# Sociology

## Prof. Giovanna Mascheroni; Prof. Lorenzo Giuseppe Zaffaroni

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

The course aims to provide students with the fundamentals of sociological knowledge.

The course is divided into one module of forty hours (fall term) and a twenty hours workshop (spring term). The first module is focused on ten essential issues which enhance the students’ ability to look at the world through a sociological lens. Students will learn how to ask sociological questions, in order to understand who is doing what with whom under what circumstances and with what consequences, i.e. to make sense of what is happening around us. The workshop explores theoretical issues and research on crucial contemporary phenomena from a cultural sociology perspective, referring in particular to the large and growing sector of the cultural or creative industries.

*Intended Learning Outcomes (knowledge and understanding)*

As a result of the course the students will be able to understand the main sociological theories and concepts.

*Intended Learning Outcomes (applying knowledge and understanding)*

Students will also manage to apply their knowledge to the critical evluation of key contemporary issues such as social interaction, social stratification and inequalities, diversity, globalization, migration, power, etc.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The issues are:

First Module

1. The sociological imagination: how to avoid taking everything for granted. Learning from classical theorists.

2 From individuals to societies: cultures, groups, organisations, institutions.

3. Social interaction: how we develop a sense of *self*, and make sense of *others* and *our* worlds?

4. Social stratification and inequalities: do all people have equal opportunities to succeed in life?

5. Diversity as a social resource: gender, ethnicity, religion etc.

6. Globalization: drivers, benefits and drawbacks, for whom and where?

7. Power and politics: who has power, where, how, and over whom? How do social movements and political forms of (local and global) resistance emerge?

8. Cities and communities: how are cities changing?

9. Migration: Who is moving where and why? How do migrants settle in new cities (between integration and interaction)?

10. Sustainability: How does the quality of the environment affect social life? Which are the main issues that a sustainable development model arises on the side of production chains and on the side of consumption practices?

Second Module

1. Creativity is social: what are the sociological approaches to creativity and the creative industries? What are the critical conceptions of creative autonomy?

2. Social processes of valuation in cultural markets and creative industries: how are cultural and economic value intertwined? How commodities and individuals acquire high status?

3. Trends as opportunities: what do the sociological approaches to fame and celebrity tell us about contemporary superstars and their “empires”?

4. The global and the local: what is the relationship between central and peripheral creative industries?

5. The designer in the city and the city in the designer: how cities shape creative work and vice versa?

6. Sharing economy and the platform society: what is the impact of the digital on the creative industries?

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

First Module:

A. Giddens-P.W. Sutton, *Essential Concepts in Sociology,* 2nd Edition, Polity Press, 2017 (Theme 1 Thinking Sociologically – Globalization, Modernity, Postmodernity, Rationalization, Society, Structure/Agency; Theme 2 Doing Sociology – Ideal Type, Reflexivity, Social Constructionism; Theme 3 Environment and Urbanism – Environment, Migration, Urbanism, Risk, Sustainable Development; Theme 4 Structures of Society – Bureaucracy, Capitalism, Consumerism, Division of Labour; Theme 5 Unequal Life Chances – Class, Gender, Race and Ethinicty; Theme 7 Interaction and Communication – Culture, Identity, Interaction, Public Sphere; Theme 8 Health Illness and the Body – Social Self, Stigma; Theme 9 Crime and Social Control – Anomie, Deviance, Labelling; Theme 10 Political Sociology – Authority, Citizenship, Conflict, Democracy, Nation State, Power, Social Movement.

A. Giddens-P.W. Sutton (2010), *Introductory Readings,* 3rd Edition, Polity Press (Readings 1, 2, 5, 14, 16, 19, 27, 34, 49, 51).

Second Module:

D. Hesmondhalg, (2018), *The Cultural Industries*, 4th Edition, Sage (Chapter 7, 11, 14, 12)

D. Hesmondhalgh. *Bourdieu, the media and cultural production***.**Media, Culture & Society, 2006, 28 (2), pp. 211-231. Available from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0163443706061682

J. Hartley-W. Wen-H. Siling-Li. (2015). *Creative Economy and Culture: Challenges, Changes and Futures for the Creative Industries.* Sage. (Chapter 3, 10).

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course is based on lectures, and students-led seminars (group presentations).

Group assignments will be planned as part of the final evaluation.

In case the evolution of COVID-19 pandemic does not allow teaching in presence, online lectures and distance learning will be guaranteed. Channels and modalities will be communicated in due time to all students.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Attending students: two written tests (one for each module): 70%; three group assignments and class discussions: 30%. More specifically, in the written text attending students will be required to answer to 5 open question on the topics of module I (40% of the final evaluation); and to 3 open questions on the topics of module II (30% of the final evaluation). The assessment of the test is based on the number of answers, the ability to use the correct terminology, the reference to the appropriate concepts and theories, the identification of critical issues, the clarity and soundness of the argumentation. Students will also be involved in 3 groups presentations: two in the first term (20% of the final evaluation) and one in the second term (10% of the final evaluation). For the group presentations, students are expected to read the recommended reading list, find additional resources on the given topic and apply the theories and readings to the analysis of case studies. The presentations will be assessed considering the originality of the work, the ability to refer to theories and concepts, the use of the correct terminology, the quality of the presentation.

Students who have not completed the group assignments will give a final exam in which they will have to answer to 10 questions on the topics of module I (60% of the overall evaluation) and 7 questions on the topics of module II (40% of the overall evaluation).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites.

*Place and time of consultation hours*

Prof. G. Mascheroni: Monday, 16,30 – 18,00, Department of Communication and Performing Arts, via Sant’Agnese 2, 4th floor.

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)