



HC
IAS

HEIDELBERG
CENTER FOR
IBERO-AMERICAN
STUDIES



UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386

M.A. Communication and Society in Ibero-America HCIAS-Course Catalog Summer Term 2025

1. Fundamental Competencies

Lecture: Language Diversity in the World: Ideologies and Migrations

Prof. Dr. Francisco Moreno-Fernández

Dr. Héctor Álvarez Mella

This lecture presents an overview of human linguistic diversity. Attention is given to taxonomy, geography as well as the history of languages, language families and human mobility. The basics of linguistic typology are discussed and attention is given to comparative parameters of diversity from an intralinguistic and extralinguistic perspective. The lecture also presents an ordering of language types according to their ethno-social context and the foundations for a comparative analysis of international languages. Particular attention will be paid to language demography and geography, as well as to a range of social, cultural and political dimensions related to linguistic diversity.

Seminar: Anthropologies of Care

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Yaatsil Guevara González

This course provides an introductory overview of the anthropology of care, examining key topics and approaches through a variety of ethnographic, theoretical, and cross-disciplinary materials. By drawing on these materials, we will explore care in its many forms—its presence and absence, its bureaucratic management, and its connections to kinship, labor, relatedness, and governance. The first part of the course will focus on theories of care as a moral practice, with a feminist perspective. In the second part, we will apply this perspective to ethnographic studies of care in diverse settings, shedding light on its political, economic, and lived realities. These studies will include discussions on the circulation of care in moral economies, its monetization as paid labor, the politics of healthcare in institutional contexts, and the role of care in kinship, household formations, and life course trajectories across cultures.

Seminar: The meaning of home (Heimat) in times of climate change and urban transformations

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Rosa Lehmann

Climate change, urban transformations and growing socio-ecological inequalities are the mounting societal challenges of our times. In Human Geography these challenges have been studied from different approaches, either focusing on different urban development trends, ecological aspects or political entanglements. In this seminar we want to combine these different approaches by directing our focus on one socio-spatial dimension that is affected by these changes in a specific way: the home. What happens to home when climate change urges people to leave their house? How are people emotionally affected by wind parks installed close to their homes? How do energy transformations impact feelings of belonging to certain spaces or neighborhoods? By using an interdisciplinary concept of Heimat and the socio-spatial category of home, this seminar tries to better understand the effects of climate change and urban transformation in different regions of the world.

Seminar: Justice, Fairness and (In-)equality

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Alejandro Ecker

This seminar introduces students to the study of inequality, justice, fairness and their connection. It provides students with a general understanding of these key theoretical concepts and with a broad and well-structured overview of various methodological approaches to study them empirically. Based on modern classics and recent application-oriented contributions in the literature students examine 1) fundamental questions of justice and fairness in modern societies and 2) procedural fairness and outcome fairness in representative democracies. Students also learn 3) about political, social and economic inequality around the world and explore the causes and consequences of inequality for citizens' attitudes and behaviour.

Thematically, we discuss issues of justice, and fairness in relation to adaptation to and mitigation of environmental pollution and climate change, global poverty reduction, and intersectional inequalities. Throughout the course, students are introduced to different data sources for empirical research on fairness, justice, and inequality, providing them with plenty of opportunities to do some initial thinking and develop first ideas for their term paper. By the end of the course, students will have improved their knowledge and skills in the areas of structured theoretical arguments, research design and causal inference. They will also apply their newly acquired insights through small exercises and hands-on research.

Seminar: Blackness and Whiteness in Brazilian Cinema and Scholarship

Prof. Dr. Renata Motta

Dr. Marília Pinheiro Pereira

This course proposes to discuss racism and anti-racism in Brazilian society through Brazilian cinema and theoretical texts by Brazilian researcher. We use the seventh art as a didactic resource to reflect on how whiteness and Blackness shape Brazilian society. Based on this concrete reality, the course seeks to explore how Brazilian social and theoretical debates can also illuminate processes of racialization and

otherness in other cultures and societies. The course methodology is based on an active and interactive approach, utilizing translanguaging as a strategy to integrate various forms of communication, allowing students to share their ideas, perceptions, and reflections through critical analysis of films and academic texts theorizing racism and anti-racism. Each session will focus on studying a film, followed by critical discussions and presentations, encouraging analysis of the works' contexts and their relation to social issues and ongoing research. Course assessment will be divided between an oral presentation based on a critical analysis of one of the films covered, connecting cinema and theory and demonstrating understanding of concepts and their application to real social situations, along with active participation in discussions and critical reflection on films and texts. The course aims to expand students' academic repertoire by integrating theories, practices, and an interdisciplinary perspective on contemporary social challenges, demonstrating how Brazilian cinema serves as a field for social, political, and cultural reflection.

Practical: Communication and Public Spheres in Ibero-America

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Pablo Porten-Cheé

This practice studies the public sphere, comprised of the media, civil society, and politics, and looks at their relationships from a communication science perspective. The practice, therefore, introduces a selective conceptual vocabulary that is regarded as instrumental to understanding the communicators of political information, such as journalists or today's 'users'. Further, the practical focuses on characteristics that typically guide the content of the media and political information and serve to uncover structures of the communication itself.

2. Methodological Skills

Seminar: Introduction to qualitative methods

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Yaatsil Guevara González

This course is designed for students who are looking for a first approach to qualitative methods. The course aims to introduce students to some of the main methods for data collection and analysis in qualitative research. However, it is more focused on the preparation and collection of data than on the analysis.

In this course students will be able to reflect on the "classic" questions: What type of qualitative method is most appropriate for my research? How do I prepare for conducting an interview? How do I adjust my methods during fieldwork? How do I organize and systematize my data after fieldwork? What kind of analysis can be carried out based on the methods I used for my data collection? What are the main challenges I will face when using qualitative methods?

This is a theoretical-practical seminar that offers not only discussions around the main characteristics of qualitative research, but also a space for practical exercises -in situ-

. In this seminar it will be mandatory to carry out practical sessions where students will implement some of the methods learned in the course.

Seminar: Introduction to quantitative data analysis using R

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Alejandro Ecker

This course provides students with knowledge in quantitative methods for the investigation of central questions in political science, sociology and economics. The aim of the course is to enable the participants to conduct independent empirical analyses using the statistical software R. The central topics of the seminar are univariate, bivariate and first multivariate analysis methods, as well as the graphical and tabular presentation of empirical results. To take full advantage of this course, students should have had some prior exposure to quantitative data analysis. They should also have a solid understanding of basic statistical methods and a strong interest both in the subject matter and empirical-analytical research. Finally, they should be comfortable with reading academic publications in English. Students are able to comprehend the logic of common statistical methods and procedures in empirical research in the social sciences and understand their application in the context of empirical research. They are able to critically receive statistical statements and independently conduct simple data analyses.

3. Advanced Competencies

Seminar: Gender, Food, Migration: An intersectional approach

Prof. Dr. Renata Motta

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Yaatsil Guevara González

The aim of this seminar would be to critically examine the interconnectedness of food, gender, and migration through an intersectional lens. This course aims to explore 1) how migration processes, shaped by various factors such as race, class, nationality, and gender, influence food practices, access, and identities. Additionally, we will explore 2) how food systems are shaped by geographical factors, such as location, climate, and resources, as well as cultural and economic forces. Finally, by incorporating an intersectional framework, we aim to discuss 3) how diverse social categories interact to affect experiences of food insecurity, food production, consumption, and its role in both local and global contexts, while highlighting the complex relationships between food, people, and places. Through a mix of theoretical readings, case studies, and ethnographic work, students would critically engage with the role of food in migration and explore how gender and migration shape the politics of food access, nutrition, and cultural representation across different contexts and locations.

Seminar: Media effects and Ibero-America

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Pablo Porten-Cheé

Because of individual limitations, most information about the world outside is assumed to be acquired through the media (Luhmann, 1996). Thus, many of our daily decisions and behaviors may be shaped by what we receive from the media. This seminar introduces selected (political) media effects approaches and, thus, into central aspects of communication science. In order to take into account the importance of contexts in research and the changing media system, the seminar selectively deals with media effects in Ibero-America on the one hand and with the impact of digital and social media content on the other. The seminar helps students understand how the individual use of media content affects our attitudes and behaviors, particularly concerning societal and political issues.

The practice mainly builds on quantitative research literature, but previous knowledge of quantitative research is not required. A short introduction to reading quantitative papers is provided.

Seminar: The role of urban-rural dichotomies for food movements / Emancipatory Ruralities

Dr. Judith Müller

This course explores the concept of rurality, examining its meaning, as well as challenges and potentials ascribed to it. The focus will moreover be on the analysis of social movements related to food and agriculture, as well as the phenomenon of rural populism.

4. Key Transversal Skills

Practical: Trends in digital communication research

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Pablo Porten-Cheé

Today's societies are facing severe changes, some related to communication phenomena or technologies in the digital world. They change the production and reception of news and political information by applying artificial intelligence and selecting content by algorithms and influencers. These changes occur in a digital media environment where users are threatened to lose control over their agency by disinformation (e.g., during the Covid pandemic) or because of being unwillingly targeted by political campaigns. However, users, when facing disinformation, are not helpless and can counter it. Such communication phenomena are on the agenda of current digital communication research, and this practice aims to provide an introductory understanding of what these current topics are and how they shape the production of news and political information as well as our media use in changing digital media environments.

The seminar relies also on quantitative research literature, but previous knowledge of quantitative research is not required. A short introduction to reading quantitative papers is provided.

