



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Urban Spaces and Social Polarization

2425-1-F8803N029

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#### Learning objectives

The course aims to achieve the following training objectives:

- develop analytical skills to identify and interpret territorial inequalities and social polarisation phenomena;
- provide conceptual and methodological tools for the study of the relations between poverty and territory;
- explore everyday life contexts and mechanisms for tackling social polarisation phenomena in urban spaces;
- know how to analyse action-research projects and practical interventions;
- develop critical and argumentative skills, aptitude for confrontation and dialogical work.

#### Contents

The course aims to provide students with tools and concepts for analysing processes of social and territorial polarisation, focusing on how socio-economic dimensions and differences in migration background, age, gender and sexual orientation influence these phenomena. The course is divided into three parts: research, theory and field projects. It includes the study of the main authors in the literature from the perspective of territorial and spatial sociology, analyses research on topics such as migration, spatial inequalities and gentrification using qualitative analysis methods, and also explores projects that aim to counter socio-territorial polarisation.

#### Detailed program

The course aims to provide students with tools and concepts for the in-depth analysis of social and territorial polarisation processes. It analyses the interactions between socio-economic dimensions that are at the origin of the phenomena of territorial polarisation and differences in migratory background, age, gender and/or sexual orientation, as well as exploring the living contexts and mechanisms that counteract the phenomena of social

polarisation in urban spaces.

The course will be divided into three parts with the aim of analysing the aforementioned issues through three different lenses: that of research, that of theory and that of field projects.

#### Theories and concepts

- The perspective of territorial and spatialist sociology;
- Territorial polarisation in a historical perspective;
- The ideal-typical models of territorial polarisation;
- The different scales of territorial polarisation (e.g. the neighbourhood, the city, the national context);
- The main literature on the subject (e.g. Arbaci, Bourdieu, Small, Van Kempen and Özüekren, Wacquant) and the main reference concepts.

Methods and research that will explore the following thematic focuses:

- Migration and territorial polarisation;
- Territorial inequalities and differences in gender, age and/or sexual orientation;
- Gentrification and displacement processes;
- Methods and tools for the qualitative analysis of urban spaces;
- Public space as a field of struggle for social inclusion/exclusion.

Action-research projects to tackle socio-territorial marginalisation that will explore themes such as:

- Social use of research;
- The phenomenon of school segregation;
- The role of universities in fighting territorial marginalisation;
- Health poverty and territorial inequalities;
- Urban regeneration and social innovation in peripheral contexts.

### **Prerequisites**

Sufficient learning, analysis and oral communication skills.

### **Teaching methods**

The course consists of 56 hours, of which approximately 50% is traditional lecture-based teaching and 50% is interactive (student-teacher dialogues, peer workshops, exercises, presentations by external guests and related discussions).

### **Assessment methods**

Learning is assessed through an individual oral interview based on the reference texts used for the examination. The student's capacity for critical analysis, in-depth analysis and interrelation of the main themes of the course, as well as the ability to provide concrete and relevant examples in relation to the topics covered, will be positively assessed.

In the case of students who attend lectures, the assessment will also take into account the activities carried out

during the course (dialogues, workshops, individual or group exercises).

## **Textbooks and Reading Materials**

The professor collects the most important articles and parts of texts on the topics covered in the course and makes them available to the students.

## **Sustainable Development Goals**

NO POVERTY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

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