**Sociology of Health**

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

The aim of the course is to provide students with basic knowledge for the interpretation of micro, meso and macro sociological aspects revolving around the relationship between health and society, through an in-depth study of the key authors and concepts of the sociology of health. Furthermore, the course is aimed at providing theoretical and methodological tools for the design and implementation of interventions based on the integration of social and healthcare services.

At the end of the course, students will be capable of:

- knowing the fundamentals and main currents of thought of the sociology of health;

- reflecting on the main conceptual categories of the discipline;

- critically interpreting social dynamics affecting health, with a special focus on the understanding of contemporary challenges;

- applying acquired knowledge to the design of interventions aimed at meeting health needs, based on the logic of integration of social and healthcare services;

- identifying, at the operational level, health promotion strategies and strategies for fighting social determinants of health inequalities.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided in two parts:

1. A first theoretical part, which will cover various authors and key topics of the sociology of health, firstly regarding microsociological perspectives, the background and the illness experience, social construction of the body, the life course perspective, mental health and disability; on the subject of mesosociological perspectives, the course will cover the topics of family relationships, social and healthcare networks, citizens associations and co-production of cure, and the integration of social and healthcare services in local communities; finally, concerning macro aspects the course will cover the topics of health policies and health systems, social inequalities of health, medicalisation, digital health and migrant health. During lectures students will receive heuristic tools for the understanding and analysis of the different scenarios. Particular attention will be paid to ageing and disability issues, through a life course approach.
2. A second practical and applied part, in which students will have the opportunity of putting into practice the knowledge acquired during the first part of the course through exercises and group discussions. More specifically, students will be able to carry out the empirical analysis of some social phenomena and related health practices, with a special focus on the following topics: ageing; background and the illness experience and disability; digital health; social inequalities of health; co-production of cure pathways.

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

M. Cardano, G. Giarelli, G. Vicarelli (edited by), *Sociologia della salute e della medicina*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2020 (excluding Chaps. IX, X).

One of the following articles (aviable on Blackboard):

M. Bury (1982). Chronic illness as biographical disruption. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 4(2), 167–182.

P. Conrad, K.K. Barker (2010). The social construction of illness: Key insights and policy implications. *Journal of health and social behavior*, 51(1\_suppl), S67-S79.

A. Peine, L. Neven (2021). The co-constitution of ageing and technology–a model and agenda. *Ageing & Society*, 41(12), 2845-2866.

S. Sabat, S., & R. Harré (1992). The Construction and Deconstruction of Self in Alzheimer's Disease. *Ageing and Society*, 12(4), 443-461.

T. Shakespeare (2006). The social model of disability. In Lennard J.Davis (eds.), *The disability studies reader*, Routledge, New York, 214-221.

In addition, students are required to study the slides and any possible material for in-depth study made available on the Blackboard platform, both for the first and the second part of the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Remote and frontal teaching, complemented by slides, videos and readings. The material will be available on the Blackboard platform. The lessons will include individual and group exercises.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The method used to assess the knowledge and competences acquired by students is an oral exam, consisting in a single test with questions on the entire course programme.

During the exam, students must show that they: (1) have acquired the knowledge on the authors and key topics covered during the course; (2) are proficient in the use of the disciplinary lexicon; (3) are capable of designing interventions using the tools provided by the course.

Students will be invited to present course issues, using a specific and adequate lexicon, arguing their statements extensively. The criteria used to assess competences are: knowledge of the topics presented during the course (from 0 to 15 points), clarity of presentation (0-5), argumentative relevance (0-5), critical skills (0-5). The use of examples which shown students’ interest in the discipline will be particularly appreciated and great weight will be given to students’ active participation during lessons with questions and personal reflection.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

There are no knowledge prerequisites for students to attend the course.

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

1. The texts specified in the reading list can be purchased at University bookshops; students may also purchase them from other booksellers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)