# **-. Sociology of Cultural and Communicative Processes**

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

The course aims to provide the tools for a detailed knowledge of the main currents of sociology, of the main authors who enlivened them, of the fundamental theoretical concepts, of the methodologies used to study society and its main themes. Within this disciplinary framework, the course aims to deepen the knowledge of cultural and communicative processes; particular attention will be paid to the sociological studies applied to the field of communication, the cultural and media industry with special reference to the processes of social construction of reality. Finally, a reflection will be dedicated to the media representation of the *other* and *otherness*, and the power of images in giving shape to our participation in the pain of others.

Knowledge and understanding

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

* know the epistemological foundations of the discipline;
* know the main traditions of sociology and the theoretical contribution of the most important authors;
* understand the main conceptual categories of the discipline, with particular reference to the sociology of culture and communication;
* know the main objects of study connected to cultural institutions and processes.

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

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

* use discipline-specific language and vocabulary;
* recognise the relevance of sociological concepts and categories with respect to the main socio-cultural phenomena connected to the educational and training field.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is structured into three parts:

1. the first part is dedicated to the history of sociological thought, reconstructed through the contribution of the main authors (in particular the classics: Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Simmel and Parsons), of the most relevant theories of the twentieth century (critical theory, phenomenology, theories of action) and the main topics addressed (socialisation, culture, globalisation);
2. the second part, complementary to the first, is dedicated to the in-depth study of culture as a symbolic system that guides subjects in social interaction, in the processes of attributing meaning to their own experience, in the dynamics of socialisation and training;
3. the single-subject part dedicated to the media image of otherness, the representation of other people's pain and the activation of solidarity mechanisms through the media.

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

Part one: history and themes of sociological thought

L. Gherardi, *Scoprire la sociologia. Teorie e temi essenziali*, Pearson, Milan, 2021. [*Buy from VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/autori-vari/scoprire-la-sociologia-teorie-e-temi-essenziali-ediz-mylab-9788891913579-691979.html)

Parte two: sociology of culture

R. De Biasi, *Che cos’è la sociologia della cultura*, Carocci, Rome, 2008.  [*Buy from VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/rocco-de-biasi/che-cose-la-sociologia-della-cultura-9788843021604-219943.html)

Part three: the representation of otherness

A. Manzato, *Vicini/Distanti. L’immagine mediale dell’altro*, Mimesis Edizioni, Milan, 2020.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Classroom lessons supported by slide presentations. The materials presented in class and other useful educational content will be made available on the Blackboard platform.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students must demonstrate: (1) their knowledge of the epistemological foundations of the discipline, the main traditions of sociology and the theoretical contribution of the most important authors; (2) their ability to use discipline-specific language and vocabulary; (3) understanding and uses of the main conceptual categories specific to sociological studies, recognising their relevance to the main socio-cultural phenomena (institutions and processes) connected to the educational and training field.

The assessment will consist of a single mark out of thirty, in the context of an oral exam on the knowledge of the entire reading list content and the main theoretical categories presented in it. Students may also take an interim written test on the reading list of the first part in January-February. The methods, the type and timing of the interim test will be published on the teacher's web page and on the Blackboard platform. The interim test will consist of a set of eight open-ended questions; the assessment of each individual answer will contribute to the overall assessment of the interim test; this assessment will be worth 50% of the final mark. In case of a positive outcome, the mark of the interim test - if accepted by the student - will be averaged with that of the oral exam relating to the second and third parts of the course reading list. In case of insufficient outcome in the interim test - or in the case of a sufficient outcome but not accepted by the student - the oral exam will focus on the entire exam programme. The scheduling of the interim written test will be provided on the teacher's web page.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Since the course is introductory, there are no content-related prerequisites for attending it.

Information on office hours available on the teacher's personal page at <http://docenti.unicatt.it/>.

1. The textbooks indicated in the reading list can be purchased from University bookstores; they can also be purchased at other retailers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)