

Course of study in
"Innovative, multimedia and digital communication" - [L-20].
 a.y. 2021/2022

SUBJECT
RESEARCH METHODS IN COMMUNICATION

SDS: **SPS/08** - ECT: 9
 II YEAR; I SEMESTER

Lecturer: **Prof. Elisabetta Mughini**
 Disciplinary tutor: **Dr. Andrea Nardi**

<p>Qualification and scientific background of the lecturer</p>	<p>Director of Research at Indire since 2012, where she is in charge of coordinating research activities on innovation processes in the school system. Formerly, head of Indire's Communication Area from 2003 to 2012. She has a scientific background in the social sciences and, during her professional career, has been able to study in depth issues related to institutional, organisational and generative communication. She has improved her skills in the area of communication and new media by collaborating with the Research Centre of the University of Florence - Communication Strategy Laboratory (CSL) and with companies that deal with traditional and digital publishing.</p> <p>Her numerous lectures include Multimedia Screenplay Strategies and Techniques of the Master's Degree Course in "Theories of Communication" (SPS/08 - Sociology Of Culture And Communication) for the academic years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.</p>
<p>Description of contents and subdivision of the programme into teaching modules</p>	<p>The course is organised in 3 modules covering the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Module 1 - Basic elements of social research. Definitions, tools and techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research methods and methodology. ▪ Main methods: surveys, content analysis, experimental method and case studies. ▪ Quantitative research. Qualitative research. Mixed methods.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The specific application field: communication ▪ Public communication: institutional, inter-institutional and political communication. ▪ Marketing communication. <p>➤ Module 2 - Detection and analysis techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observation methods and tools. ▪ Structured observation and observation grids. ▪ The structured survey and standardised questionnaires. ▪ In-depth interviews and focus groups. ▪ Comparisons of observation tools in relation to different public and private contexts. <p>➤ Module 3 - Social web and social research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of research in Social Communication. ▪ Usefulness, transparency, ethics. ▪ The social balance sheet. ▪ How can social media be used for research? ▪ Social network research tools ▪ Comparisons between instruments in relation to different public and private contexts.
<p>Abstract</p>	<p>The student will be introduced to the main methods and research tools for communication, through a constant reference to theoretical frameworks and studies developed in this area.</p> <p>The modules are structured in order to let the student gradually acquire the ability to develop practical tools for the analysis, observation, measurement and evaluation of socio-communicative, traditional and digital phenomena. The student will be able to formulate research hypotheses and develop the design of the processes connected to it, making conscious choices regarding the expected tools and products. Practical exercise will be provided in each module thus consolidating specialist knowledge and skills related to the discipline under study.</p>
<p>Learning objectives</p>	<p>In Module 1, the course aims to introduce students to the main methods and tools of communication research, providing them with a theoretical reference framework and the development of the main currents of thought and study in this field, as well as constant reference and connections with the main notions acquired during the first year. Through the subsequent Modules of the course, students will</p>

	<p>progressively acquire the ability to develop practical tools for the analysis, observation, measurement and evaluation of socio-communication phenomena, both traditional and digital. The student will be able to formulate research hypotheses and develop the design of related processes, making conscious choices regarding the tools and expected products. Modules 1 and 2 involve the reconstruction of the underlying theoretical principles through a practical elaboration of tools and actions, thus consolidating specialist knowledge and skills related to the discipline under study.</p>
<p>Expected learning outcomes</p>	<p>A. Knowledge and understanding The student will gain the ability to analyse and understand the tools behind research methodologies for communication as well as theoretical competences on the different methods.</p> <p>B. Applied knowledge and understanding The student will develop the ability and mastery of the application of the main research methodologies for public communication.</p> <p>C. Autonomy of judgement The student will be able to apply the acquired knowledge to critically choose quantitative, qualitative and integrated research methods.</p> <p>D. Communication skills The student acquires skills in the use and understanding of technical terms and concepts specific to the subject.</p> <p>E. Learning ability The student will develop a learning method capable of linking theoretical skills and empirical analysis, functional to the elaboration of future research designs and applications in the field of communication.</p>
<p>Skills to be acquired</p>	<p>EXPECTED RESULTS</p> <p>A. Knowledge of the main tools in the field of study.</p> <p>B. Orientation to the profession of researcher in the field of communication. You will develop the appropriate skills to analyse,</p>

	<p>observe and describe communication phenomena and to apply research methods to the solution of problems within the subject studied. Ability to collect and interpret useful data.</p> <p>C. Ability to communicate information and results obtained through different modes of representation.</p> <p>D. Ability to undertake further studies with thoughtful choices and critical thinking.</p>
Didactics organisation	<p>DIDACTICS PROVISION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 9 hours of recorded video lessons available on the platform. ➤ 3 synchronous meetings on the platform . ➤ Podcasts of all the above-mentioned video lessons. <p>INTERACTIVE DIDACTICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1 course orientation forum; ➤ 3 in-depth thematic forums (1 per module); ➤ possibility to carry out work in groups; ➤ 3 structured <i>e-activities</i> (as described in the section "<i>in itinere assessment methods</i>"). <p>SELF-LEARNING</p> <p>Teaching materials are provided for each module: in-depth thematic studies, articles and slides by the lecturer, open-access readings, online resources, reference bibliography, etc.</p>
Recommended examination texts	<p>The literature on research methodology in the social and communication sciences is vast. Therefore, a number of texts are recommended to guide the student in his or her preparation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ P. Corbetta, <i>Metodologia e tecniche della ricerca sociale</i>, Bologna, il Mulino, 2003 ➤ L. Paganella, <i>Sociologia della comunicazione</i>, il Mulino 2004 [pp. 229-253]. ➤ Handouts and articles will be recommended during the course by the lecturer.
In itinere assessment methods	<p>Access to the final examination is subject to the following 3 e-activities:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ E-activity 1 - "Realisation of a research design": from the research question to the organisation of actions and investigation methods. The students will be invited to work in groups to review the topics covered in Module 1, starting from a given outline. ➤ E-activity 2 - "Between quantitative and qualitative research tools: what to choose? and how to develop them?": Students will be invited to an individual work to practice the development of one of the tools chosen among those discussed in Module 2. ➤ E-activity 3 - "Social media and research": verification of acquired competences by means of an exercise on the topics of the module.
<p>Procedure for the final examination</p>	<p>The assessment of learning will take the form of an oral interview on the course contents and on the final report submitted, if any. The grade (min 18, max 30 with possible honours) is determined by the level of performance for each of the following dimensions of the oral interview: mastery of contents, appropriateness of definitions and theoretical references, clarity of argument, command of specialist language.</p>
<p>Language of instruction</p>	<p>Italian</p>