UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Political Philosophy

2324-2-E3901N051

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide an introduction to the most relevant concepts and themes of political philosophy and to guide the understanding of the philosophical-political issues most relevant to the existence and functioning of social services and social work.

Contents

The course will be structured in two parts.
The first, held by Prof. Roberto Miraglia, will offer an overview of the fundamental problems, concepts, theories and currents of political philosophy, with a general introduction to the discipline and an articulation into 4 thematic sections.
The second part, held by Prof. Giorgia Serughetti, will delve into the philosophical-political foundations of the 'Welfare State', i.e. the concepts that have historically provided the basis for legitimising State intervention aimed at including citizens and protecting them from multiple forms of vulnerability.

Detailed program

The first part of the course (Prof. Miraglia) aims to provide an overview of the fundamental problems, concepts, theories and currents in political philosophy. After a general introduction to the discipline, this overview will be divided into four thematic sections.
The first section will address the most classic problem of political philosophy, namely that of the legitimacy of political power (sovereignty). Pivoting on the classical opposition between two strands (Aristotelian-Hegelian and contractualist), the main responses philosophers have given to the classical problem of political obligation ('why and under what conditions must I obey a power?') and related questions such as the meaning and function of

social life will be shown.
The second section will address the problem of freedom and thus the limits that must be placed on political and social power. Starting from the Aristotelian idea of the political sphere as the prerogative of free and equal individuals, the developments that the idea of freedom has undergone in modernity will be shown, starting from the tradition of classical liberalism, passing through the reflections of J.S. Mill, up to the libertarian trends and their justification for the minimal state.
The third section will deal with the question of justice. Starting with the classical definitions, the lectures will follow the vicissitudes of the discussion on this issue that lead to Rawls' theory, i.e. the cornerstone of the contemporary debate. In the tension between (re)distributive justice and freedom, the philosophical roots of oppositions that often animate the public debate will be shown.
A concluding section will attempt to show how the tension between the different values at stake (freedom, justice, security, etc.) and the intertwining of philosophical-political issues on the one hand and philosophical-general issues on the other, is constitutive of the dimension of politics and an integral part of its complexity,
Each topic will be addressed in the light of concrete cases and leaving ample room for discussion.

The second part of the course (Dr Serughetti) intends to explore the philosophical-political foundations of the "welfare state", i.e. the concepts that have historically provided the basis for the legitimacy of state intervention aimed at ensuring social inclusion and protection of citizens from the negative externalities of capitalism: unemployment, inequalities of income, wealth, health, education and opportunities for participation.
The course will therefore start by exploring the notion of citizenship, starting from its classical articulation in the three categories of rights (civil, political and social), to focus more specifically on the idea of social citizenship and contemporary developments of the concept.
It will then focus on the principle of solidarity, as the foundation of economic, political and social obligations aimed at ensuring the well-being of citizens, and as an essential component of a democratic constitutional system.
Finally, the lectures will explored the relationship between these concepts and that of 'care', the core of much feminist political reflection, as a notion capable of both expanding the boundaries of welfare and redrawing the form and substance of democracy.

Prerequisites

No special skills are required, but interest in discussing current issues of public interest, willingness to learn, passion for argumentation and active participation in the classroom.

Teaching methods

Teaching includes: lectures; case analyses; student presentations; guest seminars.

Assessment methods

The examination will consist of a written test with open questions.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Stefano Petrucciani, *Modelli di filosofia politica*, Einaudi, Torino 2003.

Stefano Rodotà, *Solidarietà. Un'utopia necessaria*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2014.

Joan Tronto, *I confini morali. Un argomento politico per l'etica della cura*, Diabasis, Parma 2006.

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS