# General Sociology (First-Cycle Degree in Political Sciences and International Relations)

## Prof. Rita Bichi

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

The course aims to provide students with knowledge of the ways that sociology interprets and analyses what “living in society” means for people and groups in different cultures and in the context of traditional, modern and postmodern societies.

The course is split into three parts.

The first part is dedicated to the origins and developments of sociological thought, from its founding fathers onwards, and the main schools of thought, both classical and contemporary.

The second part will focus on systematically presenting the concepts of sociological analysis and the fundamental social processes that characterise social coexistence, with a particular focus on issues related to individual and collective life in the age of cultural, economic and political globalisation.

The third part is dedicated to exploring specific, topical themes.

*Intended learning outcomes*

By the end of the course, students will be able to understand and correctly use the key concepts of the discipline; demonstrate their understanding of the main sociological theories, both classical and contemporary; interrelate and make connections between these theories; and describe and critically examine the main phenomena of contemporary society, with a particular focus on issues and themes explored on the course.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Part 1: *Ideas on society*

* The emerging State (Marx, Kelley, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, Pareto, Schnitger, Wunderlich).
* The expanding phase (Blumer, Lofland, Wright Mills, Parsons, Merton, Schutz, Gramsci, Sturzo, Goffman).
* Critical fervour (Habermas, Garfinkel, Ardigò, Dahrendorf, Boudon, Bourdieu, Giddens, Hill Collins, Bauman, Beck)
* Rethinking society (Archer, Sennett, Hochschild)

Part 2: *People in society*

* Being in relations
* Belonging
* Re-Producing cultures
* Re-Producing social norms
* Having interests and passions: free time, recreation and sport
* Feeling emotions
* Communication: the mediatisation
* Living the everyday life
* The course of life
* Living the family
* Living the gender
* Living inequalities
* Taking action together
* Living work
* Feeling the transcendence
* Owing and trading resources
* Educate yourself and educate others
* Receiving and giving help and support
* Feeling good: health and well-being
* Feeling good: digital health
* Participating in public life
* Living in the global world
* Living the planet: climate change
* Living the times and rhythms of society
* Moving around in the world

Part 3: *Special topics.*

* The crisis and reconstruction of social ties in the age of globalisation.
* Italian culture and values.
* The condition of youth in Italy.

***READING LIST***

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

*Students taking option A* must prepare the following material:

Required reading:

Lecture notes.

R. Bichi (edited by), *Manuale di Sociologia generale*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2022.

One of the following:

Istituto Giuseppe Toniolo, *La condizione giovanile in Italia. Rapporto giovani 2023,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2023.

F. Biolcati-G. Rovati-P.Segatti, *Come cambiano gli italiani*. *Valori e atteggiamenti dagli anni Ottanta a oggi*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2020.

Z. Bauman, *Modernità Liquida,* Laterza, Roma, 2006.

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

Required reading:

R. Bichi (a cura di), Manuale di Sociologia generale, Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2022.

F. Biolcati-G. Rovati-P.Segatti, *Come cambiano gli italiani*. *Valori e atteggiamenti dagli anni Ottanta a oggi*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2020.

Z. Bauman, *Modernità Liquida,* Laterza, Roma, 2006.

Istituto Giuseppe Toniolo, *La condizione giovanile in Italia. Rapporto giovani 2023,* Il Mulino, Bologna, 2023.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures, seminars and exercises. The exercises will be conducted on Blackboard. The platform will also be used to set up an online discussion forum.

In the second semester, there will be a number of optional seminars on the special topics.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

*Intended learning outcomes*

The intended learning outcomes (ILOs) are as follows (in brackets it is stated the weight of each outcome on the final assessment):

* Knowledge of the thought of the principal exponents of sociology and related schools of thought (40%),
* Ability to make connections between schools of sociological thought (10%),
* Ability to understand and correctly use the key concepts of the discipline (40%),
* Ability to describe and critically examine the main phenomena of contemporary society (10%)

*Assessment methods of the intended learning outcomes*

*For students following Syllabus A:*

Students will be examined by means of a single written exam, which may be taken at the end of the Semester 2, before the scheduled exam date. The exam will verify whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes as defined under “Intended learning outcomes” (see above).

The written exam will be structured as follows:

* 18 multiple-choice questions worth two marks each;
* Four open questions, worth up to three marks each.

The maximum mark available (MMA) is therefore 48. The final mark (FM) will be based on the points awarded (PA) related to the maximum achievable mark (MAM) and maximum final mark (MFM) are fed into the following relation: FM=(PAxMAM)/MFM. The MFM is 31= 30 with a distinction (*lode*).

Students will have 45 minutes to complete the assessment.

The closed questions are designed to assess students’ knowledge of the thought of the principal exponents of sociology (40% ILOs) and related schools of thought and their ability to make connections between them (10% ILOs); as well as their ability to understand and correctly use the key concepts of the discipline (25% ILOs).

The open questions will assess the ability to understand and correctly use the key concepts of the discipline (15% ILOs) and the ability to describe and critically examine the main phenomena of contemporary society (10% ILOs), using the following evaluation grid.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **Advanced**  **(1.5 points)** | **Intermediate**  **(1 point)** | **Basic**  **(0.5 points)** | **Basic level not achieved**  **(0 points)** |
| **Fullness, relevance and conciseness of the answer** | Full, relevant and precise, demonstrating ability to express and explain content in own words | Well-structured, largely clear and correct | Essential information provided, methodical but not always clear and accurate | Inaccurate, superficial and incomplete (or no answer) |
| **Technical language** | Excellent, appropriate use | Good, adequate use | Sufficient but limited use | Absent; not used correctly |

Both closed and open questions will be based on the course notes and the reading list (Option A).

*For students following Syllabus B:*

Students will be examined by means of a single written exam. The exam will verify whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes as defined under “Intended learning outcomes” (see above). The structure and assessment method will be the same as for the Syllabus A exam.

Both closed and open questions will be based on the relevant reading list (Option B).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

As this is an introductory course designed to provide students with basic knowledge, there are no prerequisites in terms of content.

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.