UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology

2223-2-E2004P017

Learning area

Introductory course to sociological analysis.
The goal is to point out some of its major themes and fields of investigation.

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- Concepts and theories of Sociology
- Interpretation of modern society worked out by the founding fathers of Sociology and a very brief overview on some contemporary perspectives
- Structures and social change, with a particular focus on citizenship, power, stratification, and social mobility
- Role and function of socialization
- The social construction of the quotidian
- Technologies of everyday life, time-space distanciation, and the indirect relations: the mass knowledge society

Applyng knowledge and understanding

- Ability to apply the sociological perspective in order to describe what happens in everyday life situations
- Ability to understand the ‘stock of knowledge’ used by people during their ordinary affairs
- Ability to understand some of the changes in which contemporary societies are involved

Contents

The lectures aim to investigate the taken-for-granted social life; they ‘deconstruct’ such reality in order to focus on some of the processes by which social life takes place. The course is organized around five main topics: 1) the interpretation of modern society given by the founding fathers of sociology; 2) some of the most relevant sociological categories and research fields – from stratification to social mobility; 3) socialization; 4) the correlation between everyday life and daily experiences of social reality; 5) the role played by the techno-scientific kowledge in daily life routines: that is, the development of the ‘mass knowledge society’.

Detailed program

- Introduction to sociological epistemology: positivism, realism, interpretative sociological understanding
- Modern society and Sociology
- Secularization, citizenship, power, and the problem of social order in modern societies
- Interpretation of modern society worked out by the founding fathers of Sociology (Functionalism, Durkheim, Marx, Weber)
- Very brief overview on contemporary sociological theories: structuralfuncionalism (Parsons, Merton), power and social conflict (Dahrendorf, Collins), the sociology of everyday life (Goffman)
- Some themes of sociological investigation: stratification, social inequalities, public policies, social mobility
- Socialization and biology
- Socialization and the common sense culture
- Socialization and the theories of personality (Behaviourism, Mead, Freud, Piaget)
- Agencies of socialization
- The life course as a socially constructed reality
- The investigation of the taken for granted reality of social life
- The social ‘knowledge’ of ordinary life
- Body, time, space: three crucial variables of social life
- Action, ontological security and social practices
- Mass Knowledge Society, time-space distanciation, and the indirect relations

Prerequisites

No particular prerequisite.

Teaching methods

Lectures, text discussions, audio\video materials; small empirical researches are possible.
At the the begining of the course, a detailed program of topics discussed in every lecture will be distributed.
The teaching method and topics discussed focus on the development of synhthesis skills, thus facilitating the practical application of the theoretical concepts.
Lectures and class discussions aim to show how science can be applied in studying everyday situations.
Students are expected to be able to make use of the various topics approached during the lectures in order to describe and understand daily situations, making use of their own indipendent judgement.

Assessment methods

During the Course, there will be no intermediate evaluations. The exams will take place in normal sessions.

Written (required); oral (optional).

The written exam includes:

1. a section of multiple choice questions (only one is the correct answer); the correct answer is the most complete and logical one from the point of view of sociological reasoning; the alternatives can be in terms of:
   1.1. answers that although correct are however incomplete;
   1.2. generic or approximate answers;
   1.3. false or unlikely answers;

2. a section with open questions (in terms of very short essays).

About the written part of the exam, the section of the open questions (2) will be evaluated only if the students pass the section of the multiple choice questions (1). Otherwise, the written exam is considered not passed.
One can take the oral examination only after having passed the written one. The oral examination (optional) covers the whole program and the final vote is the the average of the written and oral.

Evaluation criteria for both written and oral examination

- Appropriate use of technical formal language – scientific formal skills
- Logical accuracy in the presentation of topics
- Ability to identify the connections between issues
- Completeness of the illustration of the topics given the limits of time and available pages (written)

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Although this course is held in Italian, for Erasmus students, course material can also be available in Eglish, and studens can take the exam in English if they wish to do so.

Bibliography:

1. Dispensa (downloadable from the teacher’s e-learning website);
2. Ghisleni M. (1998), Teoria sociale e modernità. Saggio sulla storia della sociologia, Carocci, Roma: Chap. I (excluded par. 1.6, 1.7, 1.8), Chap. II, Chap. III, Chap. IV, Chap. V, Chap. VII (only par. 7.1);
3. Bagnasco A., Barbagli M., Cavalli A. (2012), Corso di sociologia, Il Mulino, Bologna, 3rd edition: Chap. I (only par. 6), Chap. II, Chap. III (excluded par. 6.1, 6.2, 7), Chap. XI (excluded par. 4, 7, 8), Chap. XII;
4. Ghisleni M., Moscati R. (2001), Che cos’è la socializzazione, Carocci, Roma;
5. Ghisleni M. (2004), Sociologia della quotidianità. Il vissuto giornaliero, Carocci, Roma: Presentazione, Chap. I, Chap. II, Cahp. III (excluded par. 3.5), Chap. IV (only par. 4.6, 4.7), Glossario-Dizionario;
6. Ghisleni M. (2014), Presenza, assenza e delocalizzazione: le interazioni indirette e la disaggregazione spazio-temporale, in Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia, LV, n. 3, pp. 527-552 (downloadable from the teacher’s e-learning website).

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION