UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Human Agency and Sustainibilty

2223-2-F8501R069

Course title

Envinromental Sustainability and Struggle against Social Inequalities

Topics and course structure

'System change not climate change' is one of the slogans of the many demonstrations against the climate crisis. The course aims to delve into the concepts called into question by the UN 2030 Agenda (taken from the UNIMIB Sustainability Report 2020) and the 17 specific goals identified to overcome "the environmental, social and economic unsustainability of the current development model" (Sustainability Report, p. 98).

Through a critical philosophical gaze, a reflection will be developed that starts from the meaning that needs to be given to the notion of sustainability and then reflects on the characters and objectives of the social actions that can be practised.
The course will begin by 1) addressing the meanings that are assigned to the notion of '**sustainability**', 2) questioning whether and how sustainability and development can be related to each other, 3) what view needs to be taken in relation to the climate crisis and ecological sustainability. These topics will be developed by considering Marxist ecological theories.
The course will then focus on social action. How do we think about the relationship between the dominant processes of the economy, the demands of health, and labour? How to think about a different relationship with the environment, as well as the care of the most vulnerable, at a time when these dimensions come into seemingly irresolvable conflict? Therefore, it becomes necessary to place social action in a web of relations that takes into account the **vulnerability** of subjects, **gender and race discrimination** and **social inequalities**. As a study by F. Green and N. Healy, *How inequality fuels climate change*, shows, these issues are closely intertwined with the climate problem.

The coursework during the teaching hours will provide the necessary skills to pass the examination.

No previous specific philosophical knowledge is required. For any needs, the lecturer is available for clarification meetings.

Objectives

The course aims to provide philosophical notions and tools that put the student

1. in a position to understand complex contexts and to be able to act appropriately within them, taking into account the various social conditions at play;
2. in a position to deal with situations that are always new, diverse and often changing;
3. in a position to understand the implications and repercussions in socio-political processes of the professional activity carried out.

Expected learning outcomes:

1. Knowledge and understanding of the fundamental concepts expounded during the course with reference to the Marxist context from the perspective of which they are analysed, as well as their ethical-political relevance. The student will also be able to distinguish the different uses that are made of these concepts depending on the context in which they are called upon, taking into account in particular the issues of ecological crisis, gender and race discrimination, class exploitation.
2. Ability to consciously and critically apply this knowledge to the personal contexts in which the student will be acting. Ability to analyse the critical issues contained in the social relations and sustainability guidelines proposed by institutions and the work and social context. Ability to decide, individually or in groups, what behaviour to adopt in relation to the objectives of ecological sustainability and social addresses of social equality, gender, race.
3. Clarity and autonomy of judgement on the social scope of one's own actions within the pedagogical work context and on the sustainability repercussions it produces.

Methodologies

The course uses a combination of different teaching methods, including:

1. frontal lectures
2. In-depth studies by means of videos that will be projected in the classroom and accompanied by collective discussion (they may be the subject of short reflection papers at the student's request)
3. Questions and discussions on problematic issues in order to apply the concepts of critical philosophy being learnt
   The teaching is delivered in Italian.

Online and offline teaching materials

The teaching materials used during the course will be made available to students in parallel with the lectures.
Texts required for the examination can be requested to the lecturer if difficult to find.

Programme and references for attending students

Common mandatory texts:

1. Jacopo N. Bergamo, Marxismo ed ecologia. Origine e sviluppo di un dibattito globale, Ombre Corte, Verona 2022 (cap. III, pp. 85-111; cap. V, pp. 141-170)
2. Roberto Fineschi, Marx, Morcelliana, Brescia 2021 (capp. pp. 47-91, pp. 139-146)
3. Louis Althusser, Ideologia e apparati ideologici di Stato, in “Critica marxista”, 5 (1970), pp. 23-65.
4. Colette Guillaumin, Sesso, razza e pratica del potere. L’idea di natura, Ombre corte, Verona 2020, pp. 37-100, 133-155, 181-211.

1 mandatory text to choose from:
K. Marx, Il capitale, vol. 1, capp. 1-7. Qualsiasi edizione.

Angela Y. Davis, Donne Razza e Classe, Alegre, Roma 2021, i capp. 11, 12, 13, pp. 221-302.

Etienne Balibar, Immanuel Wallerstein, Razza nazione classe. Le identità ambigue, Asterios, Trieste 2000, pp. 17-133, 204-227.

Paolo Missiroli, Teoria critica dell’antropocene. Vivere dopo la Terra, vivere nella terra, Mimesis, Milano 2022, pp. 9-30, 65-92.

Lucia Chistè, Alisa Del Re, Edvige Forti, Oltre il lavoro domestico, Ombre corte, Verona 2020.

Chandra Talpede Mohanty, Femminismo senza frontiere, Ombre corte, Verona 2020.

Françoise Vergès, Un femminismo decoloniale, Ombre corte, Verona 2020.

Christine Delphy, Per una teoria generale dello sfruttamento, Ombre corte, Verona 2020.

Razmig Keucheyan, La natura è un campo di battaglia, Ombre corte, Verona 2019.

Programme and references for non-attending students

The same as for students attending.

Assessment methods

There are no in itinere tests.
Assessment is by means of a final oral examination.
The examination begins with the presentation of a topic of the student's choice, followed by one or more questions on the other examination topics.
At the student's request, the presentation of any work produced in connection with one of the videos screened in the classroom may be assessed.
At the student's or lecturer's request, the student may be asked to present a paper on topics other than the syllabus and previously agreed with the lecturer.
The final grade takes into account the assessment of three aspects:

1. the knowledge of the concepts and arguments set out in the texts to be studied;

2. the ability to articulate the discourse and develop the analysis;
3. property of language and exposition.

Office hours

The lecturer is available to students by appointment, in person or remotely, to be arranged by e-mail.

Programme validity

2 years

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | CLIMATE ACTION