

History of Communication

Code: 103854
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Journalism	FB	1

Contact

Name: David Rull Ribó

Email: david.rull@uab.cat

Teachers

Beatriz Villarejo Carballido

Carolina Escudero

David Rull Ribó

José Manuel Silva Alcalde

David Revelles Soriano

Jesús Martínez Fernández

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

No specific knowledge is required other than those obtained after taking High School.

It is assumed that students dominate Catalan and/or oral Spanish, writing and reading comprehension.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The course is held in the first course during the first semester and belongs to the training block of "Communication".

From this subject students will achieve fundamental objectives of the Degree in Journalism, which should help them to:

- Demonstrate that they have a basic knowledge of the current dynamics of the world that allows them to frame current information in its context.
- Gather and relate data from everyday reality that include a reflection on relevant topics of all kinds to interpret and disseminate to society.

- Reflect on the changes that have taken place in the communicative field throughout the centuries, and how this transforms the human, cultural, political, economic and social relations of humanity.

Competences

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Demonstrate a critical and self-critical capacity.
- Demonstrate a self-learning and self-demanding capacity to ensure an efficient job.
- Demonstrate adequate knowledge of Catalonia's socio-communicative reality in the Spanish, European and global context.
- 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.
- Disseminate the area's knowledge and innovations.
- 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.
- Manage time effectively.
- 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 have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
- Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- 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.

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. Contextualise the different journalistic trends and the work of renowned journalists.
4. Critically analyse the principles, values and procedures that govern the exercise of the profession.
5. Demonstrate a critical and self-critical capacity.
6. Demonstrate a self-learning and self-demanding capacity to ensure an efficient job.
7. Describe the structure of the media and its dynamics.
8. Differentiate the specificities of audiovisual languages.
9. Disseminate the area's knowledge and innovations.
10. Explain the development of modern international journalistic traditions.
11. Find substance and relevance in documents on theory, structure and communication in a third language.
12. Identify the fundamentals of theories and the history of communication.
13. Identify the media system and groups that have had, at a given point in time, the power to inform, and be able to describe the legal framework that exerts a certain governance on the media.
14. Identify the principal forms of sex- or gender-based inequality and discrimination present in society.
15. Identify the social, economic and environmental implications of academic and professional activities within one's own area of knowledge.
16. Identify the structural foundations of the communication system.

17. Interpret and discuss texts regarding the main communication and journalism theories and present the summary of the analysis in writing and in public.
18. Link social analysis and impacts of new communication technologies.
19. Link the historic development of journalistic forms and traditions with the groups that have had, at a given point in time, the power to inform and the manner in which this power was accessed.
20. Manage time effectively.
21. Research, select and arrange in hierarchical order any kind of source and useful document to develop communication products.
22. 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.
23. Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.

Content

The detailed calendar with the content of the different sessions will be presented on the day of presentation of the subject. It will also be posted on the Virtual Campus where students will be able to find a detailed description of the exercises and practices, the various teaching materials and any information necessary for the proper follow-up of the subject. In case of change of teaching modality for health reasons, the teachers will inform of the changes that will take place in the programming of the subject and in the teaching methodologies.

TOPIC 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF COMMUNICATION

- 1.1. What is communication?
- 1.2. Acceleration and changes in communication
- 1.3. The importance of communicative stages
- 1.4. The role of the communicative supports.
- 1.5. Crisis and digital revolution
- 1.6. Conclusions

TOPIC 2. ORAL - GESTURAL COMMUNICATION

- 2.1. The capacity of language
- 2.2. Human evolution and communication
- 2.3. Symbolic thought
- 2.4. The body as a communicative support
- 2.5. Oral-gestural communication today
- 2.6. Conclusions

TOPIC 3. WRITING

- 3.1. Birth and development of writing
- 3.2. From pictograms to phonetisation
- 3.3. The importance of writing media and writing instruments

3.4. The impact of writing on social, economic and cultural organisation 3.5.

3.5. The invention of the book

3.6. Writing as an art: monasteries and copyists.

3.7. Literacy, Writing and Power

3.8. Women and writing

3.9. Societies without writing

3.10. Conclusions

TOPIC 4. THE PRINTING PRESS

4.1. Europe at the time of the invention of the printing press

4.2. Gutenberg's printing press

4.3. The expansion of books: from incunabula to great libraries 4.4.

4.4. The printing of texts and its social influence

4.5. The periodisation of news: from advertisements to gazettes and newspapers.

4.6. Propaganda systems: Luther and religious propaganda

4.7. The Enlightenment and the shaping of the public space of bourgeois opinion

4.8. The printing press and the control of violence

4.9. Conclusions

TOPIC 5. COMMUNICATION AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

5.1. Conceptual and material bases of the Industrial Revolution

5.2. Industry, economy and the energy revolution.

5.3. The role of transport and communication routes 5.4.

5.4. Industrialisation and leisure

5.5. The importance of cities and the changes they bring.

5.6. Technical progress in the world of communication. The abolition of distance: the telegraph, the telephone and postal services.

5.7. The importance of public opinion and the press.

5.8. Creation of press agencies.

5.9. Photography and the precedents of the moving image.

5.10. Conclusions

TOPIC 6. THE MASS MEDIA

6.1. The emergence of radio and cinema.

6.2. Television

- 6.3. The written press in the face of new challenges.
- 6.4. Illustrated magazines
- 6.5. Silent and sound films
- 6.6. Cinematographic newsreels
- 6.7. Publicity and propaganda: uses and exploitation of the media in totalitarian states and in democracies
- 6.8. The creation of the Star System
- 6.9. Conclusions

TOPIC 7. THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION AND THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

- 7.1. The communication industry and the technology companies.
- 7.2. The victory of audiovisuals over the printing press and the book culture.
- 7.3. Globalisation of the information society.
- 7.4. Computerisation and new technologies in leisure and work.
- 7.5. Communicative immediacy: from the Internet to reality shows.
- 7.6. The new technological illiteracy and the digital divide: access to information.
- 7.7. A world of screens: effects on health and human relations. Social networks
- 7.8. Artificial Intelligence (AI). What does the future hold?
- 7.9. Conclusions

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	46	1.84	4, 1, 21, 2, 6, 5, 20, 13, 12, 16, 14, 23, 22, 11
Type: Supervised			
Practical activities	75.5	3.02	3, 7, 8, 10, 18, 19
Type: Autonomous			
Reading	21	0.84	4, 1, 21, 2, 6, 5, 9, 20, 15, 14, 17, 23, 22, 11

A detailed schedule outlining the content of each session will be presented on the first day of the course and will be available on the course's Virtual Campus, where students will find all teaching materials and necessary information for effective course monitoring. Should the teaching modality change for reasons of force majeure according to the competent authorities, the teaching staff will inform students of any modifications to the course schedule and teaching methodologies.

Learning will be based on several aspects:

- Reading basic texts about the history of communication.
- The case study of several topics where you will have to work individually or in groups.
- Oral presentations in the classroom about the topics studied. Collaborative work and the capacity for critical analysis and reflection will be encouraged.

The subject fosters sensitivity to the gender perspective in a transversal manner. The course content will be sensitive to issues related to gender perspective and the use of inclusive language.

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.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Exam	50%	3	0.12	4, 1, 21, 3, 6, 7, 5, 8, 9, 10, 20, 13, 12, 16, 15, 14, 17, 23, 18, 19, 11
Participation in classroom activities	10%	3	0.12	4, 1, 21, 2, 3, 6, 7, 5, 8, 9, 10, 20, 13, 12, 16, 15, 14, 17, 23, 22, 18, 19, 11
Practical activities supervised and directed	40%	1.5	0.06	4, 1, 21, 2, 6, 20, 16, 15, 14, 23, 22, 18

Continuous Assessment

The assessment of the course for students following the continuous assessment system will consist of three parts:

- Practical assignments: 40% of the final grade.
- Exam: 50% of the grade. No notes allowed.
- Class participation: 10% of the final grade.

To pass the course, the average of the three components will be calculated. Students must obtain at least 5 points in the exam and a minimum of 5 points in the average grade of the practical assignments, which must all be completed. If a student fails to complete any practical assignment for a justified reason, it will be graded as 0, and the average will still be calculated accordingly.

Only the exam can be retaken. To be eligible for the resit, students must have taken the exam during the first sitting and obtained a minimum score of 3 points.

The graded practical activities are spread throughout the course and are related to key aspects of the subject and syllabus. There will be both individual and group assignments.

Coursework or exams with more than 5 spelling and/or grammatical errors will automatically fail.

All assessment details will be clarified on the first day of class and published on the Moodle page of the course.

Single Assessment

As this course is mainly theoretical, students who wish to may opt for the single assessment system. All assessments will be carried out or submitted on the same day, which will be the final exam date. Students choosing this option will be assessed as follows:

- Exam: 50% of the grade. It will not be the same exam as that for continuous assessment students. Students choosing this option are required to read the following books: *José María Perceval, Historia Mundial de la Comunicación* and *Miquel de Moragas, La comunicación y sus cambios. De los orígenes al móvil*. No notes allowed.
- Practical assignments: 40% of the grade. These practical exercises will be submitted on the exam day. They will be individual and different from those of continuous assessment students.
- Case study resolution: 10% of the grade. It will be completed in the classroom on the same day as the exam. No notes allowed.

As with continuous assessment, only the exam can be retaken. To be eligible for the resit, students must have taken the first exam sitting and obtained a minimum score of 3 points.

To pass the course, the average of the three components will be calculated. Students must obtain at least 5 points in the exam, 5 in the case study, and 5 in the average of the practical assignments, which must all be completed.

Coursework or exams with more than 5 spelling and/or grammatical errors will automatically fail.

All assessment details will be clarified on the first day of class and published on the Moodle page of the course.

Reassessment

Students will be entitled to reassessment in the course if they have been evaluated on a set of activities accounting for at least two-thirds of the total course grade.

Second Enrollment

In the case of a second enrollment, students may take a single synthesis test, which will consist of a compilation of the different theoretical and practical assessment components. The grade for the course will correspond to the grade of the synthesis test.

Plagiarism

If a student commits any irregularity that could significantly alter the grade of an assessment task, that task will be graded with a 0, regardless of any disciplinary process that may follow. If multiple irregularities occur in assessments within the same course, the final grade for the course will be 0. The use of Artificial Intelligence is strictly prohibited, unless explicitly authorized by the teaching staff.

Artificial Intelligence

For this subject, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is allowed only in those tasks explicitly indicated by the teacher (mainly in the elaboration of the works of Topic 7). Students must clearly identify which parts have been generated with this technology, specify the tools used and include a critical reflection on how these have influenced the process and the final result of the activity. The non-transparency of the use of AI in this assessable activity will be considered a lack of academic honesty and may lead to a partial or total penalty in the grade of the activity, or higher penalties in serious cases.

Bibliography

Requierd and Essential Bibliography (*)

CALVET, Louis-Jean (2001). *Historia de la escritura*. Barcelona, Paidos.

DIAMOND, Jared (2013). *El mundo hasta ayer*. Barcelona, Random House Mondadori.

HARARI, Yuval Noah (2024). *Nexus, Una breu història de les xarxes d'informació des de l'edat de pedra fins a la IA*. Barcelona, Edicions 62.

*MORAGAS, Miquel de (2022). *La comunicación y sus cambios. De los orígenes al móvil*. Bellaterra, Publicaciones universitarias (Aldea Global, 44).

*PERCEVAL, José María (2015), *Historia mundial de la comunicación*. Madrid, Cátedra.

RUEDA-LAFFOND, José Carlos; GALÁN, Elena; RUBIO, Ángel (2014). *Historia de los medios de comunicación*. Madrid, Alianza.

SCOLARI, Carlos A. (2022). *La guerra de las plataformas. Del papiro al metaverso*. Barcelona, Anagrama.

(* = Requiered Bibliography)

Software

No special software is required. Only Word or Powerpoint.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(SEM) Seminars	11	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	12	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	13	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	21	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	22	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	23	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	2	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed