UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cultural Anthropology

2021-1-E3901N044

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

Starting from an idea of anthropology as the study and critical understanding of human diversity, this course aims to offer students: i) some basic methodological instruments of cultural anthropology and ethnography; ii) the main theoretical frameworks of cultural anthropology and; iii) some useful suggestions to read critically contemporary cultural processes by ethnography and by interpretive anthropology.

Applying knowledge and understanding

Furthermore, the course aims to focalize student's attention on the observation of cultural facts from an ethnographic perspective, and on the interpretation of everyday life details as relevant

Contents

Theoretical and methodological issues of Anthropology and Ethnography starting from the origins to current debates regarding the dynamics of culture in current societies. Introduction to the ethnographic approach to understand cultural variation.

Detailed program

1. What is cultural anthropology; 2. The concept of culture; 3. Ethnocentrism and relativism; 4. Ethnography; 5. Economic systems; 6. Reproduction, kinship and family life; 7. Culture and power relations; 8. Communication; 9.

Religion; 10. Illness, desease, malaise, cure; 11. How we understand societies through culture (myths, rituals, leisure, artistic expressions) ; 12. How anthropology interprets globalization: mobility, migrants, foreigners, travellers, tourists, local identities; culture and development.

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of social theory

Teaching methods

In the event that the emergency due to Covid-19 pandemic continues during spring 2021, lectures will be held online. All of them will be videorecorded, some in streaming, others pre-recorded. Students will be given assignments to facilitate the practical usage of anthropological concepts.

In the event that pre-covid-19 conditions are restored by spring 2021, lectures, short class assignments and the vision of documentaries to be discussed will all take place in the classroom.

Assessment methods

In the event that the emergency due to Covid-19 pandemic continues, the examination will be online and oral.

In the event that pre-covid-19 conditions are restored, the examination will be written with questions based on the teaching material of the course.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Barbara Miller (2017), Cultural Anthropology in a globalizing world, 4th edition, Pearson Education inc.

Short readings will be posted on the elearning platform Moodle during the course.

Additional readings:

- Francesco Diodato and Marta Scaglioni (eds.) (forthcoming), Invecchiamento e Cura: prospettive antropologiche, Ledizioni, Milano. Introduzione: Invecchiamento, cura e assistenza; Cap.2: I migranti che mantengono "italiane" le famiglie italiane: le badanti e l'assistenza privata alle persone anziane - S. Rugolotto, A. Larotonda, S. Van deer Geest.

- Matteo Aria e Adriano Favole (2015) L'arte della condivisione. Per una ecologia dei beni comuni. UTET, Torino, pp.24-33.

- Matteo Aria (2016) I doni di Mauss, CISU, Roma, Capitolo 5. pp. 111-127.