



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cultural and Communicational Processes

2021-1-E4001N071

Learning objectives

The aim of the course is to introduce the student to the set of technical and theoretical tools to understand and analyze contemporary cultural phenomena, in their practical and discursive dimensions.

Contents

The course is divided into two parts. In the first part, the main contemporary theories related to the sociology of culture will be presented, with particular attention to the role of symbolic power and *boundary-work* processes. In this first part, the course will focus on the political dimension of the "taken for granted", through the examination of the social construction of the categories of body, space and time. In the second part, through insights and exercises related to current social phenomena, the cultural and communicative processes at work in the fields of cultural production and consumption will be investigated, challenging the analytical categories discussed in the first part.

Detailed program

The course is divided into two parts. In the first part, the main theories related to the sociology of culture will be presented, starting from the critical discussion of the category of "taken for granted" to highlight the relationship between power relations and meaning relationships, as the starting point of the sociological approach to the worlds of culture. In this perspective, the cultural and communicative processes behind three fundamental coordinates of daily experience will be analyzed: 1) the social construction of the body and in general the issue of incorporation

(i.e. the dichotomy between nature and culture and the gender dimension); 2) the social construction of time (i.e. the question of subjective temporality, collective memory, tradition and the generational issue); 3) the social construction of space (i.e. the question of cultural boundaries, social interaction and cultural difference in the urban space). In the second part, through insights and group discussions related to current social phenomena, the cultural and communicative processes at work in the fields of cultural production and cultural consumption will be investigated, testing the analytical categories discussed in the first part. We will deal, in this case, with the issues of creativity, taste, cultural identity and globalization.

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of the classic authors of sociological thought

Teaching methods

Lectures, group discussions about texts and audio-visual material; guided analysis of research articles written by contemporary Italian authors.

In the Covid-19 emergency period the lectures will be held in mixed mode: partial presence and asynchronous video-recorded class.

Assessment methods

Written exam based on 3 essay questions (two about books suggested and one about the article chosen by each student). Questions are aimed at examining students' skills in developing autonomous reflections based on ideas learned during the course. After the written exam, it is possible to take an additional oral exam - upon request of the student or course leader. In this case, the oral exam's mark contributes to the final mark (potentially either raising or lowering).

In a Covid-19 emergency, oral exams will be telematics only. They will be conducted 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.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

-Zerubavel, E. (2019) *Dato per scontato. La costruzione sociale dell'ovvietà*. Milano, Meltemi.

-De Benedittis, M. (2013) *Sociologia della cultura. Spazio, tempo, corporeità*

-An article chosen by the student from those proposed in class (the list will be made available on elearning.unimib.it).

