UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Welfare and Public Action

2526-2-F8701N084

Learning objectives

The course provides theoretical and analytical tools to understand the transformations of local welfare systems in Italy. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Understand and critically interpret the main changes in local welfare policies;

Analyze actors, processes, and practices, with a particular focus on citizen participation;

Independently evaluate governance dynamics and forms of public action at the local level;

Communicate effectively academic content and arguments;

Develop autonomous learning skills and the ability to stay updated on welfare-related issues.

Contents

After having set out the field (issues and dynamics of local welfare) and the perspective with which we are going to analyse local welfare (the sociology of public action and its instrumentation), we will tackle some of the transformations and processes that characterise it: the advent of neo-liberalism, the role of knowledge and its forms, territorial welfare and community welfare, logics and forms of the public-private relationship, social work and care, ecological justice and social justice.

Detailed program

The course is divided into 6 weeks in which different issues/themes concerning the dynamics and transformations of local welfare systems will be addressed.

In the first week, the field of the course (the governance of local welfare systems) and the viewpoint with which it will be addressed, namely that of the sociology of public action and its instrumentation, will be defined through a discussion of themes and key words.

The second week focuses on the transformations that neo-liberalism has brought into local welfare systems through the analysis of some paradigms that have invested the field in the last 20 years (social investment, social innovation, activation), highlighting how these are part of a more general process of depoliticisation of welfare that takes shape at local level.

In the third week the theme of knowledge, one of the central issues in the transformations of welfare policies in recent years, will be addressed. We will highlight the risks and problems related to the spread of evaluation practices and the need to quantify and measure the effects and efficiency of policies.

In the fourth week, the theme of the territorialisation of welfare will be addressed, working on the transformation that local welfare systems are undergoing with a view towards community welfare. Through an analysis of the most recent devices in this direction we will understand the forms that this change can take in welfare discourse and practices.

The fifth week will be devoted to the issue of the public-private relationship, the forms it takes and the relations it builds in local welfare. Through the analysis of recent transformations with respect to the actors and the logics that insist in the field of welfare, the themes of the financialisation of welfare but also of the reorganisation of local welfare systems during the recent syndemic will be addressed as well as the theme of the crisis of care and the transformations of social work.

Finally, in the sixth week two issues will be addressed: firstly, the housing issue and the framework for housing policy in Italy; secondly, the field of eco-social policies and the transformations of local welfare from an ecological point of view also through specific case studies.

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of welfare systems and public administration in Italy.

Teaching methods

- Lectures (50%)
- Interactive teaching (50% with individual and group readings and exercises in the classroom, visits to significant local welfare realities and projects, testimonials from invited experts)
- No remote teaching will be provided.

Assessment methods

Students attending the course can take the exam writing 3 short papers on the course topics (1/3 assessment) + individual or small group (2 people) analysis of a case study investigated according to the categories and concepts

addressed in the course and present in the reading material. The topic must be defined in agreement with the lecturer and the work must be presented orally during the examination.

Students that are not attending the course can write an individual paper on a case study (about 10 pages - 40,000 characters) analysed according to the categories and concepts addressed in the course and present in the reading material. The topic must be defined in agreement with the lecturer and the paper must be handed in at least one week before the exam; the paper must be presented orally during the exam.

Assessment criteria: the oral exam aims to assess students' knowledge and understanding of the fundamental concepts and content of the course, their ability to make connections and links between topics, and their ability to rework the topics covered in a personal way.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

I week:

Martelli, A. (2007), Verso una nuova governance locale delle politiche sociali?. In “Autonomie locali e servizi sociali”, 1, pp. 97-108

Bifulco L. (2015) Il welfare locale. Processi e prospettive, Roma: Carocci, Capitolo 3.

Lascoumes P. e Le Galès P. (2009), Gli strumenti per governare, Milano: Bruno Mondadori, Introduzione

Moini G. (2013), Interpretare l’azione pubblica, Roma: Carocci, capitolo 1.

II week:

Moini G. (2015), Neoliberismi e azione pubblica, Roma: Ediesse. Introduzione

Moini G., (2017), L’innovazione sociale: an old neoliberist wine in new bottles?, in CARTOGRAFIE SOCIALI, vol. N.3, pp. 69-91.

Cantillon B. (2011), The paradox of the social investment state: growth, employment and poverty in the Lisbon era, Journal of European Social Policy, 21 (5)

Busso S. (2017) The De-Politicization of Social Policy at the Time of Social Investment. Mechanisms and Distinctive Features, in "Partecipazione e conflitto", 10(2), pp. 421-447

III week:

O. De Leonardis (2009) “Conoscenza e democrazia nelle scelte di giustizia”, La Rivista delle Politiche Sociali, n.3, 48-60

Mozzana C. (2019), welfare capacità e conoscenza. Le basi informative dell’azione pubblica. Roma: Carocci.

Sandro Busso, What works. Efficacia e quantificazione nelle politiche sociali in trasformazione, in "Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia, 3-4/2015, pp. 479-502.

IV week:

Bifulco L. (2015), Il welfare locale, Roma: Carocci (cap. 5 Integrazione).

Bifulco Lavinia, Borghi Vando. (2012) Governance, territorio e capacità: le questioni in gioco, in “La rivista delle politiche sociali”, 4, pp. 13 - 35

Vallerani S. (2022), Riflessioni sociologiche su un rapporto in bilico. Salute e Pnrr tra pulsioni conservatrici e istanze trasformative, in «Autonomie locali e servizi sociali»
Centro di Studi e ricerche in Salute internazionale e interculturale (2023), Equità nel diritto alla salute, report di ricerca.

V week:

S. Busso, S. Annunziata (2016), Il valore del lavoro sociale. Meccanismi estrattivi e rappresentazioni del non profit, Sociologia del Lavoro, 142, pp. 62-79

Bifulco L. (2015), Il welfare locale, Roma: Carocci (cap. 7 Pubblico e privato)

Busso S., Gargiulo E. (2016), «Convergenze parallele»: il perimetro (ristretto) del dibattito italiano sul Terzo settore, in "Politiche Sociali, Social Policies" 1, pp. 101-122.

D. Caselli, B. Giullari (2021), Gli operatori in C. Gori (a cura di) Politiche di welfare sociale, Milano, Mondadori Università

Bifulco, Dodaro, Mozzana (2022), Welfare locale e innovazione sociale alla prova dell’emergenza, in Polis

VI week:

Villa M. (2020), Crisi ecologica e nuovi rischi sociali: verso una ricerca integrata in materia di politica sociale e sostenibilità, in Tomei G. (a cura di), Le reti della conoscenza nella società globale, Carocci, Roma, pp. 151-182

Bifulco L. e Mozzana C. (2022), La gestione sociale dell’abitare, Carocci, Roma (capp. 1, 2, 5, 7)

Sustainable Development Goals

NO POVERTY | GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | CLIMATE ACTION | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS