Freie Universität Bozen
Libera Università di Bolzano
Università Liedia de Bulsan

SYLLABUS

course description

The course belongs to the class "caratterizzante" (alternativa) in the MA in Eco-Social Design (LM-12). This course is a compulsory optional subject in the area "Sciences & Discourse"

Course title	**Sociology** **Area: Sciences & Discourse**
Course code	**96012**
Scientific sector	**SPS/07 – Sociologia generale**
Degree	**Master in Eco-Social Design (LM-12)**
Semester	**II**
Year	**1st and 2nd**
Credits	**6**
Modular	**No**
Lecturer	**Alvise Mattozzi** office F4.04, e-mail alvise.mattozzi@unibz.it, tel. +39 0471 015227, Webpage https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/11597-alvise-mattozzi
Scientific sector of the lecturer	**SPS/08**
Teaching language	**English**
Teaching assistant (if any)	-
Office hours	Friday, 15-17
Teaching language	**English**
Total lecturing hours	**30**
Total hours of self-study and/or other individual educational activities	**about 120**
Attendance	**recommended**

Prerequisites	-
Course page	http://pro2.unibz.it/projects/blogs/essen/ https://ole.unibz.it/course/view.php?id=833

Course description

The course introduces students to sociology, its concepts and its research methods.
As for this year, the introduction to sociology will take place through the concept of "action" and specifically through the idea of "acting in common". "Acting in common" is, for Emile Durkheim, one of the founders of sociology, the way in which "society becomes conscious and affirms itself".
After an outline of the various ways in which sociology accounts for the unfolding of actions, usually juggling between various dichotomies such as agency/structure, individual/collective, understanding/explanation, the course will focus on role artifacts (tools, devices, interfaces, infrastructures, etc.) play in the unfolding of actions, often neglected by sociology. Students will learn how to describe actions by considering the role artifacts.
The issue of "acting in common", i.e. of collaboration, cooperation and coordination, will be then also tackled by considering artifacts and their mediating role. These steps will lead to the issue of "acting in commons", in order to reflect and describe the role artifacts play or can play in managing and practicing the commons.

Educational objectives

Students will be able to:

- collaborate with experts and other designers to develop and implement an integrated project;
- take into account the social impacts occurring within the tension between global and local dimensions;
- take into account the social aspects that characterize a territory, a community and a group of people;
- integrate social aspects in project design while considering the tension, which occurs between the local and the global dimensions;
- develop an individual way of thinking, leading to critical judgements and self-assessments;
- communicate, multilingually in a convincing way, through a variety of modalities (written, oral, visual);
- talk to experts about the project;
- read experts' articles, studies and reports related to one's own project issues and integrate those analyses with one's own project design;
- organize a research project while identifying relevant studies and researches, experts to collaborate with, methods and instruments to adopt;
- outline the cultural and social territorial framework where the students will intervene;
- set up a field work or an inquiry in order to define the socioeconomic framework, by exchanging ideas with researchers and experts' students will collaborate with;
- understand specialist literature so as to integrate it within their own research project;

Knowledge will be acquired in the following fields:

- the social dynamics and changes regarding the rural and urban environments and the social dimensions of technique and innovation, particularly those ones which take place in the Alps; the main methods, techniques and tools of data collection, the investigation and description of such dynamics;

List of topics covered

- Action
- Agency
- Artifacts
- Class
- Collaboration, cooperation, coordination
- Culture
- Description
- Lifestyle
- Practice
- Social Capital
- Structure

Teaching format

Most of the classes will consist in frontal lectures and discussions. In few cases the discussion will be based on class exercises, most of the times on home assignments.
Part of the classes will be carried out directly in the project course.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

Students will learn how sociology works: how it articulates issues, how it gathers data about social phenomena, how it describes them, how it accounts for them.
At the end of the course student should be able to understand and position within the broader coordinates of the sociological debate empirical research articles.

Applying knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course students should be able to find, understand and integrate social researches into their design projects, as ground for their project's choices and features.
At the end of the course students should be able to dialogue with social scientists in order to discuss about the sociological aspects of their projects.
At the end of the project students should be able to discuss about and to choose the appropriate method to gather data about their design projects.

Making judgments

At the end of the course students should be able to assess the relevance and value of a social research or a social research method for their design projects.

Communication skills
At the end of the course students should be able to communicate with social scientists about their design projects.

Learning skills
At the end of the course students should be able to get deeper into the sociological debate and to learn about specific social researches related to the specificities of their design projects.

Assessment

Written and oral.
Students will be assessed considering:

- the results of the home assignments assigned during the course
- the result of the oral discussion about the relation between what done in the sociology course and what has been designed for the semester project course at the exam
- participation in class activities
- the ability to integrate course topics and issues into the final presentation of the design project

Assessment language: English

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks

- the average of the marks given for the home assignments provides access to a certain range of marks to which the student can aspire as result of the oral discussion at the exam;
- at the exam students have to show that they are able to manage the entirety of concepts, categories and models introduced in class and deepened through the required readings. Once a student has shown a sufficient ability to manage course's concepts, categories and models, a mark between 17 and 30 will be assigned in relation to the student's performance and to the range of mark to which s/he has had access thanks to the average of the home assignments' marks;
    - therefore, even with a good average resulting from home assignments a student can fail, if s/he does not show to be able to manage the entirety of concepts, categories and models introduced in class and deepened through the required readings during the oral discussion at the exam;
- participation in class counts between 0 and 2 points to be added on the mark awarded after the discussion at the exam in case that mark is 18 or more;
- the ability to integrate course topics and issues into the final presentation of the design project counts between 0 and 1 points to be added on the mark awarded after the discussion at the exam in case that mark is 18 or more.
    - Therefore, if a student fails at the oral exam no point for participation or integration into the final project's presentation will be added.

Admission to the final part of the exams requires that the average of marks on home assignments be positive.

Evaluation criteria change for every assignment but tend to always consider the ability to compare essays among them or with empirical findings and/or observations. More in general evaluation criteria consider not only the way in which the assignment brief has been fulfilled, but also the capacity to take into account other parts of the course and to make connections among them, as well as with possible personal experiences as design student.

Required readings
Required readings will be communicated the first day of class and will be available on OLE and in the Reserve Collection on Line and in the Library

Supplementary readings

General reference for concept and categories:
- A. Giddens, P. W. Sutton, *Essential Concepts in Sociology*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.

General references for framing the sociological debate today:
- Gubelkian Commisision, *Open the Social Sciences. Report of the Gubelkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences*. Stanford University Press, 1996.
- B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford University Press, 2005.
- J. Urry, *Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty-First Century.* Routledge, 2000.
- I. Wallerstein, "The Creation of a Geoculture: Ideologies, Social Movements, Social Science", in *World System Analysis. An Introduction*, Duke University Press, 2004, pp. 60-75.

General references for framing the sociological debate around action and agency today:
- B. Latour, "Where are the Missing Masses? The sociology of a few mundane artifacts". In W. E. Bijker & J. Law (Eds.), *Shaping Technology/Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change* (pp. 225–258), MIT Press, 1992.
- B. Latour, "On Interobjectivity", in *Mind, Culture, and Activity,* 3/4, 1996, pp. 228–245
- J. L. Martin, *The Explanation of Social Action*, Oxford University Press, 2011.
- J.-H. Passoth, B. Peuker and M. Schillmeier (eds.), *Agency without Actors. New approaches to collective action*, Routledge, 2012.
- T. R. Schatzki, K. Knorr Cetina and E. von Savigny (eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, Routledge, 2001.
- E. Shove, M. Pantzar, & M. Watson, *The Dynamics of Social Practice: Everyday Life and how it Changes*. SAGE, 2012.