

## 27736 - Communication and Expression Techniques for Lawyers

### Syllabus Information

**Academic year:** 2023/24

**Subject:** 27736 - Communication and Expression Techniques for Lawyers

**Faculty / School:** 102 - Facultad de Derecho

**Degree:** 421 - Degree in Law

**ECTS:** 3.0

**Year:** 4

**Semester:** Second semester

**Subject type:** Optional

**Module:**

### 1. General information

#### **Practical argumentation. How to compose and communicate argumentative texts**

The main thesis is that from certain levels of cognitive development onwards, the well-known maxim is inverted, which establishes that by reading one learns to write by imitation. I disagree. Since adolescence, progress in the expressive capacity requires an organized approach to the writing process, breaking down the phases that separate the confrontation with the blank page and the circulation of the text or discourse. This organized reflection on the writing process should improve our ability to analyse as readers of other people's texts because we know the "tricks" of the writing trade.

The approach is fundamentally practical. In the program there is a part dedicated to oral discourse that has the problem of consuming large amounts of time. If we handle about forty students, we can calculate that if we dedicate fifteen minutes to each of them, the consumption of teaching hours is difficult to assume.

The subject contributes to the SDGs: 4 and 16.

### 2. Learning results

1. Understand the meaning formation process of words
2. Make a global approach to the socialization of our discourse, paying special attention to the sharing of efforts between the sender and the addressee in order to ensure the success of the communication.
3. Analyse in a differentiated way the different stages in the process of discourse formation: words, sentences, argumentative pieces
4. Identify the pieces of the discourse, and discover its structure by separating the main axis of the argumentation and the *obiter dicta*
5. Apply the rules of orthotypography and the recommendations for communication through written texts
6. Fundamentals of presentation-oriented graphic sign systems combining the verbal code with graphic codes

### 3. Syllabus

#### **Practical argumentation. How to compose and communicate argumentative texts?**

##### **Argumentation, a word with several lines of meaning**

##### **The context in which the argumentation takes place**

##### **From internal knowledge to social discourse**

Inner knowledge is structured and expressed in texts and discourses

Expressed knowledge becomes useful when it is shared

Communicative opportunity: I can and I want to say something

##### **The possible discourse [projected-wanted]**

First, the speech must be grammatically correct

The characteristics of the discourse condition its formation

Speech typologies

##### **Learning to write to learn to read**

Writing allows us to progress in analysis and reading

Strategies to improve the learning of written and oral expression

##### **Part 1. We observe reality and represent it through words and coded signs 1. Reality is analysed, codified and finally expressed**

We have to transform a continuous reality into discontinuous segments

We have more concepts than words

## **2. The elements of discourse. From the word to the sentence**

Words are the bridge that connects reality with discourse

In order to make themselves useful, words seek meaning

what does a word at rest look like?

As the word travels to the addressee it changes meaning

When words work as a team

Naughty words. Altered meanings

Ungrammatical characteristics of words that condition their use

What conditions must the words we choose for the expression of legal discourse meet? **3. Conditions of discourse formation**

Something to say: we avoid irrelevant speeches

General theory of discourse coding and communication

### **The pieces of the discourse**

Natural discourse and its deviations

The hidden speech, the grey speech

What conditions must effective speech meet?

## **4. Expository and argumentative progress: rules and strategies**

Tell me something I don't know

Types of discourse structures

Writing strategies. Breaking the blank page

We break down the discourse into levels

The argumentative pieces. Organization and articulation

Argumentative force and argumentative orientation

Relationships between parts and communication of plot strength

## **5. Discourse rationale. Information and sources of information**

The role of information sources varies with the type of text

Information management

Integration of outside information

## **6. Responses and replies**

Acceptable and productive replies

Reckless replies

Unacceptable and destructive retorts

## **Part 2. Communication and general circulation of discourse**

### **1. Formatting the speech**

Intelligibility, a prerequisite for communication

Encounter with letters

Introduction to visual coding

Fundamentals of oral communication

Ultra-coded texts. Description of sources and bibliography

### **2. [Profiling the context: purposes and instruments...]**

Monologic and dialogic communication

Closed text communication [printed]

Open digital text communication

Instantaneous circulation of oral speech

Long-term circulation of oral discourse

Integrated speech communication. Presentations

## **Part 3. How to analyse argumentative legal texts?**

### **1. Preliminary analysis**

Models and strategies for discourse analysis. State of the art

Confidence analysis. Verification of sources

Prophylactic analysis: cleaning up falsehoods and lies

We verify the grammatical correctness of the discourse

We verify the formal logical correctness of the discourse

We verify the "non-formal" logical correctness of the discourse

## 2. Strategic analysis

Analysis of the process of formation of the argumentative pieces

Efficiency analysis [and fundamentals]

## 3. The plot progress

Expository progress, discursive progress, argumentative progress

Searching for the vulnerable link in the story chain

Are the plot pieces adequate to the needs of the plot progress?

Argumentative strength and orientation

Analysis of the plot structure

Chaining, transitions. Passage laws

Detection of defects and inadequacies in the chaining process

Detection of traps in chaining. Fallacies

## 4. Discourse communication analysis

## 5. Levels of discourse analysis

Level 1: summary

Level 2: critical analysis

Level 3: contextual analysis

Level 4: contextual analysis with alternative

Level 5: functional analysis [analysis of the "discursive fact"]

## 4. Academic activities

The subject aims to develop autonomous learning skills and transversal competencies. The teacher provides the students with several types of working texts in the ADD:

1. Fragments of manuals and theoretical works, respecting intellectual property criteria. The number of pages is converted into ECTS credits taking as a reference a value of 6 pages/hour. The total of these mandatory study materials does not exceed 160 pages.

2. Working papers: short articles of legal content published in general media, i.e., excluding those published in indexed academic journals or other media aimed at specialists 3. The teacher publishes a study guide, which we can consider equivalent to a basic manual of less than 150 pages.

The classes are based on the students' experience: they have previously worked on the manual excerpts and the working documents set for each session. Their analysis is shared and recapitulated by connecting the experience extracted with the corresponding parts of the study guide-handbook.

## 5. Assessment system

### I. Continuous evaluation

Mere class attendance is irrelevant. The documents and interventions developed from the teacher's weekly assignments are taken into account.

The program developed comes from the fusion of very different disciplines from very dispersed materials.

It is possible to pass the objectives and obtain a passing grade, but be warned that preparation outside of the subject requires an extra effort that should be taken into account when choosing this elective if there is any kind of schedule conflict with another subject or activity

The professor pays special attention to impersonation. Students should be able to explain and reason any aspect of their work. The sanction is radical and irremissible, determining the exclusion of the continuous evaluation system and direct referral to the global evaluation; apart from other academic consequences that this serious breach of academic ethics may entail.

**Evaluation of classroom work.** The mere presence in the classroom does not generate any right to a positive evaluation; the evaluation will be based on the program of preparatory readings, the assignments and spontaneous interventions of the attendees and the answers to direct questions or problems posed by the teacher. In the case of direct questions on the assignments included in the syllabus, the absence of answer or the serious inadequacy of the intervention leads to a negative evaluation in the session. Three negative evaluations mean the exit from the continuous evaluation system. Questions are asked about the list of students enrolled, not just attendees. An absentee may be asked and the above criterion of three negative evaluations will be applied to them..

The result will be a numerical grade on the scale 1-10

Continuous evaluation; **complementary test.** Experience shows that the grades obtained during the term tend to be low; this is normal because they take into account contributions made at the beginning of the learning process. When the subject evaluation is equal to or higher than five, a complementary open-format oral test is offered. The student proposes the basic lines of this complementary evaluation.

### II. System based exclusively on a "final global test":

The final test has three parts:

1. -30% of the grade: Test on readings listed as fundamental or basic in the work plan.
2. -40 % of the grade: Practical test consisting of writing a short text on a legal or legal-related topic , usually related to a current issue during the term.
3. -30% of the grade: Practical test consisting of the analysis of a text such as those worked on in class, applying the analysis protocol that we will have completed during the term.