



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology of Family

2122-3-E3901N010

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide the theoretical and practical tools necessary for the practice of social service to be acquainted with and understand the institution of the family, gender and generation relationships, and their political, economic, and social transformations. Particular attention will be paid to recent processes of change involving families in the Western societies such as migrations, divorces, new fragile subjects, and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The development of communication and collaborative skills are particularly important; therefore, there will be moments of group discussion and presentations by the attending students.

The course is delivered in Italian.

Contents

The goal of the course is to understand demographic changes and the transformations of family typologies. Family roles and relationships will be analysed through a gender and generation perspective.

Detailed program

The course aims to provide future social workers with the theoretical and empirical notions necessary to analyse and understand the institution of the family as a social construction, the family, gender and generation relationships that compose it, and its political, historical, economic and social transformations, using a critical gaze that goes beyond prejudiced and stereotyped visions.

The lessons will focus on the Italian context but will also include a comparative approach, with particular attention to the contemporary Italian situation and the alterations induced by the Covid-19 epidemic.

The lessons are divided in three parts:

Part 1.

What is the family: the family as a social construction. Definitions, legal and historical aspects. Evolution of family law and family relations in Italy. Analysis of legislative, doctrinal, and jurisprudential sources concerning the family in its many forms. Family and social policies.

Part 2.

Families and cultural differences: transnational and migrant families, second generations, the role of the educational and legislative system. The family within the social stratification: the link between families, work and the economy; intergenerational relationships; models of couples and work-family balance. Aging of the population; overall decline in marriages and births; increase in cohabitation, marital instability, single parent, recomposed, and mixed families.

Part 3.

The Covid-19 pandemic and families: new frailties, new needs. The economic and social transformations dictated by the health emergency and new tools to deal with them. Domestic violence and Italian lockdowns.

At the end of the course, the students will be able to:

- Use the specific sociological terminology inherent to the family and family relationships;
- Develop a basic knowledge of the cultural and structural transformations of family and educational institutions;
- Analyse the different family contexts in the light of the transformations occurred over time and to apply research methods and techniques to evaluate family problems, processes and training systems emerging in contemporary global society.

Prerequisites

Sufficient educational skills in logic, social culture and reasonable capacities in learning, writing and communication.

Teaching methods

The course will apply different teaching methods: lectures with power point presentations, group discussions, presentations by the students. Experts will be invited to address some specific issues.

Assessment methods

At the end of the course, there will be a written test with 3 open questions, with a possible optional oral integration at the request of the student.

The learning tests are aimed at ascertaining the understanding of the dynamics of family changes and the use of the theoretical and practical tools provided by the course. The criteria for the evaluation of the test will be the following:

- a) Appropriateness of the contents
- b) Clarity of presentation and disciplinary lexicon
- c) Critical-analytical and exemplification skills

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Attending students

The reference texts are as follows:

Fiore B., (2021) *La relazione tra famiglie e scuola. Modelli organizzativi e politiche sociali*, Carocci, Roma, cap. 3-4-5.

Saraceno C., Naldini C., (2021) *Sociologia della Famiglia*, IV edizione, Il Mulino

Nel corso delle lezioni, verranno di volta in volta presentate letture di approfondimento.

Non attending students

Fiore B., (2021) *La relazione tra famiglie e scuola. Modelli organizzativi e politiche sociali*, Carocci, Roma, cap. 3-4-5.

Naldini, M., (2021) *Gli insegnamenti dell'emergenza. Ripensare i tempi del lavoro e della cura, fuori e dentro la famiglia*, Il Mulino, pp. 10-25

Saraceno C., Naldini C., (2021) *Sociologia della Famiglia*, IV edizione, Il Mulino.

All supplementary readings provided during the lessons.

Erasmus students:

Collins, D., Jordan, C., & Coleman, H. (2012). *Brooks/Cole empowerment series: An introduction to family social work*. Cengage Learning.
