UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Principles of Organization

2223-1-E1601N059

Learning objectives

The course gives participants the basic knowledge for understanding the fundamental concepts and tools for the study of organizations from sociological standpoint with the following aims:

1. understanding the (underestimated) relevance of organizations in the contemporary society;
2. learning how to describe and understand the heterogeneity of organizations, their forms, and their ways of functioning.

Contents

In sum, the course' subjects will be the following:

1. what an organization is;
2. organizational structures;
3. the relationship between the organization and the environment;
4. power, control and rules;
5. organizational culture;
6. decision-making processes and organizational *sensemaking*;
7. change, innovation and learning;
8. the dark side of the organization.

Detailed program

The course has been structured as follows. After an introduction with a given definition of the organization that

summarizes existing contributions and approaches on the topic, we will discuss the different levels of analysis through which an organization can be studied. Then we will analyze mechanisms, functioning and performance's requirements of organizations. Lessons will deal with a wide range of arguments with the specific purpose of giving students a background concerning the main issues that stimulate the study of organizations from a sociological standpoint. Main topics will be the variety of organizational structures, the role of the external environment, power and organizational culture, decision-making processes, etc.

More precisely, the topics will be the following:

1. what an organization is;
2. structures and organizational configurations;
3. the relationship between the organization and the environment;
4. power, control and formal rules;
5. organizational culture;
6. decision-making processes and organizational *sensemaking;*
7. change, innovation and organizational learning;
8. the dark side of the organization.

Prerequisites

None

Teaching methods

Frontal lessons, classroom exercises, case studies.
The lessons have an interactive slant: the exposition of key concepts of organizational theory goes hand by hand with the examination of cases and / or *ad hoc* exercises in order to make the students able to assimilate concepts.

Assessment methods

Written exam with questions regarding all the given references (textbooks, articles, slides etc.). Multiple choice questions (15) are used for the extensive control of the preparation on the exam program; while the open ones (2) are aimed at the intensive control over the capacity for autonomous reflection on critical points of the exam program. The correct use of language as well as the ability of argumentation will be also evaluated. No intermediate tests.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

References:

- Maurizio Catino, Lia Tirabeni (2023), *Fondamenti di organizzazione*, il Mulino, Bologna, Collana “Manuali”

Slides, additional references, and further material will be specified in more detail with the beginning of the course

and during lessons. They will be available online through the e-learning system and/or through the Milano-Bicocca University library.

Sustainable Development Goals

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION