UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociological and Psychological Principles of Financial Consumer Behavior

2324-3-E1803M124

Learning objectives

Learning objectives
The broad objective of this course is to give students fundamentals of sociology of money and economic psychology.
In details, students will be able to:
Know the basic principles of sociology of money and economic psychology
Have a critical view of what is financial well-being and how to achieve it
Understand basic sociological process – such as financial socialization – which lead somebody to build his/her own's financial wellbeing
Become familiar with psychological bias of financial behaviour (such as mental accounting and loss-aversion)
Understand what is financial education and its relationship with society
Have basic notion on how to design an effective financial education project

Contents

The course explores the principles of sociological and psychological aspect of financial consumer behavior. Starting from the basics of sociology of money and economic psychology, it explores recent research on financial consumer behaviors and financial literacy. It shows main institutional tools and criteria to design and run financial education projects

Detailed program

The course is designed to explore the principles of sociological and psychological aspect of financial consumer behavior. The course has a multidisciplinary approach, focusing mostly on sociology but also on economic psychology and behavioral finance. You will be asked to make exercises, questionnaires, interviews to test your understanding of financial consumer behaviour
It is divided in to three part. In the first part of the course, we will explore the differences between a structural and the cultural approach to sociology of money (referring to the classical works of Mauss, Weber, Simmel, Marx and Bourdieu).
The 2nd part will deal with recent research on financial wellbeing, and why it is hard to do achieve it due to psychological and social constraints) Moving from the works of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, we will look at the basic mistakes that customers do when taking financial decision (i.e. cognitive bias) and the constraints that characterize the context in which they live. In the 3rd part, it will show main institutional tools and criteria to design and run financial education projects

Prerequisites

None

Teaching methods

The course is entirely held in English language. The course includes: theoretical lectures, reading of papers from peer-reviewed journals, illustration of case histories, discussions and group exercises. More information will be given during the lessons. The class uses discussion as a cornerstone of the college experience. Reading some papers or documents online before the lesson will be recommended each week to participate actively.

Assessment methods

The students assessment will consist of a FINAL WRITTEN EXAM with 6 open questions in English on the texts illustrated in "Required readings" below

Teacher and students can make a specific agreement in order to make some of the exercises or presentation run in the classroom to be part of the final evaluation

Information about students' assessment will be provided during the course always through the platform https://elearning.unimib.it/ in the section dedicated to the course (topic "EXAM" . For further information you can write to emanuela.rinaldi@unimib.it

Textbooks and Reading Materials

TEXTBOOKS AND READING MATERIALS
• Baker, W. E., & Jimerson, J. B. (1992). The sociology of money, in «American Behavioral Scientist», 35(6), pp. 678-693.
• Bourdieu P. (2005), "Principles of Economic Anthropology". In Smelser, N. J., & Swedberg, R. The handbook of economic sociology . Princeton, NJ: Princeton university press, pp. 75-89.

• Consumer Financial protection Bureau (2015), “Financial well-being: the goal, financial education”, report, July, see https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201501_cfpb_report_financial-well-being.pdf
• OECD (2020), OECD/INFE 2020 International Survey of Adult Financial Literacy www.oecd.org/financial/education/launchoftheoecdinfeglobalfinancialliteracysurveyreport.htm (only pag 7-28)
• Rinaldi E.E., (2016), The relationship between financial education and society: a sociological perspective, in «Italian Journal of Sociology Of Education», vol. 8 (n.3), pp. 126-148 (http://ijse.padovauniversitypress.it/issue/8/3).
• Thaler, R. H., Tversky, A., Kahneman, D., & Schwartz, A. (1997). The effect of myopia and loss aversion on risk taking: An experimental test in «The quarterly journal of economics»,112(2), pp. 647-661.

Semester

I semester

Teaching language

english

Sustainable Development Goals

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION