UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Pedagogy of Work

2526-2-F5701R039

Course title

Towards and ecology of work: pedagogical perspectives

Topics and course structure

Work is a complex phenomenon situated at the core of social, political and economical interests, crossed by a plurality of individual and collective meanings as well as invested by conflictual expectations such as economic growth and social justice.
Among these issues, sustainability plays a leading role, as highlighted by Agenda 2030, and the first part of the course will trace its origins in relation to different work cultures. Pedagogical knowledge, interdisciplinary at its core, will be particularly useful to explore different dimensions of the phenomenon and converge reflections on the subjectification processes triggered by learning contexts connected to these drivers. The itinerary will be structured on different levels of analysis conceived as deeply interconnected.
At the macro level the focus will be on the role of national and international actors (OECD; EU; UNESCO; WORLD BANK, IMF) in developing policies connected to sustainable development. Circular economy, supported by the recent UE Green Deal, as well as the role of technology and artificial intelligence will be thematized.
At the meso level we will identify institutions, as well as public and private agencies, committed to activate interventions as well as learning and cultural processes connected to the working sphere (from universities to CPIA, from charities to recruiting agencies). Regarding sustainability issues, a particular attention will be dedicated to highlight systemic fragilities and capacities and the role of social protections like active employment policies. At the meso level we will also explore the role of companies and public sector in promoting a fertile dialogue within society (e.g. corporate social responsibility) and in managing inclusion and diversity issues. A series of interesting entrepreneurship activities strictly linked to sustainability dimensions will be proposed along with the analysis of their relationship with external contexts as well as their effects on internal organizational learning processes.
Finally, at the micro level, we will thematize the different individual ways of experiencing working contexts. In particular we will thematize issues related to competence development, professional transitions, the relationship between work and social justice and emerging interactions with AI in workplaces.

This second part of the course will be hence dedicated to understand the different actors reciprocal ways of positioning as well as their potential contributions to sustainability processes.
The course aims to explore an ecological perspective on issues related to work, understood as a complex set of relationships connecting different dimensions (individual trajectories of subjectivation, internal balances within organizations, the relationship between heterogeneous socio-economic and environmental systems, etc.) through different theoretical perspectives and a pedagogical thematization.

Objectives

The course aims to develop:

• knowledge about the main assumptions that, historically, structured different ways of conceiving the relationship between work and sustainability issues;

• knowledge about opportuinities as well as risks and tensions related to different ways of develop psustainaibility issues along the different social levels;

• knowledge of different social actors' roles and assumptions in relation to their contribution in structuring learning processes directed to a more sustainable working sphere.

The course is designed in order to promote the following competences:

• ability to de-construct historical, cultural and disciplinary assumptions underlying different ways of conceiving the relationship between work and sustainability;

• ability to focus the role of training along the current debate on work, employability and socio-economical scenarios;

• ability to detect and apply, in a critical and reflexive way, ideas, theories and practices related to the connections between training, learning and working;

• ability to interrogate the keywords that currently direct HR management (like "competence", "employability", "flexibility", "lifelong learning" etc.) in relation to sustainability issues;

• ability to identify a professional proprium along the different levels of analysis presented and in relation to different social actors in relation to dimensions emerging from sustainable development.

The course aims to promote the following transversal competences:

- Independent judgment;
- Communication skills;
- Ability to learn.

Methodologies

From a methodological point of view, the course favors active methodologies—such as group work and case studies—through which experiences presented by guests and students will be analyzed and discussed, drawing inspiration from the principles of community of practice, open teaching, and the flipped classroom. In this sense, students in the classroom are required to participate actively and critically in order to recognize, in the analysis of

concrete cases, connections with the course contents, linking theory to practice.
As a guideline, all training activities scheduled in the 56 hours are carried out in person.
Lectures will be held in the manner indicated by the rector's decrees; approximately 50% of the hours will be delivered as traditional teaching and 50% as interactive teaching (group work, simulations, meetings with experts, exercises, design, case studies).
The course is taught in Italian.

Online and offline teaching materials

- Presentations;
- Lectures notes;
- Case studies;
- Other didactic materials used during the lessons.

Programme and references

The course will address issues related to work in an ecological perspective, with a main focus on sustainability, unfolding the historical, cultural and socio-economic dimensions through the distinctive interdisciplinary perspective of pedagogical science. Specifically the focus will be on assumptions, cultural backgrounds and intentions of a plurality of actors involved, nationally and internationally, in developing the relationship between learning aspects, working issues and sustainability through policies or professional practices.
Coherently with the professional profile that the Degree aims to develop, the ability to master cultural aspects and operative dimensions connected to the relationship work-sustainability is carried out is consider a special resource for a professional that will operate as HR specialists in changing and unstable contexts.

References

Alessandrini G. (a cura di) (2017). Atlante di pedagogia del lavoro. Franco Angeli: Milano**Only chapters 1, 3, 4 e 7 First Part

Ferrante A., Gambacorti-Passerini M.B., Galimberti A. (2022). Ecologie della formazione. Inclusione, disagio, lavoro. FrancoAngeli: Milano (in particolare la terza parte).

One text among the following:

Zannini L., Daniele K. (2025). La tutoship nella formazione sul campo. Milano: Guerini.

Galimberti A., Muschitiello A. (a cura di) (2022).Pedagogia e lavoro: le sfide tecnologiche. Aras Edizioni: Fano.

Benadusi L., Molina S. (2018). Le competenze. Una mappa per orientarsi. Il Mulino: Bologna. Solo i Capitoli 1, 2, 3 e 4.

Biesta G. (2023) Oltre l’apprendimento. Un’educazione democratica per umanità future: Milano: Franco Angeli.

Romeo S. (in stampa). Pedagogia del lavoro. Precariato, incertezza, educazione informale.

Erasmus students
Erasmus students are requested to write to andrea.galimberti1@unimib.it to agree on the program and exam bibliography. The exam may also be taken in English and French.

Assessment methods

The exam will consist of an oral test and will last approximately 20-40 minutes depending on the progress of the dialogue itself; there will be no intermediate tests.
The choice of an oral interview as the exam method is consistent with the objectives of the course, as it allows for interaction with the student through dialogue, in order to assess their critical understanding of the course topics, their pedagogical analysis, and their ability to connect theory and practice.
The oral exam will assess:

- understanding of the content covered during the course and present in the bibliography;
- critical and reflective thinking skills in relation to the subjects explored;
- the ability to analyze, understand, and interpret problems in workplaces, using independent judgment and positioning oneself in relation to the theories discussed in the course and/or present in the bibliography;
- the ability to make meaningful connections with the content of other courses and with one's own personal and/or professional experiences.

Office hours

The teacher is available to students to arrange a meeting by appointment, in person or remotely. Please write to andrea.galimberti1@unimib.it

Programme validity

Two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | CLIMATE ACTION