# - Economic Sociology of Work and Organisations

## Prof. Maddalena Colombo

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

The course aims to provide students with the essential tools to understand the relationships between economy and society, with reference to the transition from industrial to post-industrial and globalised economy. Within the paradigm of the new economic sociology, which sees the market as a social construction and not as a self-regulated system, the aim is to provide the foundations for reading the transformations of work and organisations.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Achieve knowledge with the support of advanced textbooks, of some cutting-edge themes on the transformations of work.
* Argue on the processes of economic development in relation to the evolution of society.
* Collect and interpret some relevant statistical data.
* Develop the skills necessary for subsequent studies in the socio-organisational and human resources training fields.

***COURSE CONTENT***

In the first part of the course students will focus on how sociology interprets economic life, with reference to the paradigms considered classic (Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Parsons, Polanyi), and a specific focus on the turning point of the so-called “new economic sociology” (Granovetter). Students will try to understand the behaviours and factors underlying economic life (reciprocity, redistribution, market competition, organised interests) and changes in the labour market, up to the current de-standardisation and flexibilisation, and the consequent risks of precarisation that threaten work as a right/duty of citizens (work-citizenship relationship).

The second part will provide the foundations of organisational theory useful for describing and understanding organisations (functions, structure, activities, and organisational culture). With regard to the case of school-educational organisations, the C. Weick's paradigm of *loose coupling organisation* will be applied.

***READING LIST***

For the first part (Economic Sociology), students will have to study the following compulsory textbooks:

1. E. Mingione, *Sociologia della vita economica*, Nuova italia Scientifica, Rome 1997 (Introduction and Ch. 1).
2. R. Lodigiani*, Lavoratori e cittadini*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2018

For the second part (Sociology of organisation), students will have to prepare a thesis, according to the teacher's instructions, based on the lesson materials and the textbook:

1. K. Weick, *Le organizzazioni scolastiche come sistemi a legame debole,* in M. Colombo (a cura di), *E* *come Educazione. Autori e parole chiave della sociologia*, Liguori, Neaples, 2006 (pp. 205-215; 253-270.

Any additional materials will be provided to students.

***TEACHING METHOD***

All lessons will be supplemented by materials (slides and stimulus texts) on Blackboard. In addition to the frontal lesson, the following teaching methods will be used: classroom discussion; Forum activities on Blackboard; students’ presentation of further study textbooks in the classroom (optional).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

For the first part, the assessment will cosnists of an oral interview with reference to the contents and textbooks relating to points 1-2.

For the second part (point 3) it is mandatory to send a written essay of maximum 5 pages, as agreed with the teacher. (The essay must be sent by email to the teacher at least 7 days before the date on which the student wants to take the exam). The overall assessment will take into account the students’ preparation and argumentative ability (and possible participation in forum activities and classroom feedback) as well as the mark of the essay.﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿

The final assessment will take account of the results obtained in the parts of the exam.

The following marking rubric will be used:

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| Assessment criteria | Levels of mastery |
| Basic(18-23) | Intermediate(24-27) | High(28-30+) |
| Preparation  | The presentation reveals an essential, though not complete, knowledge of the course contents, expressed using limited language.  | The presentation displays a full knowledge of the course contents, presented using the appropriate language.  | The presentation reveals a remarkable mastery of the course contents, presented using an appropriate and rich language. |
| Argumentation  | The student argues what they have presented in a commonsensical way.  | The student argues what they have presented with relevant scientific inferences and references | The student argues what they have presented with rich and convincing inferences and references.  |

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Prerequisite of the course is knowledge of the foundations of general sociology and/or sociology of education. The active participation of students during lessons, in any forums and in the presentation of texts or case studies in the classroom will be valued.

***NOTES***

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.