

**COMILLAS**

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

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CIHS

Syllabus
2026 - 2027**TECHNICAL SHEET OF THE SUBJECT**

Data of the subject	
Subject name	Research Methods II: Epistemology of Science, Qualitative Research and Writing Scientific Texts
Subject code	E000003912
Mainprogram	Doctorate Program in Business and Regional Competitiveness, Innovation and Sustainability
Quarter	Semestral
Credits	6,0 ECTS
Type	Optativa
Department	Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales
Coordinator	Carmen Valor

Teacher Information	
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SPECIFIC DATA OF THE SUBJECT

Contextualization of the subject
Contribution to the professional profile of the degree
This course introduces PhD students to scholarly research. It comprises three modules: Epistemology, Qualitative methods and Academic writing.
Prerequisites
Having completed a course on Literature Review or similar course.



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Competencias - Objectives

Competences

BÁSICAS

CB11a	Comprensión sistemática de las teorías sobre las áreas de conocimiento objeto de estudio.	
CB11b	Dominio de habilidades y métodos de investigación relacionados con las áreas de conocimiento objeto de estudio.	
CB12	Concebir, diseñar o crear, poner en práctica y adoptar un proceso sustancial de investigación o creación.	
	RA6	Idea un estudio de naturaleza cualitativa
	RA7	Conozca las fases de una investigación
	RA9	Establezca los criterios para la definición de los problemas e hipótesis de investigación
	RA10	Formule preguntas de investigación, defina problemas y enuncie objetivos o hipótesis de manera coherente
	RA11	Planifique una investigación
	RA12	Elabore un proyecto de investigación orientado a la realización de su tesis doctoral
	RA13	Revise los procedimientos de elaboración de documentos científicos y su aplicación a la escritura de la tesis doctoral.
	RA14	Estructure un texto de carácter científico (comunicación o artículo) de manera ordenada, clara y rigurosa
	RA15	Utilice las citas y referencias de manera ajustada y con un buen criterio de selección
	RA16	Conozca las partes de una tesis doctoral y las pautas para su redacción y presentación
	RA17	Analice esquemas de diferentes tipos de tesis doctoral y diseños de investigación
	RA18	Reflexione sobre la necesidad de adaptar la estructura y redacción de la tesis doctoral a los diferentes tipos de investigación
	RA19	Formule preguntas de investigación de manera apropiada y consistente
	RA20	Relacione el alcance de las preguntas de investigación con la metodología que exige cada una de ellas
	RA21	Formule las cuestiones básicas de su proyecto de investigación
	RA22	Discuta críticamente el planteamiento de su problema de investigación
	RA23	Establezca la orientación metodológica de su proyecto de investigación
	RA24	Identifique los obstáculos del proceso de investigación.



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CB13	Contribuir a la ampliación de las fronteras del conocimiento a través de una investigación original.	
	RA1	Redactar un proyecto de investigación de naturaleza cualitativa
CB14	Realizar un análisis crítico y de evaluación y de síntesis de ideas nuevas y complejas.	
	RA1	Realiza una revisión bibliográfica de estudios cualitativos, analiza y comprender el contenido de éstos
	RA2	Juzga la calidad de un estudio cualitativo
	RA3	Formule preguntas de investigación de manera apropiada y consistente
	RA4	Relacione el alcance de las preguntas de investigación con la metodología que exige cada una de ellas
	RA5	Formule las cuestiones básicas de su proyecto de investigación
	RA6	Discuta críticamente el planteamiento de su problema de investigación
	RA7	Establezca la orientación metodológica de su proyecto de investigación
	RA8	Identifique los obstáculos del proceso de investigación.
	RA9	Conozca los diferentes modos de presentación y difusión de la información científica
	RA10	Justifique teóricamente el trabajo de investigación
	RA11	Formule hipótesis de investigación contrastables
	RA12	Describa de forma correcta y en los aspectos sustanciales las características metodológicas del estudio realizado
	RA13	Presente adecuadamente los resultados del estudio de investigación realizado
	RA14	Discuta los hallazgos encontrados en el contexto del encuadre teórico de referencia y presente las conclusiones y aportaciones relevantes del estudio realizado
CB15	Comunicarse con la comunidad académica y científica y con la sociedad en general 9 acerca de sus ámbitos de conocimiento en los modos e idiomas de uso habitual en su comunidad científica internacional.	



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	RA1	Revise los procedimientos de elaboración de documentos científicos y su aplicación a la escritura de la tesis doctoral
	RA2	Estructure un texto de carácter científico (comunicación o artículo) de manera ordenada, clara y rigurosa
	RA3	Utilice las citas y referencias de manera ajustada y con un buen criterio de selección
	RA4	Conozca las partes de una tesis doctoral y las pautas para su redacción y presentación.
	RA5	Analice esquemas de diferentes tipos de tesis doctoral y diseños de investigación
	RA6	Reflexione sobre la necesidad de adaptar la estructura y redacción de la tesis doctoral a los diferentes tipos de investigación
	RA17	Presente con eficacia ideas y contenidos haciendo uso de medios audiovisuales adecuados
	RA18	Conozca los diferentes modos de presentación y difusión de la información científica
	RA19	Justifique teóricamente el trabajo de investigación
	RA20	Formule hipótesis de investigación contrastables
	RA21	Describa de forma correcta y en los aspectos sustanciales las características metodológicas del estudio realizado
	RA22	Presente adecuadamente los resultados del estudio de investigación realizado
	RA23	Discuta los hallazgos encontrados en el contexto del encuadre teórico de referencia y presente las conclusiones y aportaciones relevantes del estudio realizado
CAPACIDADES Y DESTREZAS PERSONALES		
CA02	Encontrar las preguntas claves que hay que responder para resolver un problema complejo.	



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	RA1	Conozca las fases de una investigación
	RA4	Formule preguntas de investigación, defina problemas y enuncie objetivos o hipótesis de manera coherente
	RA5	Planifique una investigación
	RA6	Elabore un proyecto de investigación orientado a la realización de su tesis doctoral
	RA7	Formule preguntas de investigación de manera apropiada y consistente
	RA8	Relacione el alcance de las preguntas de investigación con la metodología que exige cada una de ellas
	RA9	Formule las cuestiones básicas de su proyecto de investigación
	RA10	Discuta críticamente el planteamiento de su problema de investigación
	RA11	Establezca la orientación metodológica de su proyecto de investigación
	RA12	Identifique los obstáculos del proceso de investigación
CA04	Trabajar tanto en equipo como de manera autónoma en un contexto internacional o multidisciplinar.	

Learning outcomes

RA1	Comprenderán la relación existente entre objetivos de investigación y necesidades de información.
RA2	Conocerán las ventajas e inconvenientes de las fuentes de información primarias respecto a las secundarias
RA3	Conocerán las diversas alternativas existentes dentro de las fuentes de información secundarias.
RA4	Serán capaces de diseñar procesos de recolección de datos a partir de fuentes primarias.
RA5	Conocerán las técnicas básicas para analizar datos de naturaleza cuantitativa
RA6	Serán capaces de aplicar las técnicas aprendidas para el análisis de conjuntos de datos mediante la aplicación de software estadístico
RA7	Identificar el enfoque epistemológico desde el que se ha abordado una investigación
RA8	Evaluar en qué medida se ha aplicado correctamente el procedimiento de verificación de proposiciones en una investigación
RA9	Seleccionar el enfoque epistemológico más adecuado para su investigación.
RA10	Diseñar un proceso de investigación cualitativo.
RA11	Seleccionar una muestra de carácter cualitativo.



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RA12

Analizar datos de tipo cualitativo con la ayuda de herramientas informáticas

THEMATIC BLOCKS AND CONTENTS

Contents - Thematic Blocks

Module 1. Epistemology

Lesson 1. Paradigms in scientific research

Module 2. Qualitative research

Lesson 1. Qualitative designs.

1.1. Study of processes: case study, grounded theory, participant observation

1.2. Study of conscience: hermeneutics and phenomenology

1.3. Study of discourses: critical discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis

1.4. Study of practices: ethnography/ethnomethodology and theory of practices

1.5. Content analysis

1.6. Participatory methods

1.7. Post-structuralist approaches

Lesson 2. Hot topics in the design of qualitative studies

Lesson 3. Analysis: frameworks and analytical units

Lesson 4. Writing and publishing qualitative research

Module 3. Academic writing

Lesson 1. Macro structures of texts

Lesson 2. Micro structures of texts

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

General methodological aspects of the subject

A combination of **seminars and workshops** will be used throughout the course. Lectures will be kept to a minimum, as the course follows a **flipped classroom** model. Students are expected to actively engage in the proposed pre-class and post-class activities; otherwise, they will not be able to participate effectively in the in-class activities.

This course is classified as Level 1 in accordance with the institutional AI Assessment Scale (Perkins et al., 2024). This means that students



can use AI to 1. obtain summaries or convert the materials into videos or podcasts using Notebook LM, Unrestricted or uncontrolled use of AI is not allowed. Students must demonstrate critical capacity in order to ensure academic integrity and their own learning.

- For non-generative AI, students must specify: which tools were used, in which parts of the work, and the keywords employed (if applicable).
- For generative AI, students must specify: which tools were used, the prompts or instructions provided, and the exact sections of the work where they intervened.

