

Consumption and Sustainability

Code: 103688
ECTS Credits: 6

| Degree | Type | Year | Semester |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|
| 2500262 Sociology | OT | 4 | 0 |

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

There is not

Objectives and Contextualisation

1. Knowledge and visualization of the characteristics of the consumer society in Spain and Catalonia.
2. Understand the theoretical contributions of consumer behavior
3. Analyze the relationships between class, gender, life cycle and consumption
4. Understand the limits of the current consumption model: Sustainability
5. Contextualize, the alternative theoretical perspectives.

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 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.

- Generating innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
- 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. Defining the interaction society-environment from these approaches.
2. Defining the sociological concepts that interpret the interaction between society and the environment.
3. Developing critical thinking and reasoning and communicating them effectively both in your own and other languages.
4. Distinguishing the vision of society that these actors take for granted.
5. Expressing the epistemological assumptions that led to this interaction.
6. Generating innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
7. Relating the concepts methods and techniques of environmental sociology with general theoretical and methodological debates.
8. Relating them with the debates about order, social change and capitalism.
9. Relating these concepts and visions with the theoretical and methodological debates about society and environment.
10. Students must be capable of assessing the quality of their own work.
11. 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.
12. Using their analysis to reflect the social and environmental reality of Spain and Catalonia.

Content

- I. Introduction to consumption from a sociological perspective: consumption as a "total social phenomenon".
- II. General theory of the consumer society: genesis and structure of consumer societies.
 1. The formation of the consumer capitalist market and archetypal consumer models.
 - 1.1. The background of the consumer society.
 - 1.2. Neoclassical economic theory of demand and basic concepts of consumption analysis.
 - 1.3. The real structure of the market and creation of the consumption norm: oligopolization and transformation in the demand / consumption process.
- III. The consumer society in Catalonia and Spain.
 1. Process of historical configuration and development of the consumer society: phases and models of consumption.
 2. The role of brand / product images and advertising in consumer models.
- IV. Theoretical paradigms for the social investigation of consumption and advertising communication.
 1. Criticism of the economic theory of demand: the social construction of needs.
 2. Behaviorism and consumption: the brand / product as a signal.
 3. Psychoanalysis and consumption: the brand / product as a symbol, and desire.
 4. Genetic-structural theory: consumption as a social symbol.
 5. Cultural studies and consumption: consumption as a material culture.
 6. Structural linguistics and semiology of consumption: the brand / product as sign and signifier.
 7. Postmodern theories of consumption: the identity construction through consumption.
- V. Current debates in the sociology of consumption.
 1. The axes of structuring consumption and the context of economic crisis: class, gender and life cycle.
 2. Cultural consumption and the "omnivivorism" debate.
 3. Sustainable consumption trends.
 4. Emotions in consumption.
- VI. Investigating consumption: review of statistical sources on consumption and the use of social research techniques for the analysis of consumption.

Methodology

The sessions will combine a) theoretical presentations of a theoretical nature and b) text discussion seminars.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

| Title | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes |
|---|-------|------|-------------------|
| Type: Directed | | | |
| Master Lessons | 42 | 1.68 | |
| Type: Supervised | | | |
| Tutoring students | 3 | 0.12 | |
| Type: Autonomous | | | |
| Reading articles, team work, presentation in seminars, papers | 105 | 4.2 | |

Assessment

Students must submit the following evidence:

- 1) Individual written test. At the beginning of the course the guidelines for carrying out of a written test on the topics seen during the course will be given. It will be a short test/essay to be developed independently during certain days and must be delivered on the agreed day, towards the end of the course. The test/essay will raise critically, and with a review of the literature, some of the classic or current debates of the sociology of consumption.
- 2) Group work: students must carry out -in group- a brief empirical research on a phenomenon or object / brand of consumption previously chosen and agreed with the teacher. The work will be delivered at the end of the course and an oral presentation will be made in the last weeks of the course. At the beginning of the course the teacher will give the specific orientations of the work.
- 3) Brief assignments linked to practical activities of class: the alumnado will have to deliver the practical activities linked to the discussion of texts on consumption and publicity that will provide during the course.

Assessable activities that do not exceed a minimum of 5, must be repeated to pass the course.

Those students who request it, will be attended individually in the office or virtually, in order to give the relevant explanations to the correction of the tests and guide the possible recovery.

- 4) Definition of the Not Submitted: Do not present the set of individual works

In the event of plagiarism, the evaluation of the test will be 0'.

In accordance with article 117.2 of the UAB Academic Regulations, the evaluation of those students who have been enrolled before may consist of a single synthesis examination. The students who wish to be evaluated this way should contact the professor at the beginning of the semester.

Assessment Activities

| Title | Weighting | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------|------|---------------------------------------|
| Individual written test/essay | 40% | 0 | 0 | 10, 2, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 9, 7, 8, 12 |
| Research project | 40% | 0 | 0 | 10, 2, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 9, 7, 8, 12 |

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Software

None in particular.