Course Syllabus—BRANDING GLOBAL CITIES, INSIGHTS FROM BARCELONA

**Language of Instruction:** English  
**Professor:** José Fernández Cavia and Sara Vinyals Mirabent  
**Professor’s Contact and Office Hours:** Contact: sara.vinyals@upf.edu and jose.fernandez@upf.edu. Office hours: Wednesday from 11h. to 12h.  
**Course Contact Hours:** 15 hours  
**Recommended Credit:** 2 ECTS credits  
**Weeks:** 1 week  
**Course Prerequisites:** None  
**Language Requirements:** Students need a sufficient English level to follow the course  
**Time modules:** Monday to Friday: 9am to 11am and 1pm to 2 pm.

**Course Description:**
In the globalized context, cities have to compete with each other in different matters such as: to attract investment or human talent, to favor exportations, or to position themselves as tourist destinations. This reality advocates the adoption of marketing techniques to manage cities’ positioning since cities are no longer only a container of all the goods that can be consumed within it: the place itself offers symbolism desired by all its audiences. This course provides an overview of the main changes that have motivated the contemporary role of cities. It is focused on the understanding of the new symbolic role of the territory and explore the difficulties to build up a coherent brand that represents the complex offer of places. It also emphasizes on the importance of involving the different stakeholders in the process of branding the city, the challenge to control the impact of tourism activity and its effect on residents lifestyle, and the importance of the communication activity. The case of Barcelona will help students understand the content of the theoretical sessions. Combining lectures and practical sessions, students will study in-depth how Barcelona is represented as the international brand it is today.

**Keywords:** Brand image, place branding, destination branding, online communication, projected image.

**Learning Objectives:**
At the end of the course, the student...
- will have acquired the fundamentals of Place Branding, its challenges, and its main focuses of action.  
- will have learned the role and contribution of the different stakeholders in building contemporary city brands.  
- will be able to critically analyze communication sources to identify weaknesses, threats, opportunities, and the strengths of a city’s image strategy.

**Course Workload**
The course is divided into lectures, case studies discussions, and field research project. Additional reading material will be provided during the course for the students to increase their knowledge on the different topics. Students should be able to use all the theoretical content presented during the lectures, the case studies and the additional reading material to their own project about the case of Barcelona.
Methods of Instruction:
The course includes both lectures and case studies in a two-hour session, and an additional one-hour practical session. On the one hand, the two-hour class sessions combine the theoretical lecture with the case study discussion related to the previous content. The students should read the additional reading material prior to the class. On the other hand, the practical classes will focus on working on the field project and discussing with the classmates its progress.

Method of Assessment
Class Participation: 30 percent
Final Project: 70 percent

Absence Policy
Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. The impact of absences on the final grade will be announced soon.

The BISS attendance policy does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences. The student is deemed responsible to manage his/her absences.

Emergency situations (hospitalization, family emergency, etc.) will be analyzed on a case by case basis by the Academic Director of the UPF Summer School.

Classroom Norms:
· No food or drink is permitted.
· There will be a ten-minute break during the two-hour class.
· Students must come to class fully prepared.

Course Contents:

Session 1. Introduction (Mon, Jul. 9th)
Introduction. Syllabus, assessment and home-readings.
Content. Past and present of European cities.
Content. European cities competing internationally.
Content. Barcelona’s growth in the last century.
Case study: Barcelona’s past and present.
Reading material: compilation of different materials including press articles.

Session 2. Territory, places and global cities (Tue, Jul. 10th)
Content. The XXIst century, the era of consumption society.
Content. The symbolic value of the territories.
Content. Living in a global world, aiming for local identities.
Case study: The key success factors of ‘I AMSTERDAM’.

Field research project: applying the theoretical content to the case of Barcelona.
Reading material: compilation of different materials.

Session 3. Branding places, stakeholders and co-creation (Wen, Jul. 11th)
Content. Branding places, techniques borrowed from marketing.
Content. The complexity of contemporary city brands.
Content. Stakeholders contributing to the co-creation of the global city image.
Case study: Oslo, ‘ON BRAND’.
Field research project: applying the theoretical content to the case of Barcelona.

**Session 4. Places to live or to visit? The tourism challenge** (Thu, Jul. 12th)

Content. Positive and negative impact of tourism in the city.
Content. How to make tourism activity sustainable.
Content. Barcelona’s tourism controversy.
Case study: Venice, the tourist city.
Field research project: applying the theoretical content to the case of Barcelona.
Reading material: fragment of *Venice, the tourist maze. A cultural critique of the world’s most toured city* (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

**Session 5. Place and destination branding communication** (Fri, Jul. 13th)

Content. The key factors to strengthen a place’s image.
Content. Communication sources and actors.
Case study: Barcelona global image (assembling the students’ field research project).
Field research project: students’ oral presentations.

**Required Readings:** The professor will assemble a coursepack/or indicate mandatory textbooks’ fragments.

**Recommended bibliography:**

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