The activities and/or tasks for which AI is permitted and how its use is authorized can be read in the Assessment guide of each module. The use of **generative AI for producing written text or doing data analysis** is strictly prohibited.

In-class Methodology: Activities

A combination of lectures, seminars and workshops will be used. Students are expected to engage in the proposed pre- and post-class work.

CA04, CB11b, CB12,
CB13, CB14, CB15

Non-Presential Methodology: Activities

Students are expected to dedicate 20 hours per credit to study and prepare the materials

CB11b, CB12, CB13,
CB14, CB15

SUMMARY STUDENT WORKING HOURS

CLASSROOM HOURS

NON-PRESENTIAL HOURS

ECTS CREDITS: 6,0 (0 hours)

EVALUATION AND CRITERIA

The use of AI to produce full assignments or substantial parts thereof, without proper citation of the source or tool used, or without explicit permission in the assignment instructions, will be considered plagiarism and therefore subject to the University's General Regulations.

Evaluation activities	Evaluation criteria	Weight
Short assignments, workshops and inclass exams	See rubric	20 %
Design of a qualitative study	See rubric	50 %

Ratings

The final mark of this course is calculated as follows:



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(Modules 1, 2 and 4) x Weight (0.33) + Módulo 3. Weight (0.67)

(*) Students must attend 75% of lessons to be assessed in ordinaria.

Each module must be passed. If a student fails one of the modules or one of the assessment pieces in the module his/her grade will be the lowest score obtained. Failed assessments can be taken again in March. There are only two sittings in this course; failure in the second sitting would imply the abandonment of the program.

READ CAREFULLY THE UNIVERSITY POLICY ON PLAGIARISM. REPRODUCTION OF OTHERS' WORK IS CONSIDERED A SERIOUS OFFENCE (FALTA GRAVE, SEE REGLAMENTO).

This course is classified as Level 3 (permitted with special conditions) in accordance with the institutional AI Assessment Scale (Perkins et al., 2024). This means that students may use AI to collaborate in specific tasks, provided that they critically evaluate and modify any AI-generated content, and they thoroughly document the use of AI. Unrestricted or uncontrolled use of AI is not allowed. Students must demonstrate critical capacity in order to ensure academic integrity and their own learning. For non-generative AI, students must specify: which tools were used, in which parts of the work, and the keywords employed (if applicable). For generative AI, students must specify: which tools were used, the prompts or instructions provided, and the exact sections of the work where they intervened. The activities and/or tasks for which AI is permitted (including recommendations of use) can be read in the Assessment guide of each module. The use of generative AI for producing written text or doing data analysis is strictly prohibited. The student is responsible for any incorrect information or data presented and generated by AI. The improper use of ChatGPT or other GAI platforms will be considered a serious offense as stated in the General Regulations of the University. In this regard, the use of ChatGPT or other GAI in the production of the assignment will be considered improper (and therefore prohibited), insofar as its use would seriously compromise the ability of these evaluation systems to assess the student's acquisition of the course competences. Notwithstanding, the instructor may authorize specific uses of GAI. The conditions under which these uses are allowed will be specified in the assignment description. As one of the learning goals of this course, you are expected to develop a critical and reflexive attitude toward GAI as a research tool so that it does not hinder the development of your research skills. A goal of the course is for you to internalize that GAI is not a substitute for your reasoning, nor for the collection or interpretation of lived data. We strongly recommend using walled AI such as Notebook LM as opposed to ChatGPT. Never rely on GAI for full article summaries. It often omits key assumptions, misrepresents details, or generates non-existent references (unless you work with a walled AI such as Notebook LM). Reflective work on empirical papers that illustrate methods should be based primarily on your own reading and interpretation of the assigned papers. You cannot use GAI for the reflection pieces on qualitative designs. Use of IA for this task will hinder the acquisition of the expected skills. You cannot use GAI for the debriefing or qualitative data analysis. Use of IA for this task will hinder the acquisition of the expected skills. You cannot use GAI for writing. Do not ask GAI to generate a paragraph. To develop your academic writing skills, you must create the paragraph yourself; afterwards, you may ask why it is weak or how it can be improved. Outsourcing the writing process to GAI will prevent you from improving your communication skills. You can use Grammarly for proofreading. You may use GAI for self-assessment of your work. For example, in the essay you can input the rubric and ask GAI to what extent you meet the criteria and how you can improve. Bear in mind, however, that GAI tends to be compliant and agreeable, often downplaying or overlooking the kinds of mistakes a human evaluator would notice. You will therefore need to formulate specific questions based on the rubric to obtain meaningful feedback. In sum, you must adhere to the following principles of Human-AI collaboration: Transparency: Document how and when GAI was used (include prompts and outputs). Privacy: Never upload sensitive data to open platforms. Verisimilitude: Critically assess whether GAI outputs are consistent with the epistemological and methodological foundations addressed in the course. If your rationale is shallow or weak from this perspective, you will fail the course.

The improper use of ChatGPT or other generative artificial intelligence (GAI) platforms will be considered a serious offense as stated in the General Regulations of the University. In this regard, the use of ChatGPT or other GAI in the production of the assignment will be considered improper (and therefore prohibited), insofar as its use would seriously compromise the ability of these evaluation systems to assess the student's acquisition of the course competences. Notwithstanding, the instructor may authorize specific uses of IAG. The conditions under which these uses are allowed will be specified in the assignment description.



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As one of the learning goals of this course, you are expected to develop a critical and reflexive attitude toward GAI as a research tool so that it does not hinder the development of your research skills. A goal of the course is for you to internalize that GAI is not a substitute for your reasoning, nor for the collection or interpretation of lived data. We strongly recommend using walled AI such as Notebook LM as opposed to ChatGPT.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

Basic Bibliography

Students will be provided with specific reading lists for each lesson in moodlerooms.

Hunt, S. D. (1990). Truth in marketing theory and research. *The Journal of Marketing*, 1-15.

Kuhn, T. S. (2006). *La estructura de las revoluciones científicas*. Ed. FCE

Lakatos, I. (1987). *Historia de la Ciencia y sus reconstrucciones racionales*. Ed. Tecnos

Mardones, J. M. (1991). *Filosofía de las ciencias humanas y sociales: materiales para una fundamentación científica* (Vol. 1). Anthropos Editorial.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(163-194), 105.

Popper, K.R. (2002). *La miseria del Historicismo*. Ed. Alianza Editorial

Zinkhan, G. M., & Hirschheim, R. (1992). Truth in marketing theory and research: an alternative perspective. *The Journal of Marketing*, 80-88.

Carey, S. (2010). *A beginner's guide to the scientific method*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 4ª edición.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, S. (ed) (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Sage ,Thousand Oaks, CA

Gummesson, E. (2000). *Qualitative Methods in Management Research*. (2ª ed) SAGE Publications, Londres.

Russell, W.B. (2006). *Handbook of qualitative research methods in marketing*. Edward Elgar, Washington. Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research : a practical handbook*, Sage, Londres

Spiggle, S. (1994): Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data in Consumer Research, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21, 491-502

Yin, R (1994). *Case Study Research. Design and Methods* (2ª Ed.). SAGE Publications. Londres.

Coffey, A. y Atkinson, P., 1996, *Making sense of qualitative data: complementary research strategies*. London, Sage Publications ,

Strauss, A. y Corbin, J., 1998, *Basics of qualitative research. Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. London, Sage Publications.,

Strauss, A.1., 1987, *Qualitative Análisis for social scientists*. Cambridge , Cambridge Univrsity Press.,

Blaxter, L.; Hughes, C.; Tight, M. (2001). *How to Research* (2ª ed.). OpenUniversity Press, Buckingham.



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Murray, R. (2002). How to write a thesis. Open University Press, Buckingham.

Phillips, S. y Pugh, D. (2000). How to get a Ph.D. (3ª ed.) Open University Press, Philadelphia

Rigo, A. y Genescá, G. (2002). Cómo presentar una tesis y trabajos de investigación, Eumo-Octaedro, Barcelona.

Riquelme, J. (2006). Canon de presentación de trabajos universitarios : modelos académicos y de investigación, AguaClara, Alicante.

Sabino, C. (1994). Cómo hacer una tesis, Panapo. Caracas.

Woods, P. (2006): Successful writing for qualitative researchers. RoutledgeFalmer, Londres.

Manuel-Navarrete, D., Grauer, C., Chilisa, B., Brundiers, K., Sanusi, Z., Seidel, T., ... & Lang, D. (2025). Inclusive transdisciplinarity: embracing diverse ways of being and knowing through inner work. *Ecology and society*, 30(3), 22.

Wilson, S. (2020). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood publishing / Chilisa, B. (2019). *Indigenous research methodologies*. Sage publications. (estos dos solo los ojeé en google books, pendiente de revisar para pedir)

Chilisa, B. (2017). Decolonising transdisciplinary research approaches: an African perspective for enhancing knowledge integration in sustainability science. *Sustainability Science*, 12(5), 813-827.

Escobar, A. (2018). *Designs for the pluriverse: Radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds*. Duke University Press.

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<https://servicios.upcomillas.es/sedelectronica/inicio.aspx?csv=02E4557CAA66F4A81663AD10CED66792>