# . – Elements and Methods of Sociology (2022-23)

## Prof. Monica Martinelli

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with the fundamentals required to understand the society through an in-depth analysis of sociological issues both at theoretical and at methodological level.

More specifically, the course aims to provide students with:

* a general overview of sociology as independent subject within human and social sciences;
* the tools to understand the difference between sociological knowledge and commonsense knowledge:
* the main categories of sociological analysis that play a fundamental role in understanding life in a society;
* the ability to interpret with conceptual tools and the main methodological references of sociological analysis the complex social phenomena concerning specific organised socio-cultural contexts and the individuals’ experiences.

Furthermore, the course aims to guide students through a sociological interpretation of the main transformations occurring during childhood in European societies.

At the end of the course, students will be able to: describe the main currents of the sociological thought, as well as their epistemological frameworks and main categories; carry out a critical analysis of social trends, thanks to the creation of a theoretical framework of reference allowing them to form an independent judgement concerning social and cultural processes; plan educational interventions using the tools provided by sociological analysis and research.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is composed of three modules.

I) The first focuses on the origins of sociological thought and the understanding of sociology as a scientific subject. To this aim, the course will analyse the historical origin of the subject and its distinctive aspects (fundamental issues, object, perspective and main paradigms) and classic authors (in particular, Marx, Durkheim, Weber e Simmel).

II) The second module focuses on fundamental categories and other key areas of sociological analysis, such as: action, relation, role, institution, culture, socialization processess, power, conflict, difference, inequality, social stratification etc. These categories will be presented through thematic paths useful for understanding processes and phenomena of organised social life. These in-depth analyses will be based on the contribution of different authors and of classic and contemporary sociological schools of thought as well as on interactive forms of practical exercises in class.

III) The third module aims to introduce certain elements which are related to the sociology of childhood: the condition of childhood in post-modern societies; the rediscovery of childhood in sociology: models and methods of interpretation and analysis; the child's agency; children and daily life; children’s cultures; childhood, family and social changes; children's rights; children and the media.

***READING LIST***

For the first and the second module:

* L. Gherardi (edited by), *Scoprire la sociologia. Teorie e temi essenziali*, Pearson, Milano, 2021
* A handout with introduction to some authors. Precise directions will be given at the beginning of the course

For the third module:

- W. Corsaro, *Sociologia dell’infanzia*, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 2020 (a selection of chapters will be provided during the course by the lecturer and on Blackboard).

The TEACHING MATERIAL to support the lectures will be made available throughout the course on the *Blackboard* platform (address: <http://blackboard.unicatt.it>). On the same platform, further readings will be specified and/or included (articles, anthology texts by some sociologists, essays, reports, etc.) useful for understanding the issues addressed in the course modules and for the thematic in-depth studies conducted.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course consists of class lectures that present, on a weekly basis, course content. To this aim, supplemental lecture material will be made available on the *Blackboard* platform. During lectures students will carry out some practical exercises, where they will further analyse, in a participatory fashion, both some specific issues and the perspective used to observe and learn about socio-cultural processes.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

An oral interview in which students will be asked to analytically present and critically discuss the topics covered during the course. Students should demonstrate knowledge of writers, sociological theories and categories, as well as be able to use specific subject language and vocabulary appropriately. Furthermore, students should show that they possess clear references in relation to general content of sociology of childhood.

Assessment will be based on accuracy of students’ study and quality of students’ comprehension, together with students’ ability to make connections between sociological concepts and the main authors and reference paradigms, as well as their ability to support arguments with examples from contexts in daily life.

Assessment, during the final examination, will be calculated as a single mark out of thirty.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

*Prerequisites*

There are no prerequisites for attending the course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board.