UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology

2627-2-E2006P015

Learning area

Interdisciplinary knowledge

- Introductory course to the analysis of social phenomena from a sociological point of view

Learning objectives

- Knowledge and understanding
  Ability to understand the social phenomena from a sociological perspective
- Applying knowledge and understanding
  Ability to apply sociological concepts and theories in the analysis of everyday life interactions
- Making Judgements
  Ability to understand some of the changes which are taking place in contemporary societies and how actors carry out their ordinary activities
- Communication skills
  Ability to establish an 'object' of investigation and how to argue about its characteristics both through written papers and through the formalised oral language of sociology
- Learning skills
  Encourage students to study social processes from a sociological point of view; introduce them to the themes and theories present in the sociological field in oder to their autonomy of investigation and judgment

Contents

The lectures aim to investigate the taken-for-granted social life; they ‘deconstruct’ such reality in order to focus on some of the processes by which social life takes place. The Course is organized around five main topics:

1. the interpretation of modern society given by the founding fathers of sociology;
2. some of the most relevant sociological categories and research fields – from stratification to social mobility;
3. socialization;
4. the correlation between everyday life and daily experiences of social reality;
5. the role played by the techno-scientific kowledge in daily life routines: that is, the development of the ‘mass knowledge society’.

Detailed program

- Introduction to sociological epistemology: positivism, realism, interpretative sociological understanding
- Modern society and Sociology
- Secularization, citizenship, power, and the problem of social order in modern societies
- Interpretation of modern society worked out by the founding fathers of Sociology (Functionalism, Durkheim, Marx, Weber)
- Very brief overview on contemporary sociological theories: structuralfuncionalism (Parsons, Merton), power and social conflict (Dahrendorf, Collins), the sociology of everyday life (Goffman)
- Some themes of sociological investigation: citizenship, power, stratification, social inequalities, public policies, social mobility
- Role and function of socialization
- Socialization and biology
- Socialization and the common sense culture
- Socialization and the theories of personality (Behaviourism, Mead, Freud, Piaget)
- Agencies of socialization
- The life course as a socially constructed reality
- The investigation of the taken for granted reality of social life and the social construction of everyday life
- The social ‘knowledge’ in ordinary life and the structuration of everyday practices
- Body, time, space: three crucial variables of social life
- Action, ontological security and social practices
- Technologies of everyday life, time-space distanciation, indirect relations, and the mass knowledge society

Prerequisites

No particular prerequisite.
However, given the topics that will be covered especially in the first part of the Course, it is recommended to read the Italian Constitution: articles 1-54 (also for your own personal culture). Obviously, since this is an optional reading, it will not be evaluated during the exam.

Teaching methods

This Course will be delivered in the first semester.
The Course is held in Italian.

The teaching method used is in terms of lectures: 28 lectures of 2 hours in presence.
Classes are lecture-based and do not include group work or individual presentations; however, discussions on specific topics may occur if prompted by the Professor.
Before the start of the Course, and once the class schedules and classrooms have been set, a detailed syllabus of the topics to be discussed in each lecture will be uploaded to the Course's elearning page.

The teaching method and topics discussed focus on the development of synhthesis skills, thus facilitating the practical application of the theoretical concepts.
Lectures and class discussions aim to show how science can be applied in studying everyday situations.
Students are expected to be able to make use of the various topics approached during the lectures in order to describe and understand daily situations, making use of their own indipendent judgement.

Assessment methods

Erasmus students: the exam can be taken in Italian or in English; the student can also decide for an English bibliography; in both cases, it is required to arrange a preliminary appointment with the Professor in order to establish the bibliography and the exam method, which is however mostly written.

During the Course, there will be no intermediate evaluations. The exams will take place in normal sessions.
The bibliography is the same for attending and non-attending students.

Written (required) with a duration of 120 minutes; oral (optional).

The written exam includes:

1. a section of multiple choice questions (only one is the correct answer); the correct answer is the most complete and logical one from the point of view of sociological reasoning; the alternatives can be in terms of:
   1.1. answers that although correct are however incomplete;
   1.2. generic or approximate answers;
   1.3. false or unlikely answers;

2. a section with open questions (in terms of very short essays).

About the written part of the exam, the section of the open questions (2) will be evaluated only if the students pass the section of the multiple choice questions (1). Otherwise, the written exam is considered not passed.
One can take the oral examination only after having passed the written one. The oral examination (optional) covers the whole program and the final vote is the average of the written and oral part. The oral examination aims to verify student ability in relation to arguments indicated in the bibliography.

Evaluation criteria for both written and oral examination:

- Appropriate use of technical formal language – scientific formal skills
- Logical accuracy in the presentation of topics
- Ability to identify the connections between issues
- Completeness of the illustration of the topics given the limits of time and available pages (written)

The scores obtained in both the written and oral examinations are to be interpreted as follows:

- 30 cum laude: Excellent performance, demonstrating outstanding subject knowledge alongside exceptional critical analysis and expressive clarity

- 30: Outstanding performance, characterized by comprehensive knowledge, sound analytical structuring, and highly accurate articulation
- 27–29: Good performance, reflecting thorough and satisfactory knowledge with substantially correct expression
- 24–26: Fair performance; core knowledge is present but lacks depth, and arguments are not consistently well-structured or precise
- 21–23: Satisfactory performance, though knowledge is occasionally superficial and the clarity of expression and analysis shows noticeable gaps
- < 18: The student’s performance is insufficient; knowledge of the subject is either absent or severely fragmented, demonstrating a fundamental lack of orientation within the discipline.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Erasmus students: as already indicated, the student can choose between an Italian or English bibliography; however, the student must arrange a preliminary appointment with the Professor.

The bibliography is the same for both attending and non-attending students.

Bibliography:

1. Dispensa (downloadable from the Course's elearning page);
2. Ghisleni M. (1998), *Teoria sociale e modernità. Saggio sulla storia della sociologia*, Carocci, Roma: Chap. I (excluded par. 1.6), Chap. II, Chap. III, Chap. IV, Chap. V, Chap. VII (only par. 7.1);
3. Bagnasco A., Barbagli M., Cavalli A. (2012), *Corso di sociologia*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 3rd edition: Chap. I (only par. 6), Chap. II, Chap. III (excluded par. 6.1, 6.2, 7), Chap. XI (excluded par. 4, 7, 8), Chap. XII;
4. Ghisleni M., Moscati R. (2001), *Che cos’è la socializzazione*, Carocci, Roma;
5. Ghisleni M. (2004), *Sociologia della quotidianità. Il vissuto giornaliero*, Carocci, Roma: Presentazione, Chap. I, Chap. II, Cahp. III (excluded par. 3.5), Chap. IV (only par. 4.6, 4.7), Glossario-Dizionario;
6. Ghisleni M. (2014), *Presenza, assenza e delocalizzazione: le interazioni indirette e la disaggregazione spazio-temporale*, in Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia, LV, n. 3, pp. 527-552 (downloadable from the Course's elearning page).

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION