



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 2024

1. Fundamental Competencies

Lecture: The Making of Migration Crises in Ibero-America

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Yaatsil Guevara González

This lecture has three main objectives:

- 1) To provide an initial approach to the topics of forced migration and migration corridors in the Americas, from a historical perspective. To this end, the lecture will analyze different examples of “migratory crises” that have taken place in the Americas since the beginning of the 20th century.
- 2) To reflect on how to approach the concept of “crisis” from media and political discourses’ perspectives. To this end, the lecture will present examples of discourses, news and narratives that (de)legitimize the concept of “migratory crises.”
- 3) The lecture seeks to bring students closer to Ibero-American geopolitics. To this end, examples of contemporary migratory flows that have marked the way of conceiving mobility in the Ibero-American region will be presented; from the massive flows of Chinese migration to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, or the Spanish forced migration fleeing Franco's regime to the Americas, to the more contemporary flows of African or Asian migrations to South America.

Seminar: Gender and Politics

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Alejandro Ecker

This course introduces students to the main theoretical concepts and the major empirical research questions in the area of Gender and Politics. It addresses fundamental questions in Comparative Politics from the perspective of gender differences and confronts students with important questions of causal inference in empirical-analytical research. Based on selected recent contributions students examine 1) questions of descriptive and substantive representation (e.g., in political institutions such as parties, national and sub-national legislatures). Students also learn 2) about political participation and explore the causes and consequences of gender gaps in individual voting behavior. Other key aspects that are discussed in the seminar include 3) policy-making and 4) gender dynamics in judicial decision-

making. Throughout the course, students are introduced to the relevant data sources of gender and politics, providing them with plenty of opportunities to conduct their own preliminary analyses and develop first ideas for their term paper.

Seminar: Food Movements

Prof. Dr. Renata Motta

Increasingly, citizens perceive the global food system as part of the historical causes of the ecological crisis and the persisting hunger in the world. Alternative local food initiatives react to the environmental impacts of globalized food relations; food sovereignty movements highlight class inequalities and power asymmetries in the food system that affect people's rights to culturally appropriate foodways; food justice movements denounce institutional racism; feminist movements fight persistent gender inequalities from food production to consumption; vegan movements defend animal rights. These are often mapped into different world regions, with food justice movements more present in the US; food sovereignty movements louder in the Global South, feminist food movements more active in Latin America, and local food movements commonly in the Global North. The growing politicisation of the production, distribution and consumption relate to the fact that food relations are structured by economic, social, political, cultural and environmental inequalities. This course brings together diverse strands of activism and research on food movements from Europe, North America and Latin America under the conceptual umbrella of food inequalities. It aims at offering analytical tools for students to make sense of the diversity and multiplicity of food movements and their contribution to transforming food politics.

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 for the methods I used in my research? 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: Quantitative methods: Machine Learning for the Social Sciences

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Alejandro Ecker

This course gently introduces students to machine learning models for social science research. It aims to equip them with the necessary tools to understand, evaluate, and build their own machine learning models. Starting from established and more familiar statistical methods (e.g., linear and non-linear regression models), students first learn about important differences and commonalities with machine learning models, and are introduced to fundamental concepts such as cross-validation, supervised versus unsupervised learning and model tuning. The following sessions then provide a comprehensive exploration of supervised and unsupervised machine learning techniques, ranging from basic models to more advanced methods, with a focus on interpretability. These include, inter alia, k-nearest-neighbour classifier, Decision Trees/Random Forests, Support Vector Machines, dimension reduction techniques and clustering methods. Throughout the course, students are provided with exemplary code using the *R* statistical environment and hands-on exercises to apply their learned skills directly.

3. Advanced Competencies

Seminar: Debates across World Regions: Socio-Ecological Transformations in Energy and Food

Prof. Dr. Renata Motta

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Rosa Lehmann

The social sciences have been called for a stronger role in academic and political debates on the much needed transition to alternative forms of inhabiting the planet. The goal of the seminar is a) to look at both discourses surrounding transformation as well as political strategies and societal practices to realize it; and c) to set in dialogue key schools of thought from the Global North, in particular, German debates on socioecological transformation, and the Global South, in particular Latin American decolonial debates on pluriversal alternatives. The empirical focus of the seminar is on transformations in energy and food.

Practical: 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 (particularly: 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.

4. Key Transversal Skills

Practical: Comunicación científica en ciencias sociales y humanas

Dr. Héctor Álvarez Mella

La comunicación científica es un ámbito esencial de la comunicación pública en sociedades basadas en el conocimiento. El objetivo del curso es presentar los fundamentos de la comunicación científica en sus diversas dimensiones (divulgación, periodismo, etc.) con un especial foco en la comunicación en ciencias sociales y humanas. Durante el curso se discutirán temas como los sesgos cognitivos, la lógica de la investigación o la interdisciplinariedad, con el fin de definir las particularidades de la comunicación en ciencias sociales y humanas. El curso se orienta al análisis de la presencia de las ciencias sociales y las humanidades en el panorama de la comunicación social de Iberoamérica. Para ello, la segunda parte del curso se dedicará a la creación de criterios de calidad y buenas prácticas sobre la base de un corpus de ejemplos reales de comunicación.

Seminar: Digital disinformation research and Ibero-America

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Pablo Porten-Cheé

The Covid pandemic has demonstrated an increased public debate about so-called 'fake news'. As disinformation can harm individual-level behavior and society-level decisions based on false premises, a comprehensive understanding of 'fake news' is as essential as ever before. This seminar first aims to advance the understanding of this communication phenomenon from the communication science perspective. The seminar secondly wants to enable practical research on digital disinformation. After discussing selected communication concepts that are useful to understand disinformation, students work in groups and develop codebook-like variables that could be used to identify disinformation in Ibero-America with quantitative content analysis. This practical links with the Master seminar "Communication and public spheres in Ibero-America" and will revisit selected theoretical approaches to understand the content features of disinformation (news values, news frames, and narratives).

Seminar: Contested Resources for a Low-Carbon Economy: Biomass, Minerals, Land, and Water

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Rosa Lehmann

Dr. Alexandru Giurca

Dr. Johanna Höhl

The transition to a low-carbon economy requires the use of renewable (re)sources such as agricultural and forest biomass, wind and solar energy, or green hydrogen, but also minerals for storage and transmission technologies for the electrification of the energy sector. Furthermore, the extraction or cultivation of these resources, as well as the generation of renewable energies, rely on land and water resources. These resources are contested on different scales. Governing natural resources relies on a complex array of formal and informal arrangements by which decisions over natural resources are being made, how powers, responsibilities, and rights over natural resources are exerted, and how people can access and benefit from them. In this seminar, we depart from general data on current and future resource use and political strategies targeting their use (Bioeconomy strategies, EU Circular Economy, EU Critical Raw Materials Act, German Green Hydrogen Strategy, EU Forest Strategy etc.), read studies that sketch the field of contestation around these resources, and discuss challenges around the resource base of a low-carbon economy. Empirically, we focus on forest ecosystems, copper and lithium, land, and water.

Practical: Poverty and inequality in Latin America

Dr. Miguel Carrera (Universidad de Salamanca)

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, almost one third of its population (201 millions) is poor and 82 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.

Übung: Antirassismus und Gesellschaft II

Marília Pinheiro Pereira, M.A.

Dr. Rosa Rodrigues (IÜD / Instituto Camões I.P.)

Das Ziel dieses Kurses ist es, die Diskussionen über antirassistische Praktiken aus dem letzten Semester fortzusetzen und über eine weniger ungleiche Gesellschaft nachzudenken. Ausgehend von den Kapiteln des Buches *Pequeno Manual Antirracista* (Kleines Handbuch für Antirassismus) werden wir den Rassismus in der brasilianischen Gesellschaft diskutieren und durch die Lektüre von Texten anderer Autor:innen vertiefen und darüber nachdenken, wie struktureller Rassismus Menschen mit schwarzer Hautfarbe betrifft. Der Kurs basiert auf der Lektüre und Diskussion von Themen aus dem Buch *Pequeno Manual Antirracista* der

brasilianischen Philosophin Djamila Ribeiro und ein zentraler Diskussionspunkt ist das Verständnis der Begriffe von Rasse, Schwarzsein und Weißsein in der Antirassismusdebatte. Methodisch werden die Kapitel des Buches ins Deutsche übersetzt (mit Genehmigung des Verlags). An dem Kurs können Studenten aus allen Fachrichtungen teilnehmen, allerdings sind Deutsch- und Portugiesischkenntnisse erforderlich. Jedes Kapitel des Buches wird im Kurs besprochen, wobei die Studierenden in die soziokulturellen Aspekte der jeweiligen Debatte eingeführt werden. Im Anschluss an die Lektüre und die Diskussion in Gruppen besteht die letzte Aufgabe darin, eines der Kapitel des Buches zu übersetzen.

Workshop on Science Communication

Dr. Michele Catanzaro (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona)

Objectives:

- Understanding the role, meaning, and importance of science journalism.
- Learning practical tips on how to write an effective science communication text
- Examining examples of successful and unsuccessful written communication of science (press releases and news)
- Drafting a press-release on a previously chosen research subject

5. Graduation Modules

Colloquium HCIAS Master and Doctoral Students

Prof. Dr. Renata Motta

The research colloquium supports the students in writing their master's thesis. It is held during the semester and consists mainly of scientific exchange taking place among the students, but also between the students and invited researchers. It is based on the respective topics that are dealt with in the master's thesis and in the final oral exams. A central component of the research colloquium is the preparation of a short presentation by the students in which the interim results of their own research work are presented and critically discussed.