UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Sociology of Cultural and Communicative Processes and Signing Communities

2627-1-E2007P002

Learning area

III. Learning area: Acquisition of socio-cultural contextual knowledge and skills aimed at interlingual and intercultural communication and mediation in the context of deafness

Learning objectives

Knowledge and Understanding

- History of sign communities
- Interpretive models of deafness
- The concepts of community, identity and culture applied to sign communities
- Sign communities as linguistic and cultural minorities
- Deaf Studies: origins, interpretations and main developments

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding.

- In situations of linguistic and cultural mediation between sign and hearing communities
- In situations of interaction with national and international sign communities

Contents

The history of deaf people and sign language communities from ancient times to the present day will be presented,

seeking to identify both the original characteristics of each context analysed and the longue durée phenomena that have strongly characterised the last few centuries.
Deaf Studies will be presented as an interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary field of research and its role in the emergence of new forms of deaf subjectivity, with reference to three fundamental periods: the breakdown of the hearing monologue, the birth of a new deaf subject, and the proliferation of approaches to deafness. The main theories and authors involved in Deaf Studies will also be explored in depth.

Detailed program

• Presentation of the course, its structure and the concept of hearing privilege
• Deaf Studies: basic concepts
• History of deaf people from their origins to the 18th century
• The 18th century and the structuring of deaf communities
• The positivist 19th century and the Milan Congress
• The 20th century between biopower and discipline
• William Stokoe, Gallaudet and the linguistic shift
• Field of action and interpretations: origins of DS, subject matter of DS, disciplinary sectors, interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinarity, academic demands and political objectives
• d/Deaf: uses and interpretations from Woodward to today
• Identity, community and culture: the concepts of deaf community and culture in Carol Padden and Padden and Humphries, the concept of talking culture in Tom Humphries, the BakerShenk-Cockely model.
• Harlan Lane's ethnosymbolism
• Audism in Humphries, Lane, Bauman, Eckert and Rowley, Genie Gertz
• The concept of Deafhood in Paddy Ladd.
• The concept of Deaf Gain
• New perspectives in Deaf Studies

Prerequisites

None.

For the academic year 2026/2027 it will not be possible to select this course as a single-course entry.
Exam not selectable from the study plan by students not enrolled in Interpretariato e Traduzione in Lingua dei Segni Italiana (LIS) e Lingua dei Segni Italiana Tattile (LIST) *(Italian Sign Language (LIS) and Tactile Italian Sign Language (LIST) Interpretation*).

Teaching methods

Teaching: 26 hours
Lectures
Interactive teaching: 16 hours
Part of the teaching will take place through the discussion of scientific articles and the viewing and commentary of films and documentaries. The material or its source will be made available on the course's e-learning site so that it can also be accessed by non-attending students. Attending students can explore certain topics of the course in greater depth by reading scientific articles and preparing a presentation and/or a short thesis.

Assessment methods

Assessments are both written, in the form of closed-ended tests, and oral, in the form of presentations on topics covered during the lectures, which will be explored in greater depth through scientific articles assigned in class. The questions are mainly aimed at assessing the effective acquisition of theoretical knowledge, while the presentations are mainly aimed at assessing the ability to apply the knowledge acquired to the analysis of themes and topics discussed in the reference literature. The tests and discussions of scientific articles will be averaged with the final exam score. The examination consists of a test and an interview. Students who take the tests during the lessons will not be required to take the test on the day of the examination. For students who request it, there will also be an oral interview on all the topics covered in the course, which may lead to an increase or decrease in the score of the ongoing assessments.

Evaluation grid:
-18: Barely passing knowledge, minimal application and interpretation skills.
-19–22: Satisfactory knowledge of core content, with some inconsistencies in application.
-23–26: Fair knowledge, good application skills with occasional inaccuracies.
-27–30: Solid knowledge, strong command of content, and critical thinking skills.
-30 with honors (30 e lode): Comprehensive knowledge, full mastery of the subject, and excellent command of academic language.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

The bibliography will be posted on the course eLearning website before the start of classes.

Sustainable Development Goals

REDUCED INEQUALITIES