

Micro Sociological Theory

Code: 101125
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500262 Sociology	OB	2	2

Contact

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Teaching groups languages

You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject. Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2023.

Prerequisites

The course requires to have passed "Fonaments de Sociologia". 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".

Competences

- 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.

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. Expressing the debates about these approaches in several moments.
6. Identifying the use of these approaches in different moments of the sociological theory.

Content

1. Introduction to systematic sociological theory.
2. Explanation, social mechanisms, and the theory of social action.
3. Individualism and emergence.
4. Rational choice theory.
5. Game theory in the social sciences.
6. Evolutionary game theory and social cooperation.
7. Coordination and social conventions.
8. Social trust and signaling theory.
9. Theories of collective action.
10. Analytical Marxism.
11. Theory of ordinary rationality.
12. Theories of bounded rationality, heuristics, and biases.

Methodology

The course is based on four types of activities:

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

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			
Seminars	38	1.52	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
Theoretical classes	15	0.6	2, 3, 4
Type: Supervised			
Individual tuition	15	0.6	2

Type: Autonomous			
Student's work	70	2.8	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Assessment

The continuous assessment system will be based on three kinds of evaluable evidence:

- 1) [EXAM] A final theoretical exam (50%).
- 2) [PART] Practical exercises during the course (15%), related to the contents treated in the classes. Exercises will be described and scheduled throughout the course in specific documents.
- 3) [LECT] An exercise based on compulsory readings (35%) that will aim to prove that students have read them and assimilated the contents.

To pass the assignment by this continuous system, obtaining a minimum weighted average of 5 will be required (no minimum grade is required to compute this weighted average). In case you do not overcome the assignment in the continuous evaluation (because of failing to obtain a minimum average score of 5 and/or because they haven't done some of the tests), you can opt for a re-evaluation by doing the tests for all the non-passed parts.

- If a theoretical examination has not been passed, it must be recovered with another examination of the same characteristics.
- If the participatory practices have not been overcome, they must be recovered with an exercise that will be determined.
- If the exercise based on the mandatory readings has not been overcome, it must be recovered with another exercise of the same characteristics.

In compliance with the agreements in force in the UAB, this subject provides for a single evaluation system. Those applying for the single assessment will follow the course under the same conditions as those following the continuous assessment system, except that they will only have to perform a single test at the end of the course consisting of three parts and which will include, respectively: a) questions on the theoretical contents of the courses [EXAM], b) questions about all mandatory readings [LECT], and c) exercises such as those carried out during the practical sessions [PART]. Otherwise, there will be no control of attendance to the course.

To pass the assignment in this single evaluation system it will be necessary to have obtained a minimum score of 4 for each of the three parts, and a minimum weighted average of 5 (according to the relative general weights). If you do not pass the assignment in the single evaluation, you can opt for a re-evaluation, carrying out a new single test (regardless of the parts already passed).

In any case, approving the subject by re-assessment will involve obtaining a course final grade of 8.

All evaluation activities must be carried out or presented on the scheduled day and time. Regarding the presence tests, they may be done at later time by those persons who provide a medical document that certifies that, on the day and time of the test, they were not in a position to do it or that they prove any other reason that the responsible docent for the assignment considers "force majeure". In principle, labor activities do not grant the right to do the tests at later time, unless it is duly accredited that the presence at work that day and that time was essential.

Plagiarism in the performance of any of the evaluation activities (copying from people or from the Internet) will mean suspending the subject directly with a zero. During the face-to-face tests, "mobile" telephone devices are not allowed to be used: having them on and accessible will be considered as copying.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
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Exercise on compulsory readings [LECT]	35	3	0.12	1, 2, 3, 6
Practical exercises participation [PART]	15	5	0.2	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Theory Exam [EXAM]	50	4	0.16	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Bibliography

1. Compulsory readings SELECTED FRAGMENTS (included as an orientation: each academic year they may partially vary according to academic criteria; they will be available for students at the start of the semester).

Aguiar, Fernando (1991): "La lógica de la cooperación", en AA.VV., *Intereses individuales y acción colectiva*. Madrid, Editorial Pablo Iglesias, pp. 1-41.

Axelrod, Robert (1984): "El éxito de toma y daca en los torneos computerizados", en *La evolución de la cooperación*. Madrid, Alianza, 1986.

Boudon, R. (2006): "El *homo sociologicus*. Ni idiota racional ni irracional", en Noguera, J.A. (ed.) (2010): *Teoría Sociológica Analítica*. Madrid, CIS, pp. 173-195.

Herreros, Francisco (2008): "Confianza, elección racional y teoría de juegos", en F. Aguiar, J. Barragán y N. Lara (coords.): *Economía, Sociedad y Teoría de Juegos*. Madrid, McGraw Hill, pp. 175-187.

Hollis, Martin (1994): "Juegos con agentes racionales", en *Filosofía de las ciencias sociales*. Barcelona, Ariel, 1998, pp.127-155.

Lago, Ignacio (2008): "¿Qué significa explicar en ciencias sociales?", en *La lógica de la explicación en ciencias sociales*. Madrid, Alianza, pp. 53-74.

Miguel Quesada, Francisco J. «¿Deberían interesarse los sociólogos por el marxismo analítico?». *Papers: revista de sociología*, 1996, Núm. 50, p. 155-163, <https://papers.uab.cat/article/view/v50-quesada>.

Miller, Luis M. (2008) Una aproximación sociológica a la noción de convención social. *Rev. Mex. Sociol* [online]. 2008, vol.70, n.4, pp.649-673. ISSN 2594-0651.

Noguera, José A. (2003): "¿Quién teme al individualismo metodológico? Un análisis de sus implicaciones para la teoría social", *Papers. Revista de Sociología*, nº 69, pp. 101-131.
<https://papers.uab.cat/article/view/v69-noguera>

Noguera, José A. y Tena-Sánchez, Jordi (2013): "Racionalitat i irracionalitat en la conducta humana", en *Jon Elster. Un teòric social analític*. Barcelona, UOC, pp. 44-59.

Noguera, José A. (2007): "Racionalidad y deliberación en la acción colectiva", *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, vol. 46, pp. 107-129.
<https://revintsociologia.revistas.csic.es/index.php/revintsociologia/article/view/6>

Thaler, Richard H. y Sunstein, Cass R. (2008): "Sesgos y errores", en *Un pequeño empujón*. Madrid, Taurus, 2009.

2. Reference texts

Basic level

Linares, Francisco (2018). *Sociología y teoría social analíticas*. Madrid, Alianza.

Noguera, José A. (ed.) (2010). *Teoría sociológica analítica*. Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.

Advanced level

Elster, Jon (2007). *La explicación del comportamiento social*. Barcelona, Gedisa, 2010.

Goldthorpe, John (2016). *La sociología como ciencia de la población*. Madrid, Alianza, 2017.

Van Tubergen, Frank (2020). *Introduction to Sociology*. London, Routledge.

3. Recommended supplementary references by topic

Explanation and social mechanisms

Goldthorpe, John H. (2007). *De la sociología: números, narrativas e integración de la investigación y la teoría*. Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2010.

Hedström, Peter (2005). *Dissecting the Social. On the Principles of Analytical Sociology*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Schelling, Thomas (1978). *Micromotivos y macroconducta*. México, FCE, 1989.

Rational choice and game theory

Aguiar, Fernando; Criado, Henar y Herreros, Francisco (2003). "Sociología y elección racional", en Salvador Giner (ed.), *Teoría Sociológica Moderna*. Barcelona, Ariel.

Aguiar, Fernando; Barragán, Julia y Lara, Nelson (coords.) (2008). *Economía, Sociedad y Teoría de Juegos*. Madrid, McGraw-Hill.

Marí-Klose, P. (2000). *Elección racional*. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.

Sánchez-Cuenca, I. (2004). *Teoría de juegos*. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.

Evolutionary game theory and social cooperation

Axelrod, Robert (1984). *La evolución de la cooperación: el dilema del prisionero y la teoría de juegos*. Madrid, Alianza, 1996.

Axelrod, Robert (1986). *La complejidad de la cooperación*. Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003.

Trust and signaling

Aguiar, Fernando (1993). "Confianza y racionalidad", en E. L. Espinoza y J. Rodríguez (eds.), *Problemas de teoría social contemporánea*. Madrid: CIS.

Pentland, Alex (2010). *Señales honestas. El lenguaje que gobierna el mundo*. Barcelona, Milrazones, 2008.

Collective action theory

Hirschman, Albert O. (1970). *Salida, voz y lealtad*. México, FCE, 1977.

Olson, Mancur (1965). *La lógica de la acción colectiva*. México, Limusa, 1992.

Linares, Francisco (2007). "El problema de la emergencia de normas sociales en la acción colectiva", *Revista Internacional de Sociología* nº 46.

<https://revintsociologia.revistas.csic.es/index.php/revintsociologia/article/view/7>

Analytical Marxism

Elster, Jon (1982): "Marxismo, funcionalismo y teoría de juegos. Alegato en favor del individualismo metodológico", *Zona abierta* nº 33 (1984).

Bounded rationality, cognitive rationality, heuristics and biases

Boudon, Raymond (2009). *La racionalidad en las ciencias sociales*. Buenos Aires, Nueva Visión, 2010.

Gigerenzer, Gerd (2007). *Decisiones instintivas. La inteligencia del inconsciente*. Barcelona, Ariel, 2008.

Software

No specific software is required