

Communication Theories

Code: 103862
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Advertising and Public Relations	FB	2

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Teaching groups languages

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

Prerequisites

No specific knowledge is required.

Objectives and Contextualisation

This module belongs to the Communication matter and it is qualified as fundamental within the Advertising and Public Relations Bachelor Degree. It is believed there is a progressive logic linking the basic modules of the Communication matter, based on a long teaching experience and structured as follows:

1. History of Communication. Introduces the student in the historical evolution of communication from the first communicative phenomena to nowadays communicative experiences.
2. Structure of Communication. Presents the communicative ecosystem, its dynamics and structural logic.
3. Communication theories. Presents and specifies the different theories, schools, authors and different communication analysis perspectives.

The general training objectives of this modules are: 1) identify the main theories in the communication field, the conceptual elaboration and the theoretical approaches that lay the foundations of its knowledge; 2) favour critical thinking about the role of the media within society.

Learning Outcomes

1. KM01 (Knowledge) Identify the foundations of the theories, history, and structure of the communicative system in the field of Advertising and Public Relations.
2. KM02 (Knowledge) Recognise the social, economic, cultural, and environmental implications of academic-professional activities in the field of persuasive communication.
3. SM01 (Skill) Determine what is substantial and relevant in documents on communication theory, structure and history for professional projects and actions.
4. SM04 (Skill) Use Catalan and Spanish appropriately in the transmission of information and ideas, and in the development and defence of arguments related to the history and theories of social communication.

Content

SYLLABUS:

1. Introduction and year planning. Presenting the program.
2. Interpersonal communication.
3. Non-verbal interpersonal communication.
4. Media communication. Beginning of the communication media research.
5. Media communication. Functionalist paradigm. Experimental theory of persuasion.
6. Media communication. Uses and gratifications theory.
7. Media communication. Silent spiral theory.
8. Media communication. Agenda-setting and Social construction of reality.
9. Media communication. Birmingham school/Political economy of communication
10. Media communication. Media events.
11. Media communication. Mediatization theory
12. Media communication. Attention economy/Sexualisation of culture

The calendar will be available on the first day of class. Students will find all information on the Virtual Campus: the description of the seminar 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 teaching guide includes a gender perspective when addressing the module's content.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	34	1.36	
Seminars and test	15	0.6	
Type: Supervised			
Tutoring	8	0.32	
Type: Autonomous			
Personal study and oriented readings	51	2.04	
Self-organized work	18	0.72	

Two-thirds of the in-person teaching will be delivered with the entire class, and one-third will be delivered in small-group seminars.

The entire class sessions will take the form of lectures, which may include interactive activities. The lecturer will explain the basic content of the designated thematic sections and answer questions regarding required readings and self-study work. These sessions will also provide a follow-up to the coursework (audiovisual essay), which will be developed during the seminars.

The seminars will include practical activities to delve deeper into the course material, which may require searching for or analyzing various types of learning resources (news, academic texts, reports, videos, etc.). The theories analyzed will be shared and discussed through current case studies, with active student participation, to update the syllabus and identify key elements and references in the evolution of communication theories.

The course content will be sensitive to issues related to gender perspective and the use of inclusive language.

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.

In the event of a change in teaching format for health reasons, the faculty will inform students through the Virtual Campus of any possible modifications to the course programming and teaching methodology.

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

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Audiovisual essay by teams	30%	10	0.4	
Oral presentation	10%	3	0.12	
Seminar's participation	10%	6	0.24	
Test 1	10%	1	0.04	KM01, KM02, SM01, SM04
Test 2	40%	4	0.16	KM01, KM02, SM01, SM04

1. Continuous Assessment for First-Time Enrolled Students

Continuous assessment system: Two written exams + team-based audiovisual essay + reading presentation + seminar participation.

1.1. Two written exams (50% of the final grade): These will cover the content discussed in lectures and seminars, as well as the required course readings. The goal of the exams, within the framework of continuous assessment, is to verify students' understanding of communication theories, conceptual definitions, theoretical approaches, and analysis of social communication processes.

- The first written exam will account for 10% of the final grade and will be held between the end of October and the beginning of November.
- The second written exam will account for 40% and will take place between late December and early January.

1.2. Team-based audiovisual essay (30% of the final grade): Conducted in the course seminar. The audiovisual essay will be an academic analysis of an audiovisual spot first aired in the media after January 1, 2025.

The purpose of the project is to assess students' understanding, analytical skills, and ability to structure and systematize the knowledge acquired during the course, applied to a specific case or situation.

The essay must be developed from the perspective of the theories covered in the course. Seminar instructors will approve or reject the essay proposals and provide necessary feedback for revisions. The seminar instructor will supervise the project throughout the course, in coordination with the lead professor, who will also follow up on the theoretical aspects in class.

Grading of this activity: 10% by the seminar instructor and 20% by the lead professor.

1.3. Oral presentation in the seminar (10% of the final grade): Students will present and discuss required readings in the seminar. These readings aim to support learning and apply communication theories to real-world and current contexts. These readings, along with lecture content, are key to the written exams.

1.4. Seminar participation (10% of the final grade): Attendance and participation will be evaluated. Seminar sessions will be structured to encourage student participation through questions related to the readings under discussion.

Final grade: All students must complete the above activities.

To pass the course, students must pass the written exams with a minimum average score of 5 out of 10. If this requirement is not met, the other components will not be considered, and the final grade will be the weighted average of the failed written exams.

If a student does not sit the written exams, the final grade will be marked as "Not assessable."

For the audiovisual essay, if a student does not submit or pass the proposal, the assignment will be marked as "Not assessable". Under the continuous assessment model, this also implies the final grade for the course will be "Not assessable".

Final grade breakdown:

- Written exams: 10% (first) + 40% (second)
- Audiovisual essay: 30%
- Oral presentation: 10%
- Seminar participation: 10%

2. Assessment for Students Enrolled a Second Time or More

Students in their second or later enrollment may choose one (and only one) of the following assessment options:

2.1. Continuous assessment:

(same as outlined in Section 1: two written exams + audiovisual essay + oral presentation + seminar participation).

Students must inform both the lead professor and the seminar instructor by email.

Grading and requirements to pass are the same as in Section 1.

2.2. Final synthesis exam (written test):

Second-time or repeat students may opt for a single final synthesis exam, as per Article 117.2 of the UAB Academic Regulations under Royal Decree 1393/2007, as amended by Royal Decree 861/2010.

Students choosing this option may attend lectures and seminars, but:

Final grade: The exam result will be the final course grade.

3. Single Assessment

According to the UAB Academic Regulations (approved July 7, 2022), students may request single assessment for courses that allow it. This request implies withdrawal from continuous assessment. To apply, students must submit a reasoned request during the official periods. Exceptionally, for justified health or work-related reasons, late applications may be accepted.

Single assessment grading:

- A) 50% Written exam - must be passed (minimum 5/10) to pass the course.
- B) 30% Audiovisual essay - as described in Section 1.2.
- C) 10% Oral presentation of one required course reading.
- D) 10% Individual analytical and reflective report for each course reading.

Total: $A + B + C + D = 100\%$ of final grade

4. Recovery Activities

In accordance with the UAB Academic Regulations (Title IV on Evaluation, modified July 12, 2017), recovery activities will be scheduled. Eligible students include:

4.1. Students (first or more enrollments) under continuous assessment

Students can recover the course if they've completed activities totaling at least 2/3 of the final grade.

- Written exams may be recovered if failed.
- Audiovisual essay is not recoverable, as it represents continuous work over the course.
- Seminar participation is also not recoverable.

4.2. Students under single assessment

Recovery is possible if students have completed activities worth at least 2/3 of the final grade.

- Only the written exam may be recovered if the score was under 5.
- Audiovisual essay and reading analysis tasks are not recoverable, although students may improve the latter if failed, by completing a similar task.

4.3. Students (second or more enrollments) under final synthesis exam:

Students who fail the synthesis exam may recover it.

5. Grade Improvement Options

5.1. Students under continuous or single assessment

If they passed the written exam, they may retake the recovery exam to improve their grade. However, the new score will replace the previous one, even if lower.

5.2. Students under the final synthesis exam system

If passed, they may also take the recovery exam to improve their grade. The final score will be that of the recovery exam, regardless of whether it's higher or lower.

6. Regular Review of Assessment Activities

Students may request a regular review of any graded activity if they disagree with the mark.

- Written exams and synthesis exams: reviewed by the lead professor.

- Audiovisual essay, oral presentation, and seminar participation: reviewed by the seminar instructor. Dates and times will be posted on the course's Virtual Campus page.

7. Extraordinary Review of Final Grade

In case of disagreement with the final course grade, students may request an extraordinary review. They must submit a reasoned request to the Dean of the Faculty of Communication Sciences within 15 calendar days of the final grade publication. The request must be submitted to the Academic Administration office.

Reviews will follow the Faculty guidelines published on:

<http://www.uab.cat/web/estudiar/graus/informacio-academica/avaluacio/revisioextraordinaria-de-la-qualificacio-final-1345714263962.html>

Plagiarism:

Any student engaging in academic misconduct (copying, plagiarism, impersonation, etc.) that may affect the evaluation result will receive a 0 for the assessment in question. If multiple irregularities occur, the final course grade will be 0. In all cases, the incident will be reported to the Dean for possible disciplinary action.

AI Use Policy:

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is restricted to the audiovisual essay and the oral presentation preparation. AI tools (textual or visual) may assist with idea generation, concept contextualization, prototyping, or combining elements in innovative ways.

Students must clearly acknowledge and cite their AI usage in their work. This includes specifying:

- the tool used,
- the objective,
- the prompts provided,
- the AI-generated response, and
- the process followed for reviewing and editing the content.

Do not provide personal, confidential, or copyrighted information to generative tools.

Failure to cite AI use or relying uncritically on its outputs will be considered misconduct, and may lead to failure of the assignment or the entire evaluation. In case of doubt, consult the instructor.

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Software

This subject does not require knowledge of specific computer programmes other than those for writing university papers and for telematic communication.

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	51	Catalan/Spanish	first semester	afternoon
(SEM) Seminars	52	Spanish	first semester	afternoon
(SEM) Seminars	53	Spanish	first semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	5	Catalan/Spanish	first semester	afternoon