UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Psychology of Economic Behaviour

2425-2-F5106P030

Learning area

Fundamentals and research methods in social and economic psychology

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- The developments of the monetary economy, the history of money and attitudes towards it
- The "transformations" of mentality needed in monetary economies
- The arising and dominance of the capitalist mode of production: characteristics and problems
- Some notes about psychology applied to investment, consumption or savings choices
- The inadequacy of the *homo economicus* model
- The problem of "sustainable" consumption and change in development models

Applying knowledge and understanding

- Improving the literacy on economic psychology
- Basic skills in decoding the psychological problems in economic/finance events
- Basic skills in decoding saving/consumption choices
- Better understanding of the contradictions and difficulties posed by the sustainability challenge

Contents

The first part of the course will be devoted to the study, from a historical-genetic perspective, of the birth and

establishment of the capitalist mode of production, highlighting its characteristics and problems. The path that led to the establishment of this model will be illustrated by paying particular attention to the evolution of monetary forms and the transformations of attitudes towards money. The issues of the formation (destruction) of money and the cognitive and affective-emotional psychological processes related to money, its management and its use in everyday relationships will be addressed.
We will then consider the psychological assumptions implicit in the homo economicus model, highlight its limitations, and address some more specific issues in economic psychology.
The second part of the course will look at the problem of changing the model of development, also from the point of view of what this implies at the psychological level, and will present and discuss some hypotheses for dealing with the challenges posed by "sustainability".
The course **doesn't** require technical knowledge of economics at the outset; there will be no ongoing exams.

Detailed program

- The history of currency as a means of increasing abstraction
- The cognitive difficulties involved by the modern currency of credit
- The history of attitudes toward money and credit
- The currency and the psychological confidence
- The capitalist mode of production
- The *homo economicus* model: origin and criticisms from the point of view of psychology
- The panic in the financial markets
- The psychology of savings
- *Green* consumption and *green* economy

Prerequisites

No prerequisite is indispensable to the student, beyond a basic psychological knowledge. Nor it is necessary an education in economics of any kind

Teaching methods

28 in-person lecture-based classes.
Teaching methods include the use of lectures, films, classroom discussions. All the educational material (slides of the lectures, organisational cases, films, when possible) is made available on the eLearning site of the course so that non-attending students can also use it.
The specific character and type of teaching activities will be clarified in the first lessons.
The course is held in Italian.

Assessment methods

The exam is oral. The questions are aimed at evaluating the actual acquisition of both theoretical knowledge and the ability to face problems typical of economic psychology. The evaluation criteria are the correctness of the answers, the ability to argue, synthesize, create links and critically read the reality.Participation in voluntary

activities (group work) contributes to evaluation. The works carried out, and the individual reports related to them, are evaluated by the teacher and are complemented by the evaluation of the written test.
There are no in-progress tests.

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

Textbooks and Reading Materials

All the information will be available on the e-learning page at the beginning of the lessons.

Sustainable Development Goals

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION | CLIMATE ACTION