



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Metodi della Ricerca Sociale e Organizzativa

2627-1-E1602N006

Aims

Knowledge and Understanding: to gain familiarity with the main methods of social research, while developing critical thinking skills in research design, as well as in the interpretation, production, and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Applying Knowledge and Understanding: to provide the skills necessary to design research projects and independently analyze the main types of quantitative and qualitative datasets in the field of social and organizational research, addressing descriptive, predictive, and causal questions.

Making Judgements: to develop the ability to critically assess the structure of a research study in the social and organizational domain, and to interpret its results thoughtfully, through the acquisition of appropriate analytical and reflective tools.

Communication Skills: to develop the ability to effectively communicate the design and implementation of a research project, as well as to present the results of quantitative and qualitative analyses clearly and appropriately.

Learning Skills: to promote independent learning by providing guidance and resources for further exploration of the topics covered during the course.

Contents

The paradigms of social research; qualitative and quantitative approaches; literature review; research design and data collection methods (sample surveys, experiments, participant observation, in-depth interviews, document analysis); probability and non-probability sampling designs; univariate and bivariate data analysis.

Detailed program

The course aims to provide students with the theoretical and practical skills necessary to design and carry out empirical research in the field of social and organizational sciences. The course is structured to guide students step by step through the main phases of the research process, fostering a critical and applied understanding of methodological choices. The course covers the following topics:

1. Introduction to Social Research

- The role of empirical research in the social sciences
- Main epistemological traditions and research paradigms
- Basic research and applied research

2. Defining the Research Problem and Developing Hypotheses

- Formulating research questions
- Constructing hypotheses and defining study objectives
- The role of theory and literature review

3. Operationalization of Concepts and Construction of Measurement Tools

- Conceptual and operational definition of variables
- Levels of measurement and their implications for data analysis
- Validity and reliability of measurement instruments

4. Research Design

- The logic of research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches
- Experimental, quasi-experimental, and observational designs
- Strategies for controlling threats to internal and external validity

5. Sampling Designs

- Concepts of population, unit of analysis, and sample
- Probability sampling designs (simple random, stratified, cluster, systematic)
- Non-probability sampling designs (quota, purposive, snowball sampling)

6. Data Collection Methods

- Sample surveys and standardized questionnaires
- Experiments and variable manipulation
- Participant observation and in-depth interviews
- Document and secondary data analysis

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

- Univariate analysis: frequency distributions, measures of central tendency and dispersion
- Bivariate analysis: cross-tabulations, correlations, comparison of means
- Introduction to qualitative analysis techniques (coding, categorization, thematic analysis)

8. Presentation and Communication of Results

- Principles of data visualization
- Writing the research report
- Communicating results to both scientific and non-specialist audiences

Prerequisites

None

Teaching form

The course consists of a total of 56 hours of in-person instruction, structured through a combination of lecture-based (didactic) and interactive teaching methods. Each session is divided into two parts: a first phase devoted to the presentation of theoretical and methodological content by the instructor (didactic mode), followed by a second phase in which students engage in practical activities, such as individual or group exercises (using the statistical software STATA and R), presentations, guided discussions, and case study analyses (interactive mode).

The proportion between the two teaching modes may vary depending on the topic covered. Overall, approximately 80% of the course time is dedicated to the didactic mode and 20% to the interactive mode. The course is entirely conducted in Italian.

Textbook and teaching resource

M. Lucchini (2018) Metodologia della ricerca sociale, Pearson, Milano

Semester

october 2025- december 2025

Assessment method

Student learning will be monitored through active participation in classroom discussions and a final examination. The exam will consist of a written test, followed by an oral examination.

The written test will be administered through the computer-based exam platform and will be divided into two sections:

Section One: 30 multiple-choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 1 point; incorrect or unanswered questions are worth 0 points.

Section Two: One open-ended question, accessible only if the student scores 18 out of 30 or higher in the first

section.

After evaluation of the open-ended response, students will be invited to participate in an oral discussion on topics covered during the course.

The total time allotted for the written test is 45 minutes.

Achieving the minimum score in the multiple-choice section does not automatically guarantee passing the exam.

The final evaluation of the open-ended question and the oral examination will be based on three main criteria: accuracy of content, completeness of arguments, clarity of presentation.

Office hours

Wednesday (11.00-12.00)

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION
