UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology of Innovation

2122-1-F5701R004

Course title

SOCIOLOGY OF BUSINESS INNOVATION

Topics and course structure

Within the complex economic dynamics that characterize contemporary society, scientific and technological knowledge is one of the key factors of competitiveness. In order to fully exploit the possibilities for development, it is necessary that this knowledge does not remain confined to laboratories and research centers, but spreads in the economic and social context, gaining strength and generating innovation. A key factor in the mechanisms of knowledge transfer is represented by human capital, that is, by the presence of professional figures able to operate in the boundary areas between science, economy, and society, addressing the management problems related to the generation, selection, development, and implementation of innovation in organizations.

The course aims to present the most relevant models of innovation and discuss the systemic approach to innovation, with the goal of contributing to the development of specific skills with respect to theoretical models, tools and methods for the management of organizational change, one of the fundamental aspects of the Master's Degree in Training and Development of Human Resources.

Objectives

Through the attendance of the lessons and the analysis of the texts indicated, the course of study intends:

- to promote knowledge and understanding of innovation processes in general terms, in its various forms and in relation to macro-contexts of interest;

- provide the information and tools necessary to develop the ability to understand and analyze these processes, stimulating the development of autonomous strategies for reading the phenomena;
- to make students autonomous in evaluating the processes of technological, market, managerial and organizational business innovation, start-up and business development projects, interpreting the choices of the actors operating in a territory, and the impact of their work on the environmental context.

At the end of the course, students will have acquired the following specific skills:

- ability to analyze the innovation process in the fields of technology, management, and business organization;
- ability to critically assess start-up and business development projects;
- ability to read and understand the choices of the relevant actors of a territory and their impact on the context of belonging.

Methodologies

The teaching methodology used combines different tools:

- frontal lessons, which aim to provide general information and skills that constitute the common knowledge of the class. During the lessons, the theoretical reference framework will be designed to develop students' specific skills to provide them with the required analytical and comprehension competences;
- group work, with the aim of developing the analysis, judgment and communication skills required for the evaluation of the proposed topics. A series of case studies will be proposed to be analyzed and declined according to the themes exposed related to innovation.

In the Covid-19 emergency period the lessons will be held remotely asynchronously with synchronous videoconferencing events.

Online and offline teaching materials

Programme and references for attending students

Also in the Academic Year 2021/22, as the situation does not allow the full return to normal teaching activities, there will be no distinction between attending and non-attending students.

Required text:

- Ramella, F. (2013). Sociologia dell'innovazione economica, Il Mulino.

Students must then select 4 texts of their choice from the following:

1. Porter M.E., (1998), “Clusters and the new economics of competition”, Harvard Business Review, p. 77-89, Nov-Dec.

2. Monaci, M. (2012). L'innovazione sostenibile d'impresa come integrazione di responsabilità e opportunità sociali, Studi organizzativi, 2, 26-61.

3. De Marchi, V., Di Maria, E., & Spraul, K. (2018). Collaborazioni università-impresa: i risultati sul fronte dell’eco-innovazione. ECONOMIA E SOCIETÀ REGIONALE, 62-72.

4. Narula, S., Puppala, H., Kumar, A., Frederico, G. F., Dwivedy, M., Prakash, S., & Talwar, V. (2021). Applicability of industry 4.0 technologies in the adoption of global reporting initiative standards for achieving sustainability. Journal of Cleaner Production, 305, 127-141.

5. Reis, J. S. D. M., Espuny, M., Nunhes, T. V., Sampaio, N. A. D. S., Isaksson, R., Campos, F. C. D., & Oliveira, O. J. D. (2021). Striding towards Sustainability: A Framework to Overcome Challenges and Explore Opportunities through Industry 4.0. Sustainability, 13(9), 5232.

6. Easter, S., Ceulemans, K., & Lynn, M. L. (2021). Moving Beyond Sisyphus: Pursuing Sustainable Development in a Business-as-Usual World. Business & Society, 00076503211015914.

7. Agudelo, M. A. L., Jóhannsdóttir, L., & Davídsdóttir, B. (2019). A literature review of the history and evolution of corporate social responsibility. International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility, 4(1), 1-23.

8. Poussing, N. (2019). Does corporate social responsibility encourage sustainable innovation adoption? Empirical evidence from Luxembourg. Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, 26(3), 681-689.

9. Khan, H.U.R., Ali, M., Olya, H. G., Zulqarnain, M., & Khan, Z. R. (2018). Transformational leadership, corporate social responsibility, organizational innovation, and organizational performance: Symmetrical and asymmetrical analytical approaches. Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, 25(6), 1270-1283.

10. Zhou C, Etzkowitz H. Triple Helix Twins: A Framework for Achieving Innovation and UN Sustainable Development Goals. *Sustainability*. 2021; 13(12):6535. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13126535

11. Lamine, W., Mian, S., Fayolle, A. et al. Technology business incubation mechanisms and sustainable regional development. J Technol Transf 43, 1121–1141 (2018).

12. Etzkowitz H. Is Silicon Valley a global model or unique anomaly? Industry and Higher Education.

2019;33(2):83-95. doi:10.1177/0950422218817734

Programme and references for non-attending students

Also in the Academic Year 2021/22, as the situation does not allow the full return to normal teaching activities, there will be no distinction between attending and non-attending students.

Required text:

- Ramella, F. (2013). Sociologia dell'innovazione economica, Il Mulino.

Students must then select 4 texts of their choice from the following:

1. Porter M.E., (1998), “Clusters and the new economics of competition”, Harvard Business Review, p. 77-89, Nov-Dec.

2. Monaci, M. (2012). L'innovazione sostenibile d'impresa come integrazione di responsabilità e opportunità sociali, Studi organizzativi, 2, 26-61.

3. De Marchi, V., Di Maria, E., & Spraul, K. (2018). Collaborazioni università-impresa: i risultati sul fronte dell’eco-innovazione. ECONOMIA E SOCIETÀ REGIONALE, 62-72.

4. Narula, S., Puppala, H., Kumar, A., Frederico, G. F., Dwivedy, M., Prakash, S., & Talwar, V. (2021). Applicability of industry 4.0 technologies in the adoption of global reporting initiative standards for achieving sustainability. Journal of Cleaner Production, 305, 127-141.

5. Reis, J. S. D. M., Espuny, M., Nunhes, T. V., Sampaio, N. A. D. S., Isaksson, R., Campos, F. C. D., & Oliveira, O. J. D. (2021). Striding towards Sustainability: A Framework to Overcome Challenges and Explore Opportunities through Industry 4.0. Sustainability, 13(9), 5232.

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corporate social responsibility, organizational innovation, and organizational performance: Symmetrical and asymmetrical analytical approaches. Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, 25(6), 1270-1283.

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12. Etzkowitz H. Is Silicon Valley a global model or unique anomaly? Industry and Higher Education. 2019;33(2):83-95. doi:10.1177/0950422218817734

Assessment methods

For the academic year 2021/22 there are no different exams for attending and non-attending students.

The exam consists of a written test in which the student will be asked to demonstrate the acquisition of the knowledge discussed during the course and present in the bibliography, through open questions.

The evaluation of the result of the paper is based on the mastery of the concepts and issues related to innovation addressed during the course and the ability to discuss cases and problems present in the bibliography. In addition to mastering the ability to argue the different paradigms, research perspectives, and operational tools, appropriate use of sociological vocabulary, clarity of exposition, and the ability to analyze and critically evaluate will be part of the assessment.

Office hours

The office is held by appointment.

Contact the professor by email: davide.diamantini@unimib.it

Programme validity

The programs are valid for two academic years.

Course tutors and assistants

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