UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology of Health

2324-2-E3901N074

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding
Knowing health and healthcare system dimensions
Understanding the social and environmental changes in health conditions of people over the last decades
Applying knowledge and understanding
Being able to identify common trends of health concept change and healthcare system functioning.
Developing skills to evaluate policies to combat health inequalities and promote individual and social well-being

Contents

- The social construction of illness

- The doctor-patient relationship

- The patient's experience of illness

- Determinants and health inequalities

- Healthcare system functioning

- Health promotion policies

- The impact of Covid-19 on health

Detailed program

The course sets out to provide knowledge of the main dimensions concerning sociology of health and health care.

In a micro sociological perspective, our attention will focus on the social construction of illness, on the doctor-patient relationship and on the patient's experience of illness.

In a macro-sociological perspective, it intends to provide students with tools to understand the persistent health inequities in our society. Moreover, we provide knowledge on the determinants of health and risk factors.

The course will reflect on increasingly pervasive medicalization / pharmacologization processes.

In addition to health issues, we will provide knowledge on the evolution of the health system and in particular, on the principles and functioning of the Italian health system.

Finally, we will analyze policies to combat health inequities and access to and use of health services.

On the methodological level, the course will allow the acquisition of the tools neces sary to correctly describe a health event in a population

The course will give specific attention to Covid-19 pandemic issue, evaluating the impact on health and healthcare system.

Prerequisites

Sufficient educational skills in logic, social culture and reasonable capacities in learning, writing and communication

Teaching methods

Frontal lectures, seminars, group work and practice exercises.

Students must register for the course on the e-learning platform, where they will find support materials for the lessons.

Assessment methods

Essay

10 pages or more individual or group (max 3 persons) essay. 2000 pages characters (with the exclusion of graphs, tables, figures, etc.). The essay will contribute to 30% of final grade. The essay will have to be sent to me by email.

The deadline to deliver the essay will be indicated in class.

Examples of topics of essay:

- Patient's experience of illness

- Patient interaction with health personnel

- Health inequalities

- Health and risk factors

- Impact of healthcare system on individual and societal wellbeing

The essay will have to be organized as follows:

- A theoretical framework of analysed topic (what scientific literature says about)

- A paragraph with quantitative and /or qualitative data concerning the topic.

- A paragraph discussing the topic of the essay.

- A final paragraph with a discussion of results.

- References

Written examination test

Written examination test (1 hour) -> Two open questions on students programme and topic discussed in class. Final test will contribute to 70% of final grade.

To overcome the exam, it is necessary to obtain a positive result (18 or more) in essay and final test. The final grade will be the weighted sum of the two tests.

In case the essay or the written exam or both fail to reach the passing grade, students will have to retake the part of the exam that was not passed.

Oral exam

An optional oral exam is available upon request by the student, only for those who have achieved a positive outcome in both the essay and the written exam.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Material for students

Sarti S. e Terraneo M. 2023. Studiare la salute. La prospettiva della sociologia, Roma, Carocci editore.

Terraneo M. 2018. La salute negata. Le sfide dell'equità in prospettiva sociologica, Milano, FrancoAngeli.

Toth F. 2014. La sanità in Italia, Bologna, il Mulino (capitoli 1-2-3-5-Conclusioni)

Lecture notes “Salute, sanità, società”, available in e-learning course site

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | REDUCED INEQUALITIES