

**Sociology of Education**

Code: 101158  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500262 Sociology	OB	3	1

**Contact**

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**Use of Languages**

Principal working language: catalan (cat)  
Some groups entirely in English: No  
Some groups entirely in Catalan: Yes  
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

**External teachers**

Maribel Garcia Gracia  
Xavier Bonal

**Prerequisites**

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**Objectives and Contextualisation**

*Sociology of Education* is organized according to three general objectives:

- 1) To offer a panoramic view of the main theories in the field of Sociology of Education as a discipline;
- 2) To present the main authors and explanatory mechanisms to address the relationship between education and society from a theoretical, analytical and conceptual point of view;
- 3) To use the theoretical-analytical concepts of Sociology of Education as a field to analyse contemporary educational inequalities and debates.

The course is structured under four thematic Sections:

The First Section explains the origin of the Sociology of Education as a specific field of study within Sociology, and illustrates its institutionalization process as a discipline. Simultaneously, it discusses the different ontological and epistemological perspectives from which it has been historically organised and it offers to the students a global framework to position and interpret the different authors and theories. Once the main debates to explain the relationship between education, society and sociology has been explained, this section focuses on the Functionalist approach to Sociology of Education (Durkheim and Parsons) and explains the specificities of the 'Reformist Functionalism' and the 'Human Capital Theory'.

The Second Section focuses on the neo-Marxist critique to the Functionalist approach and it explains the main theories developed in this field. Based on the proposals of authors such as Bowles & Gintis, Baudelot &

Established and Althusser, the mechanisms by which the education system contributes to the reproduction of the social classes and to the legitimation of the social inequalities are addressed. Neo-marxist theories are ontologically opposed to functionalist theories but they maintain a macro focus of study, focusing their analysis in the relationships between education, capitalism and the State.

The Third Section, addresses the New Sociology of Education (NSOE) and the crucial shift it represents for the evolution of the Sociology of Education as a discipline. NSOE maintains a critical understanding on the relationship between education and society but it attributes a crucial importance to the processes by which these inequalities are created, thus mostly developing micro and interpretative analysis. In this Section central authors in the field of the Sociology of Education, such as Bourdieu and Bernstein, are presented, as well as Young and Apple's proposals in the area of the sociology of the school knowledge and the sociology of curriculum. The section ends by presenting the Rist' labelling theory. Overall, the Section also incorporates a feminist perspective in order to understand the role of gender to explain the processes of educational inequalities. The conceptual proposal of Diane Reay is specially addressed in this regards.

The Fourth Section focuses on the Resistance Theories and particularly on Willis' proposals around the creative capacity of social agents to transform their social reality. So, maintaining a critical approach to education, these theories analyse the active role of working class students to resist the dominant school culture and to create a counter culture that provides them with collective identity. Overall, this section also presents feminist theories addressed to explain student's attitudes throughout a gender lens.

## Competences

- Analysing the problems arising from the implementation of public policies and conflict situations by recognising the complexity of the social phenomena and political decisions affecting democracy, human rights, social justice and sustainable development.
- Applying the concepts and approaches of the sociological theory, specially the explanations of social inequalities between classes, between genders and between ethnic groups, to the implementation of public policies and to the resolution of conflict situations.
- Assessing the contributions of sociological approaches to the study of culture, education, interaction between society and environment, social policy, and work.
- Demonstrating a comprehension of the analysis of social phenomena presented in English, as well as observing their strengths and weaknesses.
- Demonstrating a comprehension of the approaches of the sociological theory in its different aspects, interpretations and historical context.
- Describing social phenomena in a theoretically relevant way, bearing in mind the complexity of the involved factors, its causes and its effects.
- Developing critical thinking and reasoning and communicating them effectively both in your own and other languages.
- Developing self-learning strategies.
- Effectively communicating the basic analysis of social phenomena in an elementary level of English.
- Generating innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
- Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
- Searching for documentary sources starting from concepts.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Comparing the different theoretical approaches about education.
2. Comparing the reading of educational phenomena from several ideologies of the social reality of Spain and Catalonia.
3. Defining the appropriate sociological concepts in order to interpret the educational and school phenomena.
4. Demonstrating a comprehension of the analysis of social phenomena presented in English, as well as observing their strengths and weaknesses.

5. Developing critical thinking and reasoning and communicating them effectively both in your own and other languages.
6. Developing self-learning strategies.
7. Distinguishing sociological concepts concerning education adopted by the actors involved in the educational system.
8. Distinguishing sociological concepts, as well as the methods and techniques of social investigation commonly used to analyse education.
9. Distinguishing the explanations of educational inequalities between classes, between genders and between ethnic groups that these actors take for granted.
10. Distinguishing the social interpretations of education according to these approaches.
11. Distinguishing the underlying educational phenomena of specific policies or conflicts.
12. Distinguishing the underlying social phenomena of educational policies and conflicts.
13. Effectively communicating the basic analysis of social phenomena in an elementary level of English.
14. Expressing the debates regarding these approaches, that refer to education.
15. Generating innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
16. Relating the concepts, methods and techniques used to analyse education with general theoretical and methodological debates.
17. Relating the debates regarding these approaches, that refer to education, with the historical context in which they emerged.
18. Relating the explanations of educational inequalities with general theoretical and methodological debates.
19. Relating the theoretical approaches with debates about social order, inequality and social strategies.
20. Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
21. Searching for documentary sources starting from concepts.

## Content

The thematic organization of Sociology of Education is the following:

### BLOCK 1: THE ORIGINS OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION AND THE FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE

- 1.1. The relationship between education and sociology
- 1.2. The sociology of education in the 'classics'
- 1.3. Education, socialization and forms of cultural transmission (Durkheim)
- 1.4. Education, social selection and stratification (Parsons)
- 1.5. The Human Capital Theory and the Reformist Functionalism

### BLOCK 2. NEO-MARXIST THEORIES: EDUCATION AND THE REPRODUCTION OF SOCIAL CLASSES

- 2.1. Criticism to functionalism and human capital theory
- 2.2. Bowles and Gintis and the correspondence theory
- 2.3. Baudelot and Establet and the theory of educational networks
- 2.4. Althusser and education as the ideological apparatus of the State.

### BLOCK 3. THE NEW SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION: OPENING THE BLACK BOX OF EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES

- 3.1. From the results to the educational processes
- 3.2. Bourdieu: cultural education and reproduction
- 3.3. Gendering Bourdieu: Reay's proposal
- 3.4. Bernstein: sociolinguistic codes and educational codes
- 3.5. Young & Apple: sociology of curriculum and school knowledge
- 3.6. Rist: teachers and labeling processes

### BLOCK 4. RESISTANCE THEORY: YOUNG PEOPLE AND SCHOOL ATTITUDES

- 4.1. A new analytical framework to understand educational inequality
- 4.2. Willis: working class' boys and school counterculture
- 4.3. Gender and school attitudes: beyond Lads

## Methodology

Sociology of Education combines master classes with reading seminars and practical seminars.

- Master classes focus on the explanation of the main authors, concepts and theories of the discipline and are mainly directed by the lecturer.
- Reading Seminars are addressed to collectively debate the compulsory readings of the course by identifying the main pros and cons of the different theories and by illustrating them with contemporary data and debates
- Practical Seminars are organised around four main themes of the course and are oriented to acquire a deep knowledge of the theoretical contents through their application for the analysis of specific case studies.

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master	23	0.92	1, 2, 3, 8, 12, 10, 14, 16, 17, 19, 11
Seminars	15	0.6	21, 2, 4, 14, 20
Type: Supervised			
Supervised	20	0.8	1, 3, 10, 14, 17, 19
Type: Autonomous			
Autonomous	77	3.08	1, 2, 3, 9, 7, 8, 12, 10, 14, 16, 17, 19, 11

## Assessment

The evaluation of the subject is based on the following items:

### 1. Exam

- It is an individual activity that is carried out in the classroom the last day of the course.
- The weight of the exam is 40% of the final mark.
- It will consist of different questions that will combine theoretical exposition of the concepts and arguments of the main authors of the course and its practical application to the analysis of specific case studies.

### 2. Reading Seminars

- In groups of 4 or 5 people, the compulsory readings of the course will be presented in the classroom (each group will present one reading), emphasizing the strengths and weaknesses of each theory and illustrating its main arguments with images, data, news and other materials
- Each group will do the written assignment of the activity (maximum 4 pages. Times new roman 12, linear 1.5) and in parallel will do an exhibition in class with support of audio-visual material. Written essays have to be submitted the same day of the exhibition (late submissions will not be accepted).
- The weight of the seminars is 30% of the final mark, including the written part and the oral part
- Before the presentations it is highly recommended that each group ask for a meeting with the teacher of the course

### 3. Practical seminars:

- During the course, 4 practical seminars will be carried out with the objective to use the theoretical contents to interpret specific case studies.
  - Attendance to the 4 practices is mandatory, but only one individual submission must be done. Each student decides what practical case he / she submits, but the selected topic can not match with the author selected for the reading seminars.
  - The day of the practical seminar the classroom will work organised in groups in order to allow for a richer debate
  - The submission of the practical seminar must be done within a maximum period of 15 days after its completion in the classroom and an it has to reinforce the debate done in class with a theoretical and conceptual basis.
  - The maximum extension of the practical seminars is 4 pages (times new roman 12, linear 1.5).
  - The weight of the practical seminars is 30% of the final mark.
- Each evaluation activity needs to reach a minimum of 4.5 points to be considered approved

### Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Exam	40%	5	0.2	2, 3, 6, 12, 10, 14, 17, 18, 11
Practice	30	5	0.2	21, 2, 4, 5, 9, 7, 8, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 11
Reading seminar	30	5	0.2	1, 13, 10, 14, 17, 19

### Bibliography

#### BASIC

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- Bowles, S.& Gintis, H. (1983) "El problema de la teoría del capital humano: una crítica marxista" en *Educación y sociedad*. Vol. (1)
- Parsons, T. (1990) "El aula como sistema social: Algunas de sus funciones en la sociedad americana" en *Educación y Sociedad* vol. (6).

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#### ADDITIONAL:

Acker, S. (1994) *Género y educación. Reflexiones sociológicas sobre mujeres, enseñanza y feminismo*. Madrid: Narcea. Parte 2.

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