

Problemática Internacional
(On-line Class - 8 credits)

Este documento refiere a un grupo específico de la materia, pero describe de manera adecuada las características de la misma. Ese es su propósito: Tengas una noción más clara de contenidos y dinámica de Trabajo

1. INSTRUCTORS PROFILE

- Module 1: **Elizabeth Prado**, reprad@iteso.mx (course coordinator)
- Module 2: **Karl Spracklin**, sprackos@iteso.mx
- Module 3: **Diana Ortega**, ortegat@iteso.mx
- Module 4: **Cesar Estrada**, cesar.estrada@iteso.mx

Course web page: <https://iteso.instructure.com/courses/17637>

2. FOUNDATIONS

The international context has significantly changed since the end of the Cold War with an increased number of actors and factors participating in International Politics. The 21st century has been characterized by the occurrence of events with transnational effects, which have in turn posed issues and problems for the international community, which can hardly be dealt with unilaterally. This relatively new phenomenon of sharing consequences and responsibilities before certain issues has given place to what can be seen as the “international problematic”.

For International Relations scholars, it is quite important to understand the challenge posed by “international problematics” and its effects on international relations. As a discipline, International Relations offers different explanations and from different perspectives, both theoretically and empirically, of the international problematic and therefore this phenomenon, as well as the responses and actions of the international community, must be carefully examined.

3. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

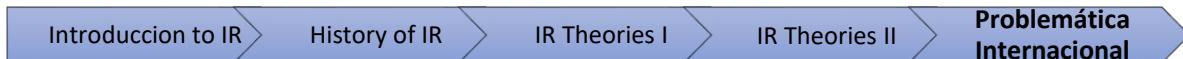
To research some of the most relevant world problems identifying their causes and consequences, as well as their interdependency with the end of analyzing and evaluating the international initiatives and actions to address them. The student will be able to explain world problems from an International Relations perspective incorporating both theoretical and empirical support.

4. SPECIFIC AIMS

- To analyze the extent to which issues and problems of international relations are interconnected.
- To identify causes and consequences of the examined world problems and challenges.
- To relate and articulate ideas, principles, assumptions, methodologies and in general, approaches from specialists and analysts over methodologies, analysis and the practice of international relations.
- To become familiarized with the use of documents produced by governments, international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations.

5. COMPETENCES

Following from other courses, this class contributes to developing the competence of *multi and interdisciplinary analysis of international scenarios.*



6. PREREQUISITES:

Abilities

- To identify main ideas in a text and summarize its main arguments.
- To discern between the students' own ideas and others' ideas.
- To analyze, deconstruct and compare models of analysis and decision-making (academic, social and political).
- To discuss and comprehend interdisciplinary dialogues, recognizing the models employed to generate feasible and sustainable solutions to addressed issues.
- To encourage teamwork and the use of different types of information sources.
- To encourage active listening to different point of views.
- To encourage tolerance when faced with diversity

Knowledge

- It is desirable to have taken courses in the areas of: History and Geography, Regional Studies, Cooperation, Development and Sustainability, Methodology.
- To know and understand the evolution of the international system.
- To identify the basic features of past and current international events and phenomena.

7. WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM STUDENTS

- This class is in English and no other language is allowed for written work, but some readings are in Spanish.
- **Student must do the readings before class and prepare for an active participation in the class discussions.**
- Students must comply with coursework deadlines and their work fulfills the guidelines established on the provided guidelines

8. APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHERS

Contact the teacher you want to meet with by email to arrange a zoom meeting. Please do so well in advance so that teachers can accommodate their agenda to meet with you.

9. DISCIPLINE AND ORDER

- Attendance to sessions is compulsory and it involves getting to class on time, staying and participating in class discussions.

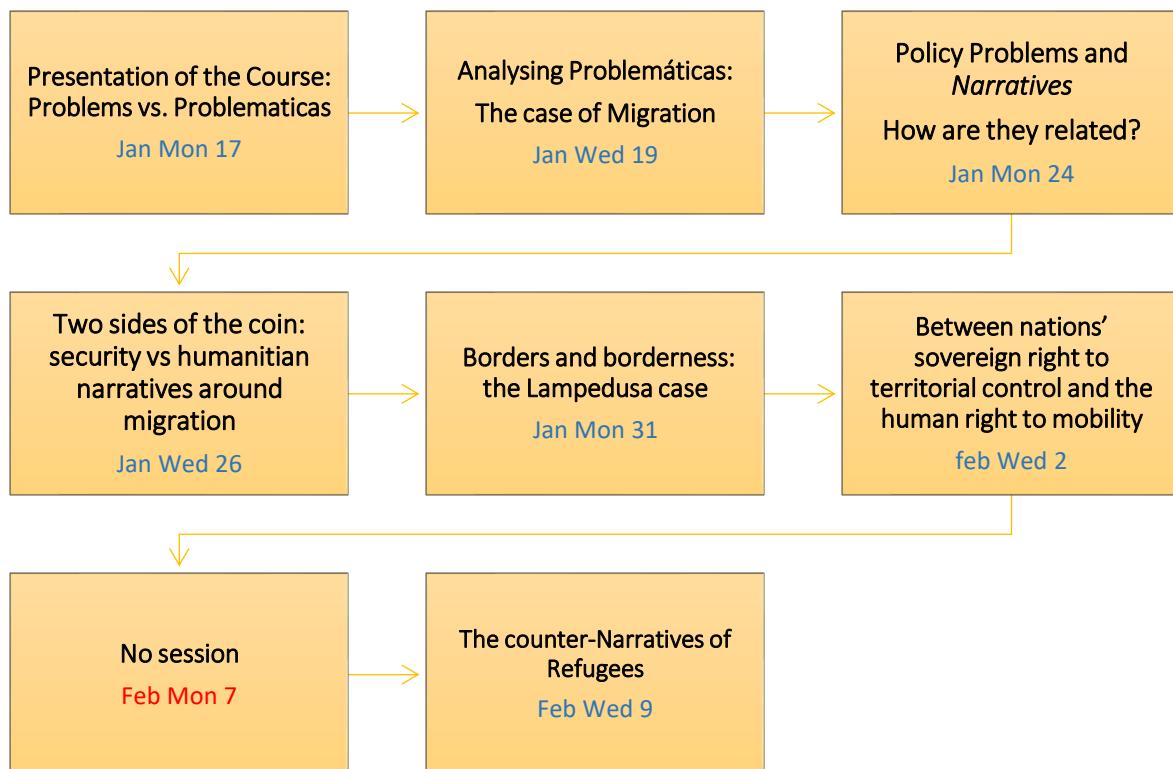
- Please have your camera on during videoconferences. Although the use of cameras is not compulsory, seeing each other contributes to the on-line interaction and help the teachers to track students' attention and body language.
- Sessions start 10 minutes after 11:00 (M.D. 3.1.5), but you are strongly advised to connect at 11 to anticipate any connectivity problems.
- Attendance will be registered thru your participation during the videoconferences. If you have any problem to connect to the sessions please contact the teacher as soon as possible to let the teacher know.
- In order to be evaluated in the ordinary period, an 80% attendance is required and 60% is required to sit the extraordinary test.
- The professor has authority to sanction any offence which affects the work environment, according to the established criteria and the Students Regulations. (M.D. 3.4.3)

10. READINGS

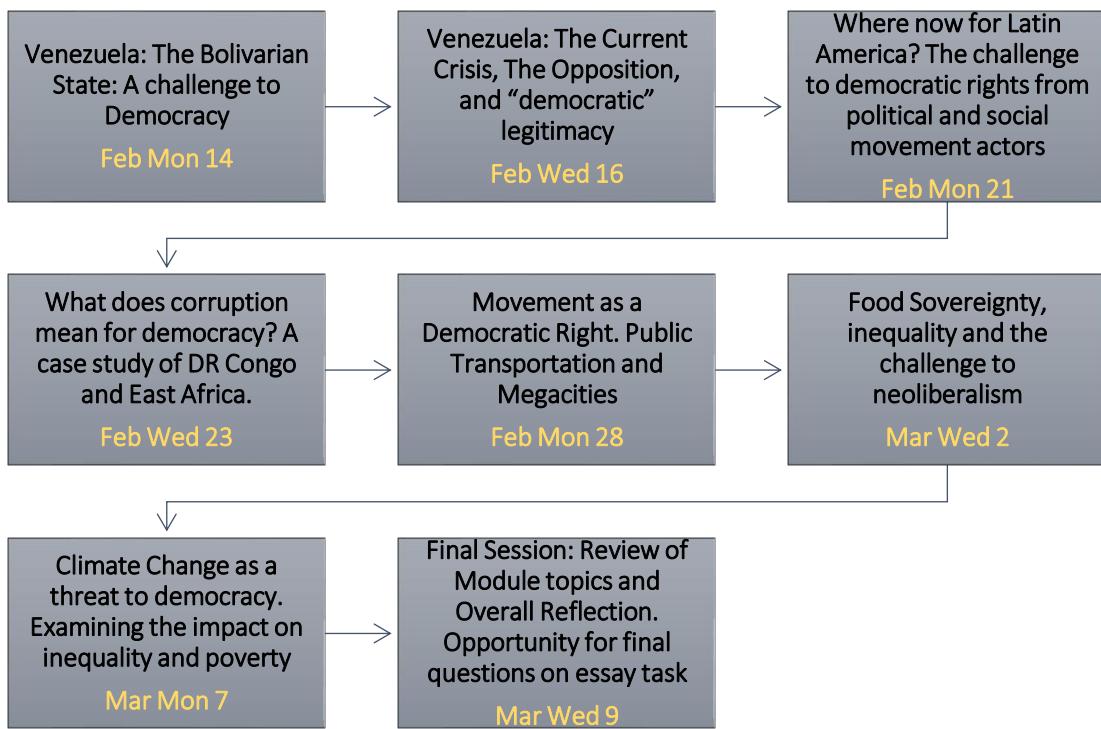
To facilitate the online class, the topics and readings are described by week at the Canvas page of the course. Please go to each module to have this information: <https://iteso.instructure.com/courses/17637>

11. CALENDAR OF MODULES AND TOPICS

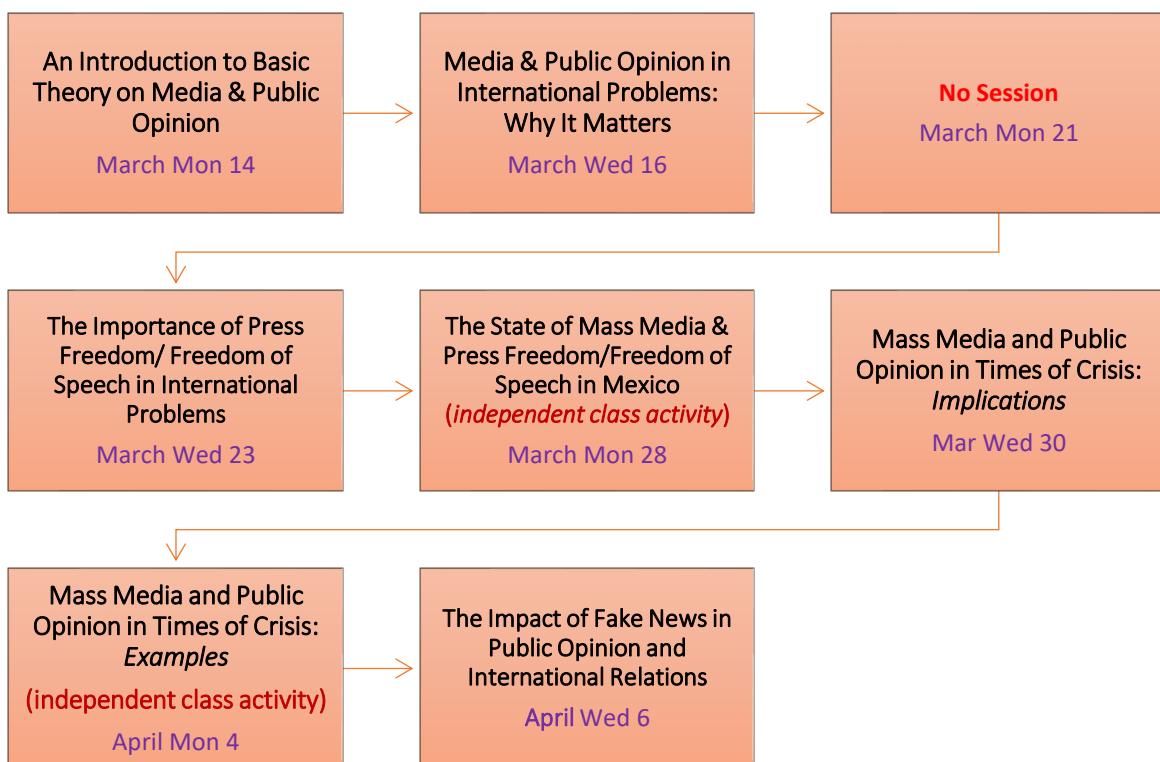
Module 1 Problemáticas and Migration: Narratives and Counternarratives



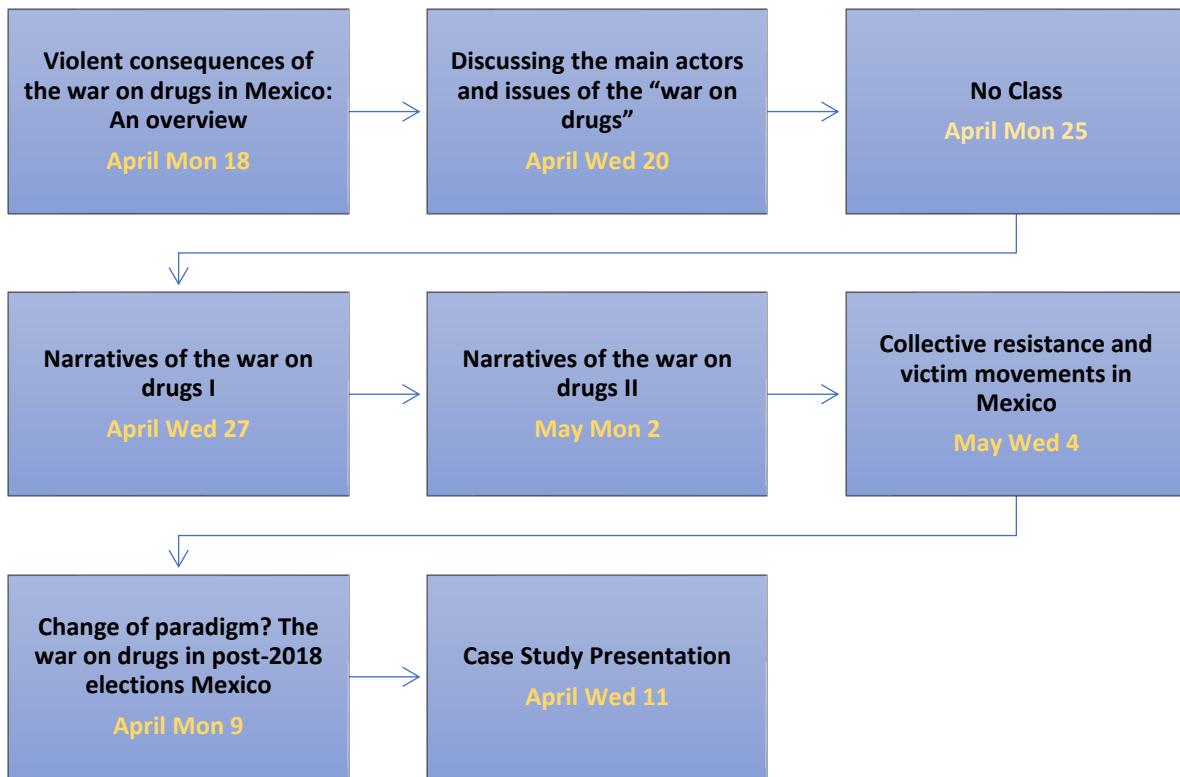
Module 2 Democracy under threat? Present issues and current challenges



Module 3 Media and Public opinion in International “Problematicas”



Module 4 The War on Drugs in Mexico: Violence, Narratives, and Resistance



12. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Each module is worth 25 Points of the total 100 that the course is worth. However, modules are evaluated differently. Please read carefully the following list of assignments and deadlines for each module.

NOTE: final grades go up from decimal 6. However, teachers can consider additional elements to decide to raise the grade.

MODULE 1

5 Class activities or products

5 POINTS EACH

There will be several activities worth 5 points each and you will get the highest 5 grades.

Since there are more than 5 activities, it does not affect you if you miss a class or fail to do an activity. You could even choose not to do a given activity, but **make sure you complete at least 5 activities by the end of the module.**

Activity 1. Problems vs. Problemáticas exercise (session 2)

Activity 2. Quick test about readings (session 3)

Activity 3. Quick test about reading (session 4)

Activity 4. Case study about the readings (due January, 30 at 11:59 pm)

Activity 5. Class activity about the reading (session 5)

Activity 6. Reading Report (session 6)

Activity 7. Reading Report (due February, 6 at 11:59 pm)

Activity 8. Class report on refugees (session 7)

MODULE 2

Essay (Maximum Word Count: 2000 Words plus a list of sources).

25 POINTS

Choose one of the issues presented in class as a threat to democracy (Module 2). Please answer the following question with reference to specific case studies and International Relation Theory:

How does this issue pose a challenge to democratic rights and ideas?

Draft Deadline: **Friday, 25th February 11:59pm**

Final Deadline: **Friday, 11th March 11:59pm**

MODULE 3

2 class activities (4.5% each)

9 POINTS

- You must answer the question presented in canvas individually in the discussion group, within the time frame indicated. There's no right or wrong answer, as long as you properly justify it.
- Be careful with grammar and syntax. One point will be deducted if the activity presents up to 5 grammar mistakes. Activities with more than 5 grammar mistakes will need to be re-written.

Case analysis 1

8 POINTS

DUE DATE: March 25, before 23:59

- You can work individually, in pairs or groups of three.
- Choose one of the cases listed below and one theory to analyze the case with.
- Support your answers with additional research from media outlets regarding the case of study.
- Make sure that all the news coverage that you use is from reputable and reliable media outlets.
- For references and format, use APA: <https://bit.ly/3fa0AbA>. One point will be deducted if the paper if these guidelines are not followed.
- The word limit is 1,500 words with a 5% +/- rule. However, the most important part is to properly justify your answers.
- Be careful with grammar and syntax. One point will be deducted if the paper presents up to 5 grammar mistakes. Papers with more than 5 grammar mistakes will need to be re-written.

Choose one of the following cases

- The 2020 breach of the US Capitol
- The 2021 Taliban takeover in Afghanistan
- The 2021 protests in Cuba

Choose one of the following theories seen and studied in class (you can choose the theory that you consider the best fit for your chosen case):

- The spiral of silence (Noelle Newman)
- The agenda setting (McCombs & Shaw) Public opinion does not exist (Bourdieu)
- The CNN effect (Coban)

Answer the following questions using both the case and the theory of your choosing:

- Why do you think this particular case is relevant for the international media scenario and/or the public? - opinion? Support your answer with three arguments.
- Based on your personal criteria, how would you describe the news coverage or the public opinion regarding this particular case: is it sufficient? Is it biased? Is it superficial? Support your answer with two arguments.

- Based on the theory you chose, which postulates of such theory can be observed in this particular case regarding the way mass media or/ public opinion have performed around it? Support your answer with three examples.
- In this particular case, do you think that the media should be merely an observant and stick with reporting the facts or should they be allowed to participate as independent actors with a diversity of opinions and positions? Support your answer with two arguments.

Case analysis 2

DUE DATE: April 8, before 23:59

8 POINTS

- You can work individually, in pairs or groups of three.
- Choose one of the cases listed below and one theory to analyze the case with.
- Support your answers with additional research from media outlets regarding the case of study.
- Make sure that all the news coverage that you use is from reputable and reliable media outlets.
- For references and format, use APA: <https://bit.ly/3fa0AbA>. One point will be deducted if the paper if these guidelines are not followed.
- The word limit is 1,500 words with a 5% +/- rule. However, the most important part is to properly justify your answers.
- Be careful with grammar and syntax. One point will be deducted if the paper presents up to 5 grammar mistakes. Papers with more than 5 grammar mistakes will need to be re-written.

Choose one of the following cases

1. The news coverage of any recent (in the last 10 years) environmental disaster
2. The news coverage of any recent (in the last 10 years) Presidential election

Answer the following questions if you chose the first option:

1. Briefly describe the context of the crisis and its impact on the country (or countries) where it took place (around 300 words)
2. If you make a quick browsing of the media coverage...would you consider the discussion stucked to the facts or did they sensationalize the information?
3. Spot two cases of fakes news spread during the crisis (misleading, partially true or entirely false) Did they have a repercussion of some sort?
4. Is there any legal regulation in the country (or countries) regarding fake news? If not, do you think they should implement some mechanism?
5. After this exercise and what we have seen in class, do you think news coverage during an environmental crisis should just report the facts? (include your individual answer in this section)

Answer the following questions if you chose the second option:

1. Briefly describe the context of the election and its significance to the country where it took place (around 300 words)
2. If you make a quick browsing of the election coverage...would you consider the discussion in the news as multi partisan?
3. Spot two cases of fakes news spread during the election (misleading, partially true or entirely false) Did they have a repercussion of some sorts in the process?
4. Is there any legal regulation in the country regarding fake news? If not, do you think they should implement some mechanism?
5. After this exercise and what we have seen in class, do you think news coverage during an electoral process should be unbiased or apolitical? (include your individual answer in this section)

MODULE 4

A. Assistance and active participation during the sessions

8 POINTS

Students are expected to assist to every virtual class and stay during entirety of the sessions. Students are expected to assist to class, having done the readings for each session and be prepared to engage in active discussions with the instructor and their classmates. Students are expected to have at least two interventions in order to account for their participation grade. Interventions are not a simply description of the themes of the readings, but rather a critical examination of the authors' main arguments, assumptions, data, contributions or limitations to better understand the *problemáticas* at hand. The structure of the sessions will begin with a presentation of that day's theme by the instructor, followed by a collective discussion of the readings and ending with a synthesis of the issues and analytical perspectives reviewed in class. There will be a ten-minute break during the first half of the session.

B. Final short paper**12 POINTS****Due date: Wednesday, May 11th 11:59pm**

Students will choose one topic discussed throughout the Module and will write a short paper (between 1,500 and 2000 words) and in which they analyze such topic based on the historical, theoretical, and analytical approaches reviewed in class. Students are expected to draw on the conceptual perspectives discussed in class and to support their own analysis with empirical data available. Students are invited to analyze their chosen topics by highlighting at least one of the following dimensions of mass violence in Mexico:

- The multiple actors involved in mass violence (e.g. individual perpetrators, criminal organizations, state security forces, self-defense groups, etc.)
- The different narratives around mass violence (e.g. the narratives of the state and the war on drugs; the narratives of drug trafficking organizations; the narratives of victims of violence [of women, migrants, marginalized populations, etc.]; the role of the media in narrating violence; the role of investigative journalism; the narrative of the US government; etc.)
- The social responses that resist violence and try to build peace in the country.

Examples of topics include but are not limited to:

- Drug trafficking and criminal actors at the state level (e.g. Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacán, Veracruz)
- The global reach of Mexico's drug trafficking organizations
- Forced disappearances and forensic crisis in the country
- Victims Collectives: The case of the *buscadoras* groups
- Femicides in Mexico (at the national or at state level)
- Violence against migrants and state responses
- The requests to the International Criminal Court to investigate potential crimes against humanity in Mexico
- The “4T” and the war on drugs: a change of paradigm or a continuation of militarization policies?

I will mainly evaluate the clarity of the writing, the structure of the essay, and the adequate use of the literature and available data to back the student's arguments.

The length of the essay is expected to be of no more than 2,000 words, plus a list of references from academic, media, and other reliable sources relevant for the issue at hand. Use the quoting format of your choice, but **please quote accordingly and uniformly**. Students are free to reach out to me in case of doubts or questions regarding their essays.

C. Presentation of final short paper**5 POINTS****Due date: Wednesday, May 11th**

Students will elaborate a short presentation of their papers and present during class. The presentation is expected to synthesize the main arguments/findings of their case study, and show a coherent narrative of how the student approached the case study to analyze it.

PLEASE NOTE THAT

- **Late submissions** will not be accepted. If you have any trouble to comply with the deadlines, contact your teacher soon as possible.

- **Plagiarism** is a serious academic offense, for this reason, those submitted works that consist of a total or partial copy of a different text will be graded with zero (0).

Quotations, References and Bibliography: In order to avoid plagiarism, credit must be given each time there is a use of:

- Ideas, opinions or theories from someone else or from your own work that has already been used for other documents.
- Facts, statistics, graphics, images or parts of information that are not from general knowledge,
- Quotation of words written or spoken by someone else,
- Paraphrased writings or sayings by someone else.¹
 - It is particularly forbidden to use the following sites for consult or reference: <http://www.rincondelvago.com/>,
<http://www.monografias.com/>, <http://www.gestiopolis.com/>, Encarta, Wikipedia, in all its editions.

LAST VERSION JAN 14, 2022

¹ http://iteso.mx/~ruth/01_tips/10_plagio/plagiarism.html. Produced by Writing Tutorial Services, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.