



COMILLAS

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS

GUÍA DOCENTE

2025 - 2026

FICHA TÉCNICA DE LA ASIGNATURA

Datos de la asignatura

Nombre completo	Comparative Cultural Studies
Código	E000010700
Nivel	Intercambio
Cuatrimestre	Anual
Créditos	6,0 ECTS
Carácter	Optativa
Departamento / Área	Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales
Responsable	Galyna Solovei
Horario	10.40-12.30
Horario de tutorías	Upon individual agreement with the student via email on Tuesdays and Thursdays
Descriptor	In this course, students will learn about a comparative approach to analyzing national cultures, which, through awareness and knowledge of differences in the behavior of representatives from different national cultures, develops students' communication skills that are sensitive to cultural differences. The course is based on the history of intercultural communication evolution and the main focuses of negotiation processes in both business and diplomacy. After completing the course, students will master the basic theories of intercultural communication, methods and tools of comparative cultural analysis, and acquire the necessary skills required for communicating with representatives of different cultures in professional environments and multicultural societies.

Datos del profesorado

Profesor

Nombre	Galyna Solovei
Departamento / Área	Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales
Correo electrónico	gsolovei@comillas.edu

DATOS ESPECÍFICOS DE LA ASIGNATURA

Contextualización de la asignatura

Aportación al perfil profesional de la titulación

In this course, we embark on a journey of cross-cultural exploration, delving into the intricate ways societies conceptualize and navigate fundamental notions such as debt and privacy. Through a comparative lens, we will examine how these concepts have been historically constructed, culturally embedded, and transformed by evolving social, economic, and technological landscapes. By engaging with seminal works in anthropology and sociology, we will unpack the complex interplay between cultural values, power structures, and individual experiences. This course challenges us to critically examine our own assumptions and biases, fostering a deeper understanding of the diverse ways societies grapple with shared human concerns.

Prerrequisitos

This course is taught in English. Proficiency is recommended.



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Competencias - Objetivos

Competencias

In this course, students will develop the competency to critically analyze and compare cultural notions across different societies, with a particular focus on concepts such as debt and privacy. They will gain the ability to trace the historical evolution of these concepts and understand their contemporary manifestations in light of social, economic, and technological changes. By examining the intricate relationship between cultural values, power dynamics, and individual experiences, students will develop a nuanced understanding of how cultural contexts shape societal norms and behaviors. Ultimately, the objective is to cultivate a critical and reflexive approach to cross-cultural understanding, enabling students to navigate the complexities of an interconnected world with heightened cultural sensitivity and awareness.

Resultados de Aprendizaje

Through an in-depth exploration of cultural notions such as debt and privacy, students will develop a critical understanding of how these concepts are shaped by historical, social, and technological forces within different cultural contexts. They will gain the ability to analyze and compare diverse cultural perspectives, recognizing the impact of cultural variations on individual and collective experiences. Furthermore, students will develop skills in interpreting academic literature and applying theoretical frameworks to real-world issues, fostering a complex understanding of the complexities of cross-cultural interactions in a globalized society.

BLOQUES TEMÁTICOS Y CONTENIDOS

Contenidos – Bloques Temáticos

- **Historical and Cultural Constructions of Debt:** This block would explore the historical origins and diverse cultural interpretations of debt, drawing heavily on David Graeber's "Debt: The First 5,000 Years." It would examine how debt has been used as a tool of social control, economic exchange, and moral obligation across different societies and time periods.
- **The Anthropology of Privacy in the Digital Age:** This block would delve into the evolving concept of privacy in the context of surveillance capitalism, drawing insights from Shoshana Zuboff's "The Age of Surveillance Capitalism." It would investigate how digital technologies and data collection practices have impacted individual privacy, social relations, and power dynamics.
- **Biopolitics and the Governance of Life:** This block would examine the intersection of power, knowledge, and the human body, drawing on Michel Foucault's "The Birth of Biopolitics." It would explore how political and economic systems regulate and control populations through various mechanisms, including healthcare, surveillance, and social norms.
- **Economic Systems and Cultural Values:** This block would analyze the relationship between economic structures and cultural values, potentially incorporating insights from Joseph Schumpeter's "History of Economic Analysis." It would investigate how different economic systems shape and are shaped by cultural beliefs, practices, and social hierarchies.
- **Technology, Culture, and the Future of Humanity:** This block would explore the impact of technological advancements on human societies and cultural evolution, potentially referencing Ray Kurzweil's "The Age of Spiritual Machines." It would examine how emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and biotechnology are challenging traditional notions of identity, consciousness, and social organization.

These thematic blocks would provide a comprehensive and interdisciplinary exploration of key anthropological and sociological concepts, encouraging students to critically engage with the complex interplay between culture, power, and human experience in a rapidly changing world.

METODOLOGÍA DOCENTE



Aspectos metodológicos generales de la asignatura

The course consists of theoretical and practical parts. During lecture sessions, students will be introduced to theories and methods of comparative cultural analysis. To reinforce their knowledge, students are required to independently study one article per week from the list of required readings, which will be discussed in class.

During the seminars, students will participate in role-playing games—simulations of negotiations, prepare a group presentation, and an individual project consisting of an outline presentation and group discussion, as well as write an individual essay.

The final exam, which accounts for 50% of the course grade, consists of three questions based on articles read during the course and the content of the lecture sessions.

Metodología Presencial: Actividades

Class discussions, presentations and exams.

Metodología No presencial: Actividades

Reading assignments and research.

RESUMEN HORAS DE TRABAJO DEL ALUMNO

Summary/Division of Student work hours

In-class hours

Theoretical classes	25
Practical classes	25
Academically guided activities	25
Assessments	10

Out-of-class hours

Self-study of theoretical content	20
Self-study of practical content	20

EVALUACIÓN Y CRITERIOS DE CALIFICACIÓN

Assessment activities	Criterion	Weight
Group presentations	In teams of 3 students, prepare a presentation covering one of the proposed issues.	20%
Final exam	Comprehensive answers to 3 questions based on mandatory readings and lecture sessions.	50%
Individual final essay	Analytical and summarizing skills. Clarity. Public presentation skills, clarity.	20%



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In-class written task

During the course, students will have 2 in-class written tasks, working in teams of 3 10%

Calificaciones

- Committing any serious academic misconduct, such as **plagiarism** of previously published material, or **copying** in the exam or any other graded activity, **will imply not being able to pass the course in the ordinary assessment period.**
- The **use of AI** to create complete works or relevant parts, without citing the source or the tool or without being expressly allowed in the description of the work, will be considered plagiarism and regulated according to the General Regulations of the University.
- At the beginning of the term the professor will announce the office hours for the course. Tutorials are an essential part of the development of the course, and students may attend tutorials during the course within those office times, but it is recommended that they are arranged in advance with the professor.
- Any non-face-to-face learning activity that requires the submission of an assignment/document, etc. will be submitted by the student through Moodle, always in PDF format.
- To be able to take the final exam, students must not have missed **more than one third of the classes without justification.** If this requirement is not met, the student may lose the right to be assessed both in the ordinary and extraordinary assessment period (art. 93-1 of the General Regulations). Failure to attend to the first hour of a two-hour lecture, means having missed the whole session in terms of attendance, regardless of whether or not the student the second hour.

BIBLIOGRAFÍA Y RECURSOS

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Bibliografía Complementaria

Relevant references

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