Practical: El español como lengua de herencia en Europa: narrativas de migración y biografías de aprendizaje

Dr. Pilar Valero

El presente curso se enfoca en analizar los espacios y las dinámicas del español en Europa como lengua de herencia. Debido a su consolidación en la educación y la sostenibilidad de los flujos migratorios, se está viviendo un movimiento de expansión geográfica combinado con una alta diversidad lingüística y cultural. Las biografías de sus protagonistas, los hispanohablantes en el continente europeo, reflejan este proceso. El curso explorará los factores demográficos, migratorios, educativos y culturales que han contribuido a la expansión del español en Europa, evaluando su impacto en las sociedades receptoras. Por medio del análisis demolingüístico, se detallarán los perfiles de los hablantes en Europa, cuáles son sus condiciones socioeconómicas, culturales y lingüísticas, y cómo estos factores interactúan en la socialización de la Europa actual. El curso tiene un enfoque interdisciplinario que combina la lingüística, la sociolingüística y los estudios de comunicación. Se propone la construcción de una serie de pódcast como un proyecto integrador. Esta serie, elaborada a partir de entrevistas, buscará no solo documentar las experiencias y las dinámicas del español en Europa, sino también ofrecer una plataforma para visibilizar las historias de los hablantes y las realidades que enfrentan. Cada episodio estará diseñado para explorar un tema central, como las prácticas lingüísticas en entornos familiares o la influencia cultural de las comunidades hispanoamericanas en las ciudades europeas. Por medio de esta serie de pódcast, se destacarán las realidades comunicativas que surgen de la reconstrucción de la comunidad hispanohablante en Europa, resaltando la importancia del español no solo como herramienta de comunicación, sino también como vehículo de identidad, integración y expresión cultural. El curso ofrecerá un espacio para reflexionar sobre el presente y el futuro del español como lengua de herencia en Europa, permitiendo a los participantes profundizar en las dinámicas complejas de esta lengua en un contexto globalizado y multicultural.

Seminar: Introducción a la comunicación social e intercultural: fundamentos teóricos y gestión comunicativa

Prof. Dr. Óscar Loureda

Dr. Vanesa Rodríguez Tembrás

Este curso tiene como objetivo proporcionar una comprensión integral de los principios fundamentales de la comunicación social e intercultural, explorando tanto sus bases teóricas como sus aplicaciones prácticas. A través de una combinación de sesiones teórico-prácticas en modalidad híbrida, el curso se centra en los siguientes objetivos:

- Identificar las claves esenciales de la comunicación intercultural.
- Analizar diferentes tipos y modelos de comunicación social.
- Explorar las profesiones relacionadas con el ámbito de la comunicación.

- Familiarizarse con las principales líneas de investigación en comunicación, con un enfoque particular en América Latina.

El programa está organizado en cuatro bloques temáticos que abordan diversos aspectos de la comunicación:

- 1) Fundamentos de la comunicación Introducción a los conceptos básicos, teorías y modelos esenciales de la comunicación.
- 2) Comunicación social e IA Análisis del impacto de la inteligencia artificial en la comunicación social y sus implicaciones éticas y prácticas.
- 3) Comunicación intercultural Exploración de los desafíos y estrategias para la interacción multilingüe efectiva entre culturas.
- 4) Gestión de la comunicación: aplicación a la subtitulación Estudio práctico de la gestión comunicativa aplicada, con énfasis en el subtítulo como herramienta de mediación intercultural.

Practical: Workshop on Science Communication

Dr. Michele Catanzaro (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona)

In this workshop we will in the first place demystify some widespread prejudices on the interaction between science and the media and explore a more complex and realistic model of science journalism. In the second place, we will carry out a series of hands-on-exercises to learn some basic techniques used by journalists to communicate science effectively. Through an interactive method, we will analyze and compare texts produced by others, and draft our own texts, in order to interiorize those techniques. In the third place, we will learn about what features make a science journalism work especially outstanding, using both general criteria and practical examples. And finally, we will touch upon the practicalities of the work of science journalists. The workshop will be carried out in English (some examples may be in Spanish but they will be translated/commented).

The teacher, Michele Catanzaro, has a PhD in Physics, is a lecturer in science journalism at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and has been working as a science journalist for international outlets for over two decades. He was Nature-Marsilius Invited professor at the University of Heidelberg in 2023.

Practical: Poverty and inequality in Latin America

Dr. Miguel Carrera Troyano

Latin America is one of the most unequal regions in the world, and for this reason, despite the fact that most of the countries are upper middle-income, according to ECLAC 27% of its population (172 millions) is poor and 66 millions are extremely poor. The course will first present the definitions and methods for measuring poverty and inequality, and then provide a quantification of the data and the main explanatory factors for the persistence of these phenomena and their socio-economic implications. Finally, it addresses the debate on the policies needed to tackle these problems.