UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Organization and Management for Educational Service

2627-2-E1902R022

Course title

Organizing Socio Educational Services

Topics and course structure

Organisations that offer social and educational services play a key role in society, especially in today's world. At the same time, they're facing some big changes. Recent social, cultural, economic, political, regulatory and demographic changes have significantly transformed both the nature, range and complexity of the needs (of individuals, families and communities) to be met and the organisations called upon to interact with those needs. There have been profound changes in organisational structures, in the ways in which the resources necessary for the provision of services are accessed, generated and used, and in the organisational capabilities required to ensure sustainability, quality, innovation and ethics.

However, these changes are also associated with often very significant changes in the knowledge, skills and abilities that area and service managers, coordinators and operators need to act in a scenario that requires reflection, interpretation, negotiation of meanings and decision-making in complex conditions. For many organisations providing social and educational services, the transition to this scenario is well underway and being managed with awareness and method, while for others it represents a challenge that still needs to be addressed.

The course aims to develop awareness of these dynamics of change (which have been accelerated by the reform of the Third Sector) and to develop the knowledge and skills (theories, models and tools) necessary to effectively implement the work behaviours that are essential to ensure two conditions:

- to be able to provide socio-educational services of high significance and quality for users, beneficiaries and various stakeholders;
- to ensure a working environment that is motivating, supportive and capable of ensuring the well-being of all those involved.

Consequently, the course is structured in four parts. The **first part** will discuss the specificities related to the definition and provision of socio-educational services. The key topics will be the organisational elements of a socio-educational service, the management of relations with external stakeholders, the definition of the organisational proposal to the reference community, the definition of objectives and the creation of the conditions necessary to measure and report on the impact/quality of the service offered. The **second part** will analyse and discuss the dimension of individual behaviour, including the role played by key dimensions such as personality and individual differences, perceptions and prejudices, motivation and decision-making styles. The **third part** will consider the dimension of work groups and interpersonal dynamics: the key themes will be group processes and dynamics, the conditions for effective work teams, group decision-making processes, conflict, power and influence dynamics. Finally, in the **fourth part**, the analysis will focus on the main variables that characterise the organisation within which individuals and groups act: the key topics will be organisational culture, structures, roles, control and coordination processes, and personnel management systems (tasks, responsibilities, delegation).

Objectives

Organisations that provide social and educational services are not all the same. Nor are the services they offer. At the same time, every service professional has their own preferences, values, ambitions, and visions of the service and the world.
Promoting the greater match between individual characteristics, the job and the organisation in which it is carried out is one of the fundamental prerequisites for ensuring quality services and, at the same time, the well-being and satisfaction of educators. However, this requires knowledge and skills that are neither instinctive nor naive. Consequently, the aim of the course is to promote and consolidate the ability to read and interpret the characteristics of organisations and the services they provide, as well as the skills and behaviours that the organisation itself expects its educators to demonstrate, so as to enable students to play an active and informed role in their professional work and in their relationship with the organisation.

In particular, the course aims to promote the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and skills

- develop basic knowledge in the field of social and educational service organisation;
- promote knowledge of the different dimensions that influence work behaviour in social and educational services;
- develop the knowledge and skills useful for understanding the dynamics of mutual influence that occur in the organisation-people relationship;
- discuss theories, models and tools underlying effective organisational behaviour;
- recognise the individual determinants of behaviour (skills and motivation).

Application of knowledge and understanding

- acquire awareness and analytical and critical thinking skills regarding the complexity of work behaviour in services, in order to promote behaviour in oneself and others that is conducive to the provision of high-quality services;
- analyse and interpret inconsistencies and/or organisational problems in order to identify possible solutions;
- acquire the ability to apply theoretical knowledge to specific organisational situations in order to act as an active agent of improvement.

Autonomy of judgement

- acquire the ability to interpret the dynamics at work in contemporary services;
- develop and argue a critical reflection on the provision of socio-educational services that are significant, assessable in terms of their impact, sustainable and innovative;

- carry out a critical reflection on empirical cases guided by theoretical perspectives and analytical models;

Communication skills
develop the ability to independently formulate ideas and thoughts, argue them and communicate them, supporting discussion and debate with other actors;
work in coordination with colleagues, including when managing projects;
analyse group behaviour dynamics: conflict, power, leadership, culture;

Learning skills

- manage relationships between one's own organisation and key actors in the external environment;
- influence processes and participate in change initiatives;
- reflect on one's professional experience, identifying areas for further development, including training initiatives to be promoted in relation to the organisation of relevant social and educational services.

Overall, at the end of the course, students will have developed the ability, on the one hand, to understand organisations that provide social and educational services and how they work and, on the other hand, to understand to what extent and how their own behaviour is influenced by and, at the same time, can influence the organisation and behaviour of other actors. Students will learn the basics of organisational behaviour, know how to apply them in the context of social and educational services, and have a framework for reflecting on their own and others' work behaviour with a view to continuous growth.

Students will demonstrate a knowledge of basic organizational behaviour and its handling in socio-educational services. In particular, they will be able

- to understand individual antecedents of behaviour (competence and motivation);
- to analyse group dynamics: conflict, power, leadership and culture;
- to manage process of influence and be part of change initiatives;
- to act in coordination with teammates, even in project setting;
- to manage relationships between their organization and key stakeholders.

Methodologies

The course aims to promote experiential and reflective learning methods, supported by theoretical sessions. For this reason, all lessons include a lecture component (LC) and an interactive component (IC). More specifically, the course consists of 28 two-hour lessons in Italian, divided into:

14 lessons (50% of the course) consisting of 70% lecture and 30% interactive learning.

The lecture component is aimed at sharing content, concepts and theoretical frameworks in the form of a lecture given by the teacher. The interactive component takes the form of a plenary discussion of textual, graphic and video resources, with the teacher acting as a facilitator. It is supported by the use of instant polls, the generation and discussion of cloudwords, image metaphors, etc. using interactive digital tools.

11 lessons (39% of the course) consisting of 50% lecture and 50% interactive learning.
These lessons normally begin with a lecture to share a theoretical/conceptual framework and guidelines for analysing cases or incidents (provided in advance to students via the Moodle course environment). Cases and incidents are analysed and discussed in the interactive and reflective phase of the lesson, first in small groups and then in a plenary session with the teacher acting as facilitator. The final phase of these lessons, which is again lecture-based, aims to clarify the links between the theoretical and methodological elements and the aspects that emerged from the case discussions, supporting and reinforcing the development of both disciplinary and cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills, which are the objectives of the course.

3 lessons (11% of the course) consisting of 20% lecture and 80% interactive learning. These lessons include testimonials from experts/professionals in the service sector, as well as role-plays and simulations aimed at involving students in experiential activities to be reflected upon in the classroom, under the guidance of the teacher, through individual assessments, small group discussions and finally in a plenary session. The aim is to promote and consolidate the development of both disciplinary and cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills, which are the objectives of the course.

Of the total 56 hours of teaching, 57% is traditional teaching (DE) and 43% is interactive teaching (DI).

Online and offline teaching materials

Programme and references

- Robbins S. P. & Judge T. A.., 2021, Organizational Behavior, Pearson;
- other resources that will be defined taking into account specific student's learning needs and interests (please get in touch with the teacher at cristiano.ghiringhelli@unimib.it)

Assessment methods

Oral Examination (English language). The examination will assess the following subjects:

- knowledge of the content covered (concepts, theories and models),
- the ability to critically rework the content presented,
- the ability to apply the content to the analysis of cases presented in the supporting materials (business cases, video and text resources) accompanying the texts indicated,
- formal accuracy in the discipline and correct use of specialist language.

In particular, the assessment will be based on the Dublin Descriptors listed in the ‘OBJECTIVES’ section using the following grading scale:

Not satisfactory (0-17/30)

- Knowledge and understanding: superficial or confused understanding of the key concepts of the course. Lack of references to case studies and other teaching resources or inability to relate them to theoretical models.
- Application: poor ability to transfer knowledge and theoretical models to concrete situations; descriptive and generic approach, lacking awareness of organisational behaviour in social and educational services.
- Autonomy and critical thinking: no personal elaboration; inability to recognise contextual and contingent factors related to the provision of a social and educational service.
- Communication: approximate, imprecise language. Confused and unstructured formulation. Inappropriate use of organisational terminology.
- Learning: lack of reflection on one's own role. Lack of awareness of the relational and organisational processes studied.

Satisfactory (18-23/30)

- Knowledge and understanding: general knowledge of the content, but with gaps or simplifications. Recognition of the main models and dimensions underlying work behaviour in socio-educational contexts,

but difficulty in examining and (in the case of oral interviews) discussing details.
- Application: substantial adherence to what was proposed in the teaching without personal elaboration. Ability to link course concepts only to known or previously discussed examples and at a general level, with significant difficulty in proposing original analyses based on personal reflection and reworking.
- Autonomy and critical thinking: limited or partial personal elaboration of the content and perspectives proposed in the teaching programme.
- Communication: overall clear and coherent presentation, but with language and structure that strictly conforms to what is proposed in the teaching resources.
- Learning: sufficient or fair ability to connect the course content to reflection on one's role as an educator in social and educational services. Timid awareness of the professional dimension inherent in the role.

Adequate (24-27/30)

- Knowledge and understanding: confident knowledge of the content, with rare gaps or simplifications. Recognition of the main models and dimensions underlying work behaviour in socio-educational services, examined in detail with limited and localised inaccuracies.
- Application: personal elaborations on what was proposed in the teaching, but not fully developed. Ability to link course concepts to known or already discussed examples at a general level, partial ability to propose original analyses based on personal reflections and reworkings of the teaching resources proposed
- Autonomy and critical thinking: good ability to personally elaborate on the content and perspectives proposed in the teaching programme.
- Communication: overall clear and coherent presentation, the result of personal elaboration demonstrating adequate appropriation of the topics and links between the dimensions of organisational change discussed in class and a personal analysis of the proposed resources that is not superficial.
- Learning: good ability to connect the course content to reflection on one's role as an educator in social and educational services. Initial awareness of the professional dimension inherent in the role.

Excellent (28-30 with honours/30)

- Knowledge and understanding: full, articulate and in-depth mastery of the topics covered. Ability to link theoretical models, tools and methods for understanding, analysing and effectively acting on work behaviours in social and educational services in all their constituent dimensions, both individual and collective. Ability to discuss and reason about the complexity of socio-educational work with confidence and competence.
- Application: autonomy in the analysis of concrete cases and a proactive attitude. Relevant use of theoretical models to contemporary socio-educational work scenarios. Ability to analyse cases and situations, even unfamiliar ones, methodically establishing one's own work behaviour posture.
- Autonomy and critical thinking: independent and original interpretation of contextual factors and contingencies. Critical thinking and ability to reflect on the interactions between dimensions that can influence work behaviour in social and educational services. Ability to take a position on alternative perspectives, arguing the reasons for doing so.
- Communication: fluent, precise language appropriate to the discipline. Well-organised, non-redundant presentation, with awareness of the context, theoretical constructs and the relationships between them.
- Learning: full awareness of one's own training path. Ability to interpret the organisation as a space for negotiating perspectives, perceptions and meanings, as well as for individual and collective learning. Non-superficial reflection on one's future role within social and educational service organisations.

Office hours

Please check the following web page: https://www.unimib.it/cristiano-ghiringhelli

Programme validity

Two academic years.

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION | GENDER EQUALITY | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH