UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Policy and Politics

2122-1-F8701N010

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide an introduction to the most relevant concepts and themes for the study of politics, for the understanding of problems debated in the public sphere and for the design and analysis of public policies.

Contents

The course will deal with three macro-themes, which will constitute as many articulations of the program: 1) Introduction to the fundamental concepts of political theory; 2) Theories of democracy and populism; 3) Democracy and the issue of equality.

Detailed program

1) In introducing the fundamental terms of political theory, we will analyse the historical and theoretical meaning of concepts and themes such as:

what is politics

what is a policy;

power, authority and legitimacy;

State and civil society;

the public/private dichotomy;

forms of government;

fundamental rights.

2) In the part dedicated to the theories of democracy and populism, we will explore the competing definitions and visions on the foundations, principles, procedures and forms of democratic government, and the tension to which neo-populisms subject contemporary liberal democracies. The topics addressed will include: history of the democratic ideal; concepts of freedom and equality; liberal democracy; majority and minorities; the principle of representation; deliberative processes; actors in the democratic process and forms of political participation. And: definitions and characteristics of populism; the relationship between populism and democracy.

3) The third part will address the issue of inequality as a threat to the survival of democracy. It will analyse the attack on equality as an effect of the combination of neoliberal policies, resurgent nationalism and anti-egalitarian ideologies. Specific cases and issues will be studied in the form of exercises (individual and group presentations).

Prerequisites

No special skills are required, but interest in discussing contemporary political issues, willingness to learn, passion for argumentation and active participation in the classroom.

Teaching methods

Teaching includes: frontal lessons; case study analysis; presentations by students; seminars with guests.

Assessment methods

The exams will be held in oral form.

During the course, students have the opportunity to give a presentation, in presence or in telematic mode, which will be taken into account in the final evaluation.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

The exam will focus on the contents of the lessons (video recordings and slides will be made available on the e-learning page), and on the following texts:

1) Donatella Della Porta, *Introduzione alla scienza politica*, il Mulino, 2008 – capitolo 1 (parr. 2-4), capitolo 2, capitolo 3, capitolo 5 (parr. 1-8), capitolo 6 (parr. 1-5), capitolo 7 (parr. 1, 3-7).

2) Giorgia Serughetti, *Il vento conservatore*, Laterza, 2021. Il volume sarà disponibile a ottobre 2021.

3) A text of your choice from the following:

- Ilaria Boiano e Giorgia Serughetti, *Donne senza Stato. La figura della rifugiata tra politica e diritto*, Futura/Ediesse, 2021.

- Wendy Brown, *Stati Murati, sovranità in declino*, Laterza, 2013.

- Colin Crouch, *Identità perdute. Globalizzazione e nazionalismo*, Laterza, 2019.

- Luigi Ferrajoli, *Manifesto per l'uguaglianza*, Laterza, 2018.

Students who will give presentations during the course will be allowed to study only text 1) and 2) for the exam.

Readings for the presentations:

During classes, readings will be provided directly by the lecturer.