

Macro Sociological Theory

Code: 101126
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500262 Sociology	OB	3	1

The proposed teaching and assessment methodology that appear in the guide may be subject to changes as a result of the restrictions to face-to-face class attendance imposed by the health authorities.

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

Prerequisites

It is recommended to have passed "Fonaments de Sociologia", "Pensament Sociològic Contemporani" and, specially, "Teoria Sociològica Micro". Besides, it is strongly recommended to have passed "Pensament Sociològic Contemporani". The course assumes the students have basic knowledge of the classics of sociology and the main schools of sociological thought in the XXth century.

Objectives and Contextualisation

As revealed by the emphasis on learning skills, sociological theory should significantly contribute to built students' basic conceptual map. To do so, the course articulates two different pedagogical criteria: it introduces the main current theoretical contributions to sociology, and it does so in systematic way, given that the historical aspects have already been studied in "Fonaments de Sociologia" and in "Pensament Sociològic Contemporani".

Gender perspective will have a key rol in these objectives.

Competences

- 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.
- 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.
- Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
- Students must be capable of assessing the quality of their own work.

- Students must be capable of managing their own time, planning their own study, managing the relationship with their tutor or adviser, as well as setting and meeting deadlines for a work project.

Learning Outcomes

1. Comparing theoretical approaches about the macro- and micro- sociological phenomena.
2. Defining the main micro and macro sociological concepts.
3. Demonstrating a comprehension of the analysis of social phenomena presented in English, as well as observing their strengths and weaknesses.
4. Developing critical thinking and reasoning and communicating them effectively both in your own and other languages.
5. Developing self-learning strategies.
6. Distinguishing the underlying social phenomena of specific policies or conflicts.
7. Expressing the debates about these approaches in several moments.
8. Recognising the sociological implications of several intellectual debates (about the subject, action, social order, language, etc.).
9. Relating their usage and criticism in the historical context in which they emerged.
10. Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
11. Students must be capable of assessing the quality of their own work.
12. Students must be capable of managing their own time, planning their own study, managing the relationship with their tutor or adviser, as well as setting and meeting deadlines for a work project.
13. Using the approaches of sociology in order to observe the effect of these policies or the outcome of these conflicts.

Content

1. Introduction
 - 1.1. Social phenomena: types
 - 1.2. Modalities of explanation in social sciences. Methodological individualism, Coleman's boat and social mechanisms.
 - 1.3. Gender inequalities as an example of social phenomenon.
2. Emotions
 - 2.1. What are emotions?
 - 2.2. The model of emotion-based action.
 - 2.4. Gender and emotions.
3. Social norms
 - 3.1. Concept, types and main formal definitions
 - 3.1.1. Social norms, gender and sex. Homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality.
 - 3.2. Social norms in standard rational choice theory
 - 3.3. Cristina Bicchieri's typology.
 - 3.4. Jon Elster's typology
4. Contributions from the natural sciences
 - 4.1. Reductionism in science.
 - 4.2. Physiology and neuroscience
 - 4.3. Evolutionary psychology
 - 4.3.1. A. Fiske and the four elementary forms of sociability.
 - 4.3.2. P. Boyer and the study of religious beliefs.
 - 4.4. The ecological rationality program.
 - 4.5. Contributions from the natural sciences and gender and sex issues. Homosexuality, bisexuality, transsexuality.
5. ABM simulation, social networks and diffusion
 - 5.1. ABM simulation models
 - 5.2. Social networks and small worlds

- 5.3. The strength of weak ties: M. Granovetter.
- 5.3.1. Weak ties and women mobilizations.
- 5.4. Social influence.
- 5.4.1. Social influence and gender and sex issues. Homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality.
- 5.5 Self-fulfilling prophecies.
- 5.5.1. Self-fulfilling prophecies and gender.
- 5.6. Critical mass.
- 5.6.1. Critical mass and gender-based discrimination.
- 5.7. Applications: spreading of innovations, social segregation, divorce, social movements, etc.

- 6. Power, inequality and hierarchies
- 6.1. Hierarchies: main types
- 6.2. The concept of power: types and characteristics
- 6.2.1. Gender and power relations.
- 6.3. Status hierarchies: the Manzo-Baldassarri model.
- 6.4. The concept of inequality: types and normative implications.
- 6.4.1. Inequalities and gender differences.
- 6.5. Opportunity structures.
- 6.5.1. White's vacancy chain model.
- 6.5.2. G. Manzo's model of educational inequalities.

- 7. Institutions and organizations
- 7.1. Institutionalism and neo-institutionalism.
- 7.2. D. North's theory of institutions.

- 7.3. Institutional design strategies.

- 7.4. Law and compliance
- 7.4.1. The expressive function of the law.
- 7.4.2. Nudges

- 7.5. Some problems related to institutional design
- 7.5.1. Trust in institutions: the principal - agent problem
- 7.5.2. The second best alternative problem
- 7.6. Social decision theory.
- 7.6.1. Vote, negotiation and deliberation.
- 7.6.1.1. Deliberation and gender.
- 7.7. J. Searle's ontology

- 8. Conflict
- 8.1. Concept and types
- 8.2. Traditional academic approaches
- 8.3. Per-Olof H. Wikström's crime theory
- 8.4. Two case studies:
- 8.4.1. Witchcraft prosecutions in Scotland between 1563 and 1736 (Anna Mitschele)
- 8.4.2. Lynchings in Georgia between 1875 1930 (Roberto Franzosi)

- 9. The future of the social sciences
- 9.1. Jon Elster's qualitative social science.
- 9.2. The analytical sociology program.

- 9.3. Duncan Watts and the criticism against common sense-based explanations

Methodology

The course is based on 4 types of activities:

- 1) Lectures that will present the contents in class counting on students' active and critical participation.
- 2) Practical exercises and other activities that will allow students to apply the theories studied in class.
- 3) Individual tuition.
- 4) Students' autonomous activities: reading list.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Practical exercises: seminars, etc.	14	0.56	11, 1, 2, 3, 5, 4, 6, 8, 13
Presentation and discussion of contents	42	1.68	1, 2, 3, 8
Type: Supervised			
Individual tuition	14	0.56	11, 1, 2, 5, 4, 6, 8, 13
Type: Autonomous			
Reading texts	36	1.44	11, 1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 8
Study	16	0.64	11, 1, 2, 5, 4, 12, 8
Writing papers and exercises	21	0.84	11, 1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 8, 10

Assessment

The assessment will be based on 2 kinds of exercises:

- 1) 2 final exam.
- 2) 2 exercises based on the compulsory readings where students will have to show they have done the readings and have assimilated the contents.

Remarks:

- To pass the course it is necessary to obtain a minimum average grade of 5, and a minimum grade of 4 in each exercise.
- The failure to carry out any of the evaluation exercises (even if an average grade of 5 or higher is obtained), will be considered as "non-evaluable".
- Students who do not pass the continuous assessment (because they haven't obtained a minimum average grade of 5 and/or because they haven't done some of the exercises), have the right to reassessment. Specifically:
 - A student who doesn't pass some exam, will have to do another exam with the same characteristics.
 - A student who doesn't pass some exercise based on the compulsory readings, will have to do another exercise with the same characteristics.
- To pass the re-evaluation, it is mandatory to do the exercises corresponding to all non-passed parts.
- Students who pass the re-evaluation will obtain a final grade of 5.

- The assessment exercises must be done or delivered on the scheduled day. As for presential exercises, only those students who provide a medical document certifying that, on the sheduled day, they weren't in fit state to attend, or who certify any other reason that the professor considers *force majeure*, will be allowed to do this exercise in other moment. In principle, working does not give the right to do the exercises in a different moment, unless the student properly certifies that his presence at work on that day and at that time was indispensable.
- Cheating will imply failing the course with a zero. It is forbidden to use electronic devices (such as mobiles or smartwatches) during the presential exercises, and having them switched on will be considered as cheating.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Compulsory readings based exercises	30%	3	0.12	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, 8, 9, 10, 13
Exams	70%	4	0.16	11, 1, 2, 3, 5, 4, 6, 7, 12, 8, 9, 10, 13

Bibliography

COMPULSORY READINGS

1. Introduction

Hedström, P. (2006): "La explicación del cambio social: un enfoque analítico", J.A. Noguera (2010): *Teoría Sociológica Analítica*. Madrid: CIS.

2. Emotions

Elster, J. (2010 [2007]): "Emociones", *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

5. ABM, social networks and diffusion

Hedström, P. (2006): "La explicación del cambio social: un enfoque analítico", J.A. Noguera (2010): *Teoría Sociológica Analítica*. Madrid: CIS.

Ball, P. (2008 [2004]): "Que pequeño es el mundo", *Masa crítica. Cambio, caos y complejidad*. Madrid: Turner. Fondo de Cultura Económica.

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Granovetter, M. (1973): "La fuerza de los lazos débiles. Revisión de la teoría reticular", Requena, F. (2003): *Análisis de redes sociales*. Madrid: CIS.

Schelling, T. (1989 [1978]): "La masa crítica, las propinas y los limones", *Micromotivos y macroconducta*. Fondo de cultura económica.

