



## UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA

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### SOCIOLOGY OF ORGANISATION

**MATTEO VILLA**

Anno accademico 2019/20  
CdS CORPORATE COMMUNICATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT  
Codice 258QQ  
CFU 9

Moduli	Settore/i	Tipo	Ore	Docente/i
SOCIOLOGIA DELL'ORGANIZZAZIONE	SPS/09	LEZIONI	63	MATTEO VILLA

#### Learning outcomes

##### *Knowledge*

Students who successfully complete the course will show a solid comprehension on the main theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of organizational processes in the world of production, in the associative systems and in the welfare systems.

In particular, on the base of international studies and research included in the program, he/she will have to understand such mechanisms in the context of a complex and deeply transforming society and in the face of the current social, economic and environmental challenges.

##### *Assessment criteria of knowledge*

The required knowledge will be evaluated during a final exam (see "Assessment methods").

##### *Skills*

Students will learn to recognize between different types of organization and between approaches and patterns of organizational processes of many kinds. They will also learn to evaluate what the same patterns and approaches and tools produce in terms of quality of organization and work, of risks and opportunities, socio-economic and ecological mechanisms, power management, forms of inclusion/exclusion and participation

##### *Assessment criteria of skills*

Classroom exercises with group work, presentations and discussion aimed at analyzing and comparing data, research findings, and theoretical schemes related to approaches and patterns of organizational processes.

##### *Behaviors*

Students will be able to use some theories and methods to study and understand approaches and patterns of organizational processes, and critically analyze some problems and pragmatical consequences that result from them

##### *Assessment criteria of behaviors*

Class exercises with group work, presentations, discussion and comparison on specific case studies and experimental application of tools and approaches.

##### *Prerequisites*

The student should have basic notions of general sociology, economic sociology, economics.



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### Teaching methods

Lectures are based on theoretical-active teaching methods, mainly based on Action-Research methods for learning and integrated use of Theory, Experience, Reflection. Lessons include mixes of oral presentations, practical exercises, discussion and comparison.

### Syllabus

Syllabus and examination program are divided into three parts, connected to each other:

The first part, "*Institutional - Theory and Practice of Organizing: The Different Approaches*", is mainly devoted to the exploration and study of the main organizational theories. The path revolves around some metaphors proposed by the author of the handbook: organizations as machines, organisms, brains, cultural systems, political systems, psychic prisons, flux and transformation, instruments of domination.

The second part, "*Single-subject - Complexity, ecology and organizational processes: the contribution of Gregory Bateson*", goes deep into one of the approaches discussed in the first part, the complexity theory, moving from the original and eclectic contribution of Gregory Bateson up to few current developments.

The third part, "*Research - Organizational change and the current challenges*" discusses the problems of organizational knowledge, learning and change with three options on highly topical issues among which the student must choose one:

Option 1. **LABORATORY (mandatory participation: suspended due to health emergency until the conditions are in place):** *Learning, leadership and decision-making processes in democratic organizations*: knowledge, experimentation and learning of methods and tools to support decision-making processes in democratic organizations (with particular reference to nonprofit, cooperative, associative and spontaneous organizations and to public-private systems of participatory governance).

Option 2. **THEMATIC PATH: Bureaucracy, Managerialism and Participation: ambivalence of changes in welfare systems**: theoretical analyses and case-studies on the current processes of transformation in the forms of government, participation and management of public-private welfare systems and on the ambivalent effects on the relationship between citizens and Institutions and in the system of rights and duties.

Option 3. **THEMATIC PATH: Ecology, evolution and organizational processes: systemic approaches to sustainable development**: problems and theoretical and methodological perspectives on the relationship between society, economy and the environment, and tools for organizational innovation towards sustainability.

Option 4 (new addition). **THEMATIC PATH: IV Industrial revolution and organizational processes: the political, socio-economic and environmental implications of the second machine age**: organizational changes and risks and opportunities of digitization of production and information processes through the development of robotics, additive technologies, integrated automation, internet of things, virtual reality, use of big data, cloud and artificial intelligence.

