**General Sociology**

## Prof. Fabio Introini

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

The objectives of the General Sociology course are as follows:

1. to learn the theoretical, conceptual and categorial foundations of sociology;
2. for students to understand the essential elements of sociological knowledge from an epistemological and methodological perspective, recognising in particular, the distinctive features of the main paradigms and sociological traditions, as well as their historical and chronological context;
3. for students to acquire a broad and structured vision of the main themes, issues and problems that sociology addresses and has addressed throughout its development;
4. for students to acquire basic skills in sociological reasoning.

The aim of the course in General Sociology is to provide students with the founding and fundamental elements of the discipline of sociology from a historical, theoretical, epistemological and methodological perspective. The course will be divided into two main modules, one per semester. Semester 1 will focus on the history of sociological thought, the origin of sociology as a science, and the illustration of the various traditions of study and research that gave rise to sociology and still constitute its life blood. Semester 2 will be dedicated to exploring the main areas of study within the discipline.

*Knowledge and understanding*

By the end of the course, students will:

1. have mastered the essential categories and basic concepts of sociological knowledge;
2. be able to identify the different traditions and paradigms that have coexisted in the history of the discipline, contextualising them in time and linking them to key authors;
3. know the theories of the main protagonists in the history of sociological thought;
4. understand the link between sociology and modernity/modernisation;
5. know the fundamental concerns of contemporary sociology.

*Applying knowledge and understanding*

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

1. draw comparisons and identify parallels between different authors;
2. articulate the multidimensional nature of social phenomena;
3. observe social phenomena from various points of view, applying integrative and non-exclusive logic;
4. recognise the socially constructed nature of the “facts” and social and institutional processes;
5. understand the way in which emerging social phenomena require revision of the fundamental concepts of the subject.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided into two parts, one per semester.

The first part will focus primarily on the history of sociological thought. After an initial introduction to sociological knowledge, its premises, historical nature and to the challenges that contemporary society poses from a sociological perspective, the course will examine the historical, political and social factors that led to the birth of sociology as a science in modern Europe. It will then focus on a number of classic authors, from the "founding fathers" (Comte, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel and Marx) to the “modern classics” (Parsons, Goffman, Garfinkel), to the “contemporary classics” of reflective modernisation and globalisation (Giddens, Beck, Bauman).

The second part of the course will explore the analysis of concepts, topics and problems of sociology. In particular, it will examine the following conceptual nuclei: culture and communication, social structure, socialisation, social stratification, urbanism and the metropolis, social change and collective movement.

***READING LIST***

Students may choose between two syllabus options (A and B). The first (A) is for attending students; the second (B) is for students who are unable to attend.

*Students taking option A must study the following material*

* Course notes (edited by students)
* Course slides (edited by the lecturer)
* Additional texts and/or material indicated by the lecturer in class
* R. Bichi (edited by), *Sociologia generale*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2022 (the parts to be studied will be indicated at the start of the course by the lecturer)

NB: Students will also have to produce two written works or papers (see “Assessment method and criteria” below) in accordance with indications from the tutor.

*Students taking option B must study the following material:*

* R. Bichi (edited by), *Sociologia generale*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2022 (to be studied: the two introductory texts by R. Bichi, chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 46, 47, 51, 52, plus three more chapters of the students’ choice)
* E. Durkheim, *Il suicidio*, BUR, Milano 2014 (to be studied: da pag. 223 a pag. 410)
* E. Goffman, *La vita quotidiana come rappresentazione*, Il Mulino, Bologna 1997 (tutto)

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will employ various teaching methods. In both semesters, these will include frontal lectures, with the projection of audiovisual material and lecturer-led reading in class.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

*For the students taking option A:*

The overall mark will be the outcome of four different assessments which will allow the skills acquired and the achievement of course aims to be tested. There will be two written tests, one on the first semester, the other on the second semester, there will also be two written papers produced in groups (the groups will be composed by the lecturer at the start of the course); again, one paper will be produced in the first semester and a second paper in the second semester.

*Written tests*: the test on the first semester will consist of 13 questions, each one will award 2/30, for a total of 26/30. The test on the second semester however, will consist of 12 questions, each one will award 2/30 for a total of 24/30. In order to prepare for the tests students should study lecture notes, slides, texts and material indicated by the lecturer in class and the parts of the textbook by R. Bichi indicated in the reading list (option A). The written tests will last 25 minutes. The test on the first semester may also be taken as a “mid-term test” during the period of the academic calendar the Faculty of Political and Social Science reserves for these events (January-February 2022). Students who do not pass the mid-term test may make up for it in the official second semester session together with the second-semester examination. Those wishing to reject the mid-term mark must notify the lecturer of their decision within 5 days of the date of the mid-term test. Students may only sit the test on the second semester, on the other hand, during an official examination session. More detailed informtion regarding the tests will be provided by the lecturer at the start of the course.

Paper: the paper on the first semester awards between 0/30 marks up to 5/30 marks; the paper on the second paper awards between 0/30 marks up to 7/30 marks. Indications regarding the composition of the paper will be communicated by the lecturer, together with the assessment criteria, during the course. The papers must be sent by email to the lecturer before the deadline set during the course, generally this is 15 days before the mid-term test (for the paper on the first semester) and the date of the first examination session (for the paper on the second semester).

*For the students taking option B:*

The overall mark will be the result of the marks awarded for two different assessments: a written test and an oral interview.

Written test: the written test will be composed of 18 closed questions, each one will award 1/30 marks and 2 open-ended questions, each one will award between 0/30 marks up to a maximum of 3/30 marks. Both the closed questions and the open-ended questions will be on the parts indicated in the textbook by R. Bichi in the reading list (option B). The written test will last 45 minutes.

Oral interview: the oral interview will award a maximum of 7/30 marks. The questions in the oral interview will be on the parts indicated in the textbook by R. Bichi and on other texts indicated in option B). The oral interview, barring unforeseen events and logistic contingencies, will take place on the same day as the written test.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course

Course activities will be supported digitally by the university’s Blackboard platform, which students will be required to consult constantly. Blackboard is intended both as a communication tool between students and lecturer, and also as a repository for some of the material the lecturer decides to provide. Both students choosing option A (students who can attend) and students choosing option B (students unable to attend) are required to constantly and frequently monitor Blackboard, albeit for different purposesd.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching and assessment will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.

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.