calendar will be available on the first day of class. Students will find all information on the Virtual Campus: the description of the activities, teaching materials, and any necessary information for the proper follow-up of the subject. In case of a change of teaching modality for health reasons, teachers will make readjustments in the schedule and methodologies.

This English translation has been carried out automatically with Google Translate. In many points it is a summary of the Teaching Guide in Spanish or Catalan. In case of any doubt or discrepancy, the valid reference text is only the Teaching Guide in Spanish or in Catalan.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Analysis of three journalistic works	10%	0	0	1, 3, 2, 4, 8, 9, 14, 21, 5
Document analysis	10 %	0	0	6, 16, 15, 2, 4, 8, 7, 10, 11, 12, 20, 19, 17, 18, 13, 21, 23, 22
Exercise of analysis of a work of investigative journalism	20%	1	0.04	4, 8
Report of the research work	15 %	1	0.04	4, 8, 12, 21
Research report	45%	1	0.04	6, 16, 15, 2, 8, 7, 10, 11, 12, 20, 19, 17, 18, 13, 21, 23, 22

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Software

There is no specific software for this subject.