### Bibliography

#### Required texts:

I PART – *Institutional. Theory and Practice of Organizing: The Different Approaches*

G. Morgan, *Images. Le metafore dell'organizzazione*, Milano, FrancoAngeli 2002 (reprint 2015). EN Edition: *Images of Organizations*, Sage, London

G. Bonazzi, *Il cambiamento del paradigma organizzativo nel 20° secolo: alcune ripercussioni sulle convinzioni profonde*, Sociologia del lavoro, N. 100, 2005

II PART – *Single-subject. Complexity, ecology and organizational processes: the contribution of Gregory Bateson*

G. Bateson, *Verso un'ecologia della mente*, Adelphi, 2000. Only the Chapters: "Le categorie logiche dell'apprendimento e della comunicazione" "Il ruolo del cambiamento somatico nell'evoluzione", "Ecologia e flessibilità nella civiltà urbana"

G. Bateson, *Mente e Natura. Un'unità necessaria*, Milano: Adelphi, 1984. Only the Chapters: 2. "Ogni scolarretto sa che...", 7. "Dalla classificazione al processo"



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H.Tsoukas, *Complex Knowledge. Studies in Organizational Epistemology*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005. Only the "Introduction" and the Chapters 8. and 9.

III PART – *Research. Organizational change and the current challenges* Choose one option between the following ones:

Option 1. LABORATORY (mandatory participation: **suspended due to health emergency until the conditions are in place**): *Learning, leadership and decision-making processes in democratic organizations*:

E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, New York: Garden City, 1959. Only the third chapter: "Regions and Region Behaviour"

G. Bateson, *Verso un'ecologia della mente*, Milano, Adelphi, 2000 (o edizione più recente). Solo

i capitoli: Solo i saggi: "Verso una teoria della schizofrenia" e "Doppio vincolo, 1969". EN Edition: *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Only the Chapters: "Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia", "Double Bind, 1969"

K. Lewin, *La teoria, la ricerca, l'intervento*. Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005. Solo il capitolo VIII "Il problema della democrazia e il gruppo". EN Edition: *Paragraphs drawn from Resolving Social Conflicts. Selected Papers on Group Dynamics*

P. Allen, S. Maguire, B. McKelvey (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Complexity and Management*, Sage, London 2011. Only the Chapters 20 "Organizational learning and complexity science: exploring the joint potential" and 22 "Implications of complexity science for the study of leadership"

Option 2. THEMATIC PATH: *Bureaucracy, Managerialism and Participation: ambivalence of changes in welfare systems*:

L. Bifulco, *Gabbie di vetro. Burocrazia, governance e libertà*, Milano, Bruno Mondadori, 2008. Only the Chapters: Premessa, Chapter 1. "Tempi moderni" and Chapter 6. "Gabbie di vetro".

E. Ongaro, S. Van Thiel (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Public Administration and Management in Europe*, Palgrave, 2017. Only the Chapters 46 "Public Administration in Europe North and South: Enduring Differences and New Cleavages" and 16 "Collaborative Governance and the Third Sector: Something Old, Something New"

M. Bonetti, M. Villa, *In the shadow of legalism: understanding community participation in an overly-bureaucratic context*, Critical Policy Studies, 2014, Vol. 8 No. 4, pp. 447-464.

S. Sabatinelli, M. Villa, *Happy ever after in the quasi-market place? The dowry logic of active labour policy in Lombardy Region*, International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, 2015, Vol. 35, Issue 11/12.

Option 3. THEMATIC PATH: *Ecology, evolution and organizational processes: systemic approaches to sustainable development*:

G. Bateson, *Verso un'ecologia della mente*, Milano, Adelphi, 2000 (o edizione più recente). Solo i saggi: "La spiegazione cibernetica", "Finalità cosciente e natura", "Forma, sostanza e differenza". EN Edition: *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, Only the Chapters: "Cybernetic Explanation", "Conscious Purpose versus Nature", "Form, Substance and Difference"

W.E. Stead, J.G. Stead, *Can Humankind Change the Economic Myth? Paradigm Shifts Necessary for Ecologically Sustainable