UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Research Methods in Social and Cultural Anthropology

2122-1-F0101R001

Course title

Research Methods in Anthropology

Topics and course structure

The course intends to problematize the conditions of fieldwork, analyzing the concrete research activities, the processes of writing and of theoretical elaboration. It discusses the ethnographic practice in the light of the profound changes in the conditions, functions and aims of the scientific research in the contemporary world. Comparing the classic monographies with the most recent productions, it combines the analysis of the epistemological foundations of the different methods with the examination of the fieldwork techniques.

Objectives

The course aims at promoting the dialogue between theoretical reflections and ethnographic practices. It considers how to choose among different methodologies and their diverse applications. It i provides solid and systematic knowledge in the field of the anthropological and ethnological sciences, identifying their specificities as well as their interdisciplinary connections. Starting from the analysis of some ethnographic cases, it applies the transversal and comparative views of the discipline to the critical analysis of the contemporary societies.

Methodologies

Lectures.

Power point.

Online and offline teaching materials

Online and offline teaching materials.

Programme and references for attending students

The course critically discusses the anthropological research practices and their textual restitution. It analyzes comparatively the classical ethnographies with the contemporary productions and it combines the exam of the epistemological foundations with a reflection on the different fieldwork techniques. The focus is on the concrete conditions of the research activities, on the microprocesses of the everyday life, on the asymmetry of the ethnographic encounters, on the translation through cultural and linguistic boundaries, on the ethical problems and on the social role of the anthropologist. The course articulates from a historical and theoretical point of view the major methodological problems: from the choice of the field and of the research object to the elaboration of the project in a thick dialogue with the scientific literature; from the entry into the field and from the construction the ethnographic authority to the relations with the interlocutors; from the production of data (observation, interviews, life stories, questionnaires etc.) to their organization; from the writing methods (notes, notes, diaries, final text) to the theoretical elaboration and to the return of the research results to interlocutors inside and outside the academic world.

References materials will be provided by the professor.

Programme and references for non-attending students

Program and bibliography for not-attending students are the same as the ones provided to attending students

Assessment methods

The oral examination aims to verify the student's ability to critically think and elaborate the contents proposed by the course

Office hours

Before and after classes, by appointment via email

Programme validity

Two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Dott. Dario Buonomo