Schelling, T. (1989 [1978]): "La clasificación y la mezcla: la raza y el sexo", *Micromotivos y macroconducta*. Fondo de cultura económica.

Tena-Sánchez, Jordi i León, F.J. (2019): Modelos de Dinámicas de Opinión. Una revisión de literatura. *Revista Internacional de Sociología*. A prensa.

7. Institutions and organizations

Goodin, R. (2003): "Las instituciones y su diseño", *Teoría del diseño institucional*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

North, D. (2001): "La comprensión del proceso de cambio económico", *Revista de Occidente*, 240.

Pettit, P. (2003): "El diseño institucional y la elección racional", Goodin, R. (ed.): *Teoría del diseño institucional*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Elster, J. (2010 [2007]): "Toma colectiva de decisiones", *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Elster, J. (2010 [2007]): "Organizaciones e instituciones", *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Searle, J. R. (2006 [2005]): "¿Qué es una institución?", *Revista de derecho político*, 66: 89-120.

9. The future of the social sciences

Manzo, G. (2014): "Data, generative models, and mechanisms: More on the principles of analytical sociology", *a Analytical Sociology. Actions and networks*. Wiley.

Elster, J. (2011). The two great fears of 1789. *Social Science Information*, 50(3-4), 317-329.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018411411017>

Elster, J. (2010 [2007]): "¿Es posible la ciencia social?", *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Watts, D. (2014). "Common Sense and Sociological Explanations", *American Journal of Sociology*, 120 (2): 313-351

Complementary readings by topic

General

Elster, J. (2010): *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Hedström, P. (2005): *Dissecting the social*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Manzo, Gianluca (2014): *Analytical Sociology. Actions and networks*. Wiley.

2. Emotions

Elster, J. (2009): "Emotions", Hedström, P. i Bearman, P. *The Oxford handbook of analytical sociology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elster, J. (1996): *Alquimias de la mente*.

N. Frijda. *The emotions*.

3. Social norms

Elster, J. (2010): *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona: Gedisa. Cap. 22 i pp: 126-132.

Elster, J. (2009): "Social norms", Hedström, P. i Bearman, P. *The Oxford handbook of analytical sociology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bicchieri, C. (2006): *The grammar of Society. The nature and dynamics of social norms*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Cap. 1.

Linares, F. (2007): "El problema de la emergencia de normas sociales en la acción colectiva", *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, 46: 131-160.

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4. Contributions from the natural sciences

Elster, J. (2010 [2007]): "Lecciones de las ciencias naturales" i "Fisiología y neurociencia", *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

J.H. Barkow, L. Cosmides i J. Tooby (eds.), *The Adapted Mind*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. La introducció dels autors.

Pinker, S. (2003): *La tabla rasa*. Barcelona: Paidós.

Fiske, A.P. (1992): "The Four Elementary Forms of Sociality: Framework for an Unified Theory of Social Relations", *Psychological Review*, 99: 689-723.

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Kahneman y Tversky (1996): On the Reality of Cognitive Illusions. *Psychological Review* 103 (3)

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Page, Scott E.; John H. Miller (2007). *Complex Adaptive Systems: An Introduction to Computational Models of Social Life*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. p. 284.

De Marchi (2005): *Computational and Mathematical Modeling in the Social Sciences*.

Epstein, Joshua M. (January 8, 2007). *Generative Social Science: Studies in Agent-Based Computational Modeling*. Princeton University. p. 352.

N. Gilbert (2008): *Agent-based models*. Sage.

Railsback & Grimm (2009) *ABM with Netlogo*.

En *The Oxford handbook of analytical sociology* y en *Analytical Sociology. Actions and networks* hay varios capítulos sobre estos temas.

6. Power, inequality and hierarchies

Searle, J. (2010): *Making the social world*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press. Cap. 7: "Power".

Manzo G., Baldassarri D. (2015) "Heuristics, Interactions, and Status Hierarchies: An Agent-based Model of Deference Exchange", *Sociological Methods and Research*, 44, 3, 329-387.

Hedström, P. i Bearman, P. (2009): *The Oxford handbook of analytical sociology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Cap. 6.

Manzo, G. (2013). "Educational Choices and Social Interactions: A Formal Model and A Computational Test", *Comparative Social Research*, 30, 47-100.

7. Institutions and organizations

Pettit, P. (2001): "Groups with Minds of their Own", treball presentat a la conferència "Social Ontology after *The Common Mind*", Erasmus University, Rotterdam.

North, D. *Understanding the Process of Economic Change*, Princeton University Press, 2004

C. Sunstein: *Un pequeño empujón*.

8. Conflict

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