UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology of Communication

2425-3-E2001R005

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide an overview of contemporary communication and media dynamics, particularly emphasizing the influence they have on culture. By studying the functioning of old and new media, the course will allow students to deepen their understanding of the technological, social and cultural underpinnings of the contemporary media ecosystem, and will provide them with tools that will be useful during their work life.

Contents

In the first part of the course, we will analyze the main theories of contemporary communication.

In the second part, the focus will be on the changes in the media industry in the new century, aiming to highlight the technological and digital transformations that have profoundly modified this sector. In addition to a series of theoretical lectures to frame the topic, this part will feature thematic insights that will include the presence of external gue guest from various sectors of cultural production and digital entertainment

Detailed program

Culture, technology and media

Communication theory

Digital media: history and social contexts

Paradigms for studying technological innovation

Studying digital media in historical perspective

Models of digital society

The Computer

Internet

Mobile phone

The digitization of analog media

Part Two

Platform strategies

Istitutional changes

Social media intermediaries

Shifting cultural practices

Entertainment sectors

Video games

Celebrities and influencers (nano and micro)

Public shaming

Memes and society

Prerequisites

None

Teaching methods

Lectures, group and individual work.
The course consists of 56 hours, approximately 50% of which will be delivered through traditional teaching methods (lectures with the use of slides, audio, and video) and 50% through interactive teaching methods (exercises, subgroup work, presentation of case studies from which to develop individual and subgroup projects, prepared and discussed during the course).
The lessons will be conducted in person with a maximum of 30 percent conducted remotely.

Assessment methods

Final written exam. The aim of the exam is to asess the comprehension degree of the issues dealt with in the course, the argumentative skills, the clarity of exposition, the accuracy of sociological terminology. Those who participated in group work will have the option to give a presentation arranged with the teacher. The presentation, if judged excellent or very good, can completely replace the final exam; if judged good, it will be averaged with the final exam, which will consist of only one question instead of three.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

1)Balbi, G. Magaudda, P. (2021) *I media digitali. La storia, i contesti sociali, le narrazioni,* Laterza, Roma-Bari

two books from the following options:

Brilli, S. (2002) Youtube freak show. Fama e derisione alle soglie dell'influencer culture, FrancoAngeli
Lolli, A. (2019) La guerra dei meme, Effequ.
Lolli, A (2025) Storia della fama, Effequ
Domaneschi, F (2020) Insultare gli altri, Einaudi.
Eichorn, K. (2023) Content. L'industria culturale nell'era digitale, Einaudi.
Nagle, A. (2018) Contro la vostra realtà, Luiss
Poell, T, Nieborg, D. Duffy, E. (2022) Piattaforme digitali e produzione culturale, Minimun Fax
Ricci, O (2013) Celebrità 2.0. Sociologia delle star nell'epoca dei new media, Meltemi
Ricci, O (2022) L'ultima comunità. I primi vent'anni di Wikipedia, Ledizioni
Ronson, J (2015) I giustizieri della rete. La pubblica umiliazione ai tempi di Internet, Codice

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION