



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Communication, Media and Society

1920-3-E4001N097

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#### Aims

The course objective is to provide an understanding of the functioning of the news media system, of the actual processes of news production and of the changes it is undergoing under the pressure of technological innovation.

The students will develop the ability to critically analyse the news, the construction of social problems, and how linguistic and social processes influence the framing and the representation of reality.

#### Contents

The course addresses the relationship between news media and power. This relation is approached from a historical perspective, then considering the social environment of the news making process, and finally evaluating the power effects of the language of the media.

#### Detailed program

The course is divided into two parts. In the first, a short review of the concept of power is provided, and then a social history and a political economy of the media system is sketched. The lessons will focus on the mass and industrial nature of the media and their consequences, on the birth of news as a concept, on the characteristics of mainstream news media and of other models, and on the impact that the new media have on today's nature of news.

In the second part, the ethnographic and sociological body of research on the news making process will be used to understand the nature of the reality constructed by the news media. The relationship between the media and other

political and social agencies will be also examined in order to reflect on the environment of news production and on the public construction of social problems.

Special attention is dedicated to the language of news. Narrative structures, modes of address and quotation, stylistic features, framing choices, among other features, will be analysed to sketch mainstream media discourse and its power effects.

## **Prerequisites**

None

## **Teaching form**

Lectures, exercises, examples with discussions, analysis of audio/video and other documents. Language: Italian.

## **Textbook and teaching resource**

Those attending the lessons will find the reader "I mezzi di informazione e il potere" on the e-learning page and at the "copisteria Fronteretro" in Viale Sarca 191

This program is valid only for the first three exam sittings.

Those not attending the lessons are required to study the following:

1. Castells, Manuel *Comunicazione e potere*, Milano: Università Bocconi, 2017, Chapters 2-4.
2. Reader "Dispensa per non frequentanti" available on the e-learning page and at the "copisteria Fronteretro" in Viale Sarca 191.

## **Semester**

Second semester

## **Assessment method**

The final exam is written. In the first part, some closed-ended questions will test the knowledge of the various topics of the program, the ability to establish connections and to use the concepts illustrated during the course.

In the second part, the student will select one question among two options, in order to write a short essay, in which she/he will have the possibility to address the topic using the abilities acquired during the classes and from the reading of the textbooks.

The student will have the possibility to ask for an oral exam in order to receive another assessment of her/his preparation, provided that she/he has received a passing grade in the written exam.

## **Office hours**

Students can refer to my personal page accessing it from the "rubrica" in the university website.

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