UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology of Education

2627-3-E1901R131

Course title

What We Talk about When We talk About Education

Topics and course structure

The course will seek to provide a sociological definition of educational activity. The initial segment of the course will introduce the principal theoretical frameworks of sociology that enable the understanding of education.

It will thereafter examine the specific modalities of educational work, exploring two dimensions: the ceremonial and credentialing aspects of educational activities, as well as the discretionary elements that characterise the daily practices of educators.

Finally, the ceremonial dimensions of education will be considered through the reading of the works of a classic in sociology, Erving Goffman.

Objectives

Through this course and by consistently and actively participating in class sessions, the following learning outcomes are intended to be promoted in terms of

1. Knowledge and Comprehension

– Developing a critical and well-articulated understanding of the main sociological perspectives on education and the most important theoretical approaches in this field;

– Acquiring knowledge regarding the ceremonial dimensions that characterise educational practices and organisations.

2. Applied knowledge and comprehension

– Applying acquired knowledge and skills to expand, from a sociological perspective, one's professional competence in the field of education and training, linking theory and practice;
– Evaluating work contexts and educational experiences from a critical-interpretive perspective.

3. Independent Judgment

– Acquiring and consolidating analytical and critical thinking skills, developing the capacity for epistemological and methodological reflection to support one's professional responsibilities.

4. Communication Skills

– Development of the ability to communicate effectively within the organisational contexts in which the educational profession is typically practiced;
– Knowledge and use of the specific language and terminology of the sociology of education as tools for evaluation and communication in professional settings

5. Learning Skills

– Ability to process and organise knowledge;
– Ability to critically analyse routine situations characteristic of educational work.

Methodologies

The course is taught in Italian.

The 42 hours of instruction are conducted in person.

Lectures and classroom discussions on the topics covered, with the aim of assessing the critical thinking skills acquired. The course will seek to stimulate debate with students through the analysis of real-world cases.

Film will also be used as a teaching tool.

In this regard, the course is structured as follows in terms of Lectures and Interactive Learning: approximately 80% of the time will be devoted to Lectures and 20% to Interactive Learning, including discussions facilitated by the lecturer.

Online and offline teaching materials

Reading materials are available in the e-learning section of the Sociology of Education course.

Programme and references

1. W.S. Baroni, *Sociologia del lavoro educativo. Un'introduzione*, Carocci, Roma 2021.

2. Cappellato V., Cataldi L., *Coping strategies e razionamento. La discrezionalità degli operatori sociali come street-level bureaucrats e situated agents*, in "Sociologia del lavoro", 155, 2019, pp. 96-119.

3. Meyer J. W., Rowan B, *Le organizzazioni istituzionalizzate. La struttura formale tra mito e cerimonia*, in W. W. Powell e P. J. DiMaggio, *Il neoistituzionalismo nell'analisi organizzativa*, Edizioni di Comunità, Torino, 2000, pp. 59-87

4. One text of your choice between:

E. Goffman, *Asylums. Le istituzioni totali: i meccanismi dell'esclusione e della violenza*. Students can use all available editions. Chapters to read: *Prefazione* di Alessandro Dal Lago, *Prefazione, Premessa, Sulle caratteristiche delle istituzioni totali, La carriera del malato mentale*.

E. Goffman, *La vita quotidiana come rappresentazione*, il Mulino, Bologna. Students can use all available editions. Chapters to read: *Introduzione all'edizione italiana* di Pier Paolo Giglioli, *Introduzione*, *I. Rappresentazioni*, *II. Equipes*, *VI L'arte di controllare le impressioni*.

E. Goffman, *Il rituale dell'interazione*, il Mulino, Bologna. Students can use all available editions. Chapters to read: *Introduzione*, *I. Giochi di faccia, II. La natura della deferenza e del contegno, IV Alienazione dall'interazione, V. Sintomi di malattie mentali ed ordine pubblico.*

As an alternative to the Goffmanian readings, one may opt for:

I.F. Cortés, G. Petti, *Giustizia Minorile. Ascesa e declino del tribunale per minorenni in Italia*, Mondadori Università, Segrate (Mi). Si devono leggere *Indroduzione*, Capitolo 1 *Una giustizia a misura di minori e famiglie*, Capitolo 4 *Verso il declino del Tribunale per i minorenni*, Capitolo 5, *Il destino del Tribunale per i minorenni.*

Assessment methods

Students are required to take an oral exam on the subjects introduced during the lecture.

The choice to use an oral exam as the assessment method is consistent with the course objectives, as it allows for interaction with the student to evaluate their ability to critically understand the course topics and to connect theory with practice.

Moreover, Students will also have the opportunity to write a short essay during the course on the same topics. The short essay will be the subject of assessment. In the event of a positive assessment, the oral exam will not be required. Further information will be provided at the beginning of the course.

The assessment criteria are as follows:

1. ability to respond to the examination questions pertinently;
2. ability to express concepts using a sociological appropriate language.
3. ability to apply sociological theory to the practical realities of daily educational work.

Office hours

By appointment only.

Programme validity

The course syllabus is valid for two academic years.

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

REDUCED INEQUALITIES