



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

### Comunicazione, Media e Società

2021-3-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.

In the course, an interdisciplinary and multilevel approach is preferred, passing from the big picture to everyday practices, and focussing on historical reconstruction, sociological investigation, and discourse analysis. Particular attention will be given to the language of news, among other features to their narrative structures, modes of address and quotation, stylistic features, framing choices, in short, to media discourse and its power effects.

#### Detailed program

The course is divided into four 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.

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.

The third part is dedicated to the changes introduced by the advent of the Internet in the relationship between the media and their audience, in the production and nature of news and in the new online information economy. We will focus on phenomena such as blogs and citizens' journalism, the sharing economy, and the role of platforms, the relationship between news and truth.

The fourth part broadens the view to the role of the media in the construction of social problems, considering phenomena such as the agenda-setting effect, the moral panic model, and media-hypes.

## **Prerequisites**

None

## **Teaching form**

In the Covid-19 emergency period, the lessons will be held in mixed mode, with student's partial presence and video-recorded lessons in synchronous/asynchronous mode. The lessons, in Italian, are assisted by Power Point and audio/video materials to synthesize concepts and analyze with the class concrete examples and case studies taken from everyday news.

## **Textbook and teaching resource**

There is no distinction between people who attend and do not attend the lessons, because everyone will have the opportunity to watch the video-recorded lessons. The text to be studied is the reader "I mezzi di informazione e il potere", which will be uploaded at the start of the lessons on the e-learning page and available at the "copisteria Fronteretro" in Viale Sarca 191.

## **Semester**

Second semester

## **Assessment method**

The final exam is written and 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. The exam consists of two questions to be answered with short essays that will give students the opportunity to propose their own path of reasoned

presentation. In the Covid-19 emergency period, the exam will be held online through the platform Esami Online.

The student - and the Professor - 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. The interview will be carried out using the WebEx platform and the e-learning page of the teaching will contain a public link to access the exam for possible virtual viewers.

## **Office hours**

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

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