

Introduction to Sociology
Course Description

Aim of the course

Aim of the course:

In this semester two questions will be analyzed based on classical and contemporary sociological texts. In the first part of the semester, from a macro oriented perspective the nature of “social” is investigated: why do people follow hierarchies?; how to imagine representations, which are collective?; how do social systems emerge?; how do capitals structure the sphere of action?; what is globalization and how it affects our life? In the second part, from a micro oriented perspective the social elements of action are analyzed: how is the reality constructed with the others?; why and how do we roleplay?; how do social interactions frame our understanding of the world?; what are the forms of recognition and the consequences of their deprivation?; how do routines and reflexivity organize our everyday life?

Learning outcome, competences

knowledge:

- classical sociological theories
- contemporary sociological theories

attitude:

- reflexivity

skills:

- reading and understanding sociological texts
- capability of reconstructing argumentations
- comparing and criticizing theoretical concepts

Content of the course

Topics of the course

Social integration: what holds together societies?

1. Weber – intentionality/ authority/ legitimation
2. Durkheim – social facts/ collective consciousness/ solidarity
3. Habermas – lifeworld/ system
4. Bourdieu – fields/ capitals/ habitus
5. Castells – network integration/ globalization

Social action: what are the social components of human behavior?

6. Berger-Luckmann – Constructing reality/ intimacy/ secularization
7. Goffman – role theory/ stigma
8. Habermas – communicative action/ public sphere
9. Honneth – recognition
10. Giddens – identity/ intimacy

Evaluation of outcomes

Learning requirements, mode of evaluation, criteria of evaluation:

Requirements

- participation on courses
- reading texts

Mode of evaluation: two written examinations during the semester

Reading list

Compulsory reading list

- Weber: Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology (2 volume set) (Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich) 1-7§., 16§.
- Durkheim: The Rules of Sociological Method. What is a social fact? pp. 50-85.
- Habermas: Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and system vol. 2 pp. 113-144.
- Bourdieu: Is disinterested act possible? In: Practical reason – On the theory of action.
- Castells: The information age vol 1. Conclusion pp. 500-510, vol 2. Conclusion pp. 419-429.
- Berger-Luckmann: The social construction of reality. I. The foundation of knowledge in everyday life
- Goffman: Stigma and social identity. In: Stigma
- Habermas. Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the rationalization of society volume 1 pp. 286-319.
- Honneth: The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts. pp. 92-130
- Giddens: The transformation of intimacy. 10. Intimacy as democracy