

## 26119 - Social structures

### Syllabus Information

---

**Academic Year:** 2020/21

**Subject:** 26119 - Social structures

**Faculty / School:** 108 - Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y del Trabajo

**Degree:** 274 - Degree in Social Work

**ECTS:** 6.0

**Year:** 2

**Semester:** Second semester

**Subject Type:** Compulsory

**Module:** ---

## 1.General information

### 1.1.Aims of the course

Social Work is developed within a social context. In this way, the Social Structure, along with other subjects of the same learning module (Sociology and Social Processes), tries to introduce the student to the knowledge of this essential context in which to develop their profession. Before starting this subject, students are supposed to have basic knowledge of sociology and this subject aims to deepen in the knowledge of some key features and processes for the compression of our current society. It also emphasizes on the structure of inequality, whose existence justifies the reality of social work.

### 1.2.Context and importance of this course in the degree

The subject belongs to the module C of the studies plan, the one that is responsible for the processes and problems where social work acts, along with other subjects such as psychology, economics, etc. As it is taught in in the second semester of the second year, students are supposed to have some general knowledge already acquired in the three previous semesters. And in the same way, this subject will help them with the content of the subject Social Processes (3rd year) as well as with the practicum and some optional subjects.

### 1.3.Recommendations to take this course

To take this course and for a correct learning process is very important to remember and to take account of the contents of the subject General Sociology (1st year). It is also necessary to spend some time reading the selected texts. Exceptionally (due to inevitable causes or calendar problems), some changes can be done in the contents of this guide.

## 2.Learning goals

### 2.1.Competences

After passing the subject, the student will be more competent to...

- Defend individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities and act on their behalf if the situation requires it.
- Get on well in the exercise of the profession with better knowledge of the reality where the social worker has to act and with better approach to the decisions that have to be taken.
- Know and understand critically the main aspects of the imbalances and social and power inequalities and the mechanisms of discrimination and oppression (in particular the ones derived from economic relations and of work, gender, ethnic and cultural rights).
- Know and understand critically the main aspects of social conflict, the mechanisms of power and

authority, of domination, exploitation and alienation, and perspectives of different social sciences on these processes and mechanisms.

· Analyze and evaluate the impact of inequality and discrimination in the workplace with people in particular contexts and problematic situations.

## **2.2.Learning goals**

The course "social structure" aims to provide the students the acquisition of basic knowledge of key processes that characterize our current society. After the course, students are expected to understand better the complex reality, to know different explanations about this reality that have been developed and to have a more critical vision to interpret the social environment. In particular, the subject will present gender inequality, a specific commitment of the Center.

## **2.3.Importance of learning goals**

We live in a complex society. The number of groups with different interests, permanent conflicts and serious imbalances is growing. In a context where these realities are transformed really fast it's difficult to understand our environment. Social workers have to exercise their profession in the middle of this confusion. More than ever it is necessary to proceed to an analysis of this changing reality; to resolve the complex keys, not always obvious, of our social life and try to put a little order in the chaos that will allow us to make decisions and intervene. In the final analysis, promote the exchange of what we do not like and preserve on the other hand that which deserves it. In this subject, the intention is to contribute to this analysis and to provide the future social workers, intellectual elements that will support their subsequent professional practice.

## **3.Assessment (1st and 2nd call)**

### **3.1.Assessment tasks (description of tasks, marking system and assessment criteria)**

The student must demonstrate that it has achieved the learning outcomes using the following evaluation activities

#### **CONTINUOUS EVALUATION SYSTEM**

The course has an important theoretical content and it's based on the work of reading, understanding and debate about a dossier of readings that will be provided. The homework will be reading the texts that correspond to each topic explained at class.

- 1.- The theory (T1) will be evaluated through a written test of a knowledge review of the readings' contents. It's the 40% of the final mark of the subject . For passing the subject students must achieve in this test a minimum score of 5.
- 2.- All the weeks we will make during the class a serie of practices (T2) supplementary to the lectures and for which is necessary a preliminary reading of the corresponding readings of the week and the participation in the theoretical sessions . One of them will be dedicated to gender's topic. Students will perform these practices in pre-established groups and will be commented and/or corrected in a collective way. The mark will be the result of the progressive evaluation throughout the course and the realization of a test that each student will do at the end of the course, where the student will be required to solve one of the practices that have been carried out in the course of the semester. Its realization and valuation will be the 30% of the final mark . A minimum of 5 will be necessary to pass the subject.
3. - Supervised work (by a tutor)(T6). It's the 30% of the final mark. It's required a minimum mark of 5. It will be developed in groups. This part will consist in reading, making a summary and a commentary of a book that will be proposed at the beginning of course. From that text, the teacher may require the answer to a question or the deepening in some concept with use of complementary bibliography.  
This is the criteria followed for the evaluation of this work:
  - ? Summary's quality and evidence of the understanding of the text
  - ? Work's adaptation to the demanded requirements
  - ? Quality and provision of supplementary documentation ? Formal Aspects
  - ? Personal contributions and commentary's originality

These activities may be recovered in the official call of the exam in case of not achieving the enough

final average mark.

## SINGLE EVALUATION SYSTEM

Students who want to choose this type of evaluation should inform the teacher in advance. (Check "Important Dates" in calendar ) Students will have to complete the following requirements:

1. - Making a comprehensive summary of the readings' dossier. This part will be the 20% of the final mark.
2. - Writing a work. This will be the 30% of the final mark. This activity will consist in reading, making a summary and commentary of a book that will be proposed at the beginning of course. Their specific conditions will be published in the ADD. This is the criteria followed for the evaluation of this work: ? Quality of the summary and evidence of the understanding of the text ? Work's adaptation to the demanded requirements ? Quality and provision of supplementary documentation ? Formal Aspects ? Personal contributions and commentary's originality The summary and the work will be presented at the official announcements: June and/or September. In both activities it's necessary to obtain a minimum mark of 5.
3. - To take a written test on the day of the official call of the exam. This is the 50% of the final mark. It will be necessary to achieve a minimum of 5.

## 4.Methodology, learning tasks, syllabus and resources

### 4.1.Methodological overview

The main methodological resource for the development of the subject consists of reading. The different contents are based on series of chosen readings that are the basis of the exhibition activities that will be analyzed and discussed. In small group sessions practical exercises will be done and more specific aspects of the contents will be explained. The goal of the small groups is to reinforce the work done in large groups.

### 4.2.Learning tasks

The learning activities belong to the three modules of teaching and learning.(T1, T2 and T6). Each week there will be a lecture (T1). The exhibition will be done by the teacher and the student has to do a previous work consisted of reading. Also, there will be practice sessions (T2) where the student has to put in practice (through some exercises proposed by the teacher) the knowledge acquired during the lectures and the previous readings. This activity will be mostly develop in small groups. Simultaneously to the previous activities the student will write a work in group (T6) during the semester that will be supervised by a teacher in tutorials and that will have to be submitted at the end of the semester.

### 4.3.Syllabus

. Program

1. - Presentation of the subject in the module and social work's professional profile.

#### WEEK 1

2.- The concept of Social Structure. Structure-action's debate. Structural determinants of social problems. Learning Outcomes: The student, - Understands how social relations are studied from the perspective of the social structure. - Understands and distinguish the different theoretical positions that explain the functioning of society. - Recognizes the importance of structural factors in the explanation and understanding of the social problems. - Appreciates the complexity of the social analysis and the need for a critical and analytical vision.

#### WEEKS 2 AND 3

3- Industrial society until today. Social Historical framework. Structure and Social Change. Contemporary Social Structure: features, trends and current debates. Learning Outcomes: The student, - Recognizes the fundamental features that characterized the industrial society. - Understands the process and significance of contemporary change - Distinguishes the crucial aspects of the most recent changes with respect to the classical industrial society. - Knows the contents of the following concepts:

industrial society, capitalism, alienation, postindustrial society, network society, globalization... - Critically analyzes the contemporary social reality.

#### WEEKS 4 AND 5

4- Inequality and stratification. Structural dimensions of inequality. Historical models of Stratification. Social mobility. The measure of inequality.

Learning Outcomes: The student, - Understands and defines the concept of social stratification and appreciates its centrality in the social structure. - Distinguish between difference and inequality. - Recognizes the various determinants of inequality. - Identifies and distinguishes the various historical models of stratification

#### WEEKS 6, 7 AND 8

5. - The explanations of inequality.

5.1. - The classical theories of Marx, Weber, and functionalism. Analysis and critical evaluation of the various perspectives. 5.1.1. - Marxist theory of the social classes. 5.1.2. - Functional Theory of Emile Durkheim. 5.1.3. - Max Weber: Class, status and power. 5.1.4. - Analysis, assessment and comparison of the classical theories. 8

5.2. - recent theories on the stratification and inequality. 5.2.1. - Development of the functionalist theory of social stratification: Talcott Parsons, Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore. 5.2.2. - Critical Theory of Conflict: Marxism:Erik Olin Wright. 5.2.3. - Non-critical theories of conflict: Ralf Dahrendorf. Neoweberianos :J. Goldthorpe

Learning Outcomes: The student, - Knows the contents of the main theories on inequality. - Knows how to distinguish the conservative and critical paradigms in the explanation of the inequality. - Applies correctly elements of the different theories to a concrete social reality.

#### WEEKS 9, 10, 11 AND 12

6. - Contemporary classes' structure. The transformation of work and its impact on the inequality . Dualization and social exclusion. A global perspective of inequality. Globalization and Development. Poverty in the world. Theoretical explanations for inequality in the world.

Learning Outcomes: the student: - knows the big global imbalances and can handle and interpret basic indicators. - can define the concepts of absolute and relative poverty. - recognizes, distinguishes and compares different theoretical explanations about the underdevelopment and poverty The Student - Knows the "Map" and recognizes the characteristics of each class. - Understands what are the key factors of inequality in developed societies, including Spain. - Meets the substantial changes in the workplace and is able to move its impact on the structure of the inequality. - Knows the meaning of the concept of "social exclusion". - Critically analyzes information about the reality of inequality and appreciates the key role that it has on the vital opportunities for groups and individuals.

#### WEEKS 13 AND 14

7. - Ascriptive factors in inequality. Age and gender as a factor of inequality. Gender social's construction. Domestic field and public field. Ethnicity and inequality.

Learning Outcomes: the student: - Recognizes the weight of the adscriptives factors inequality's structure. - Knows the conceptual differences between sex and gender. - Understands how age and gender are socially constructed and its relationship to the structure of inequality.- Can point out the main indicators of discrimination toward women in various fields. - Knows how to distinguish between race, ethnicity, prejudice and discrimination. - May explain the relationship between ethnic origin and system of stratification. - Can point to some indicators of discrimination based on age, gender and ethnicity. - Applies the previous knowledge to the understanding of some aspects of the migration phenomenon.

#### 4.4.Course planning and calendar

THE SCHEDULE OF THE LECTURES WILL TAKE PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROGRAM. EACH WEEK THERE WILL BE A PRACTICE SESSION REFERRED TO THE CONTENT OF THE WEEKLY READINGS. AT THE SAME TIME, STUDENTS WILL HAVE TO GO TUTORING WITH THE TEACHER AT LEAST TWICE DURING THE SEMESTER IN THE ESTABLISHED SCHEDULE IN ORDER TO SHOW THEIR PROGRESS IN THE WORK AND GET SOME INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE TEACHER FOR FINISHING IT. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBJECT WILL BE COMPLEMENTED BY SOME ACTIVITIES OF THE CONTINUOUS EVALUATION ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE (ALREADY EXPOSED AT THE BEGINNING):

- Week 3: First report of the supervised work. Students will inform the teacher the chosen topic and the

program of their work.

- Week 4: Deadline to communicate the teacher the choice of single evaluation instead of continuous one.
- Week 11: Second report of the supervised work. Students will present the progress in their works.
- Week 13: The work has to be submitted.
- Week 15: Global test of the theoretical content and delivery or test of the practicals. - Official call: Single evaluation or repetition of the failed activities or tests.

#### **4.5. Bibliography and recommended resources**

See Spanish versión for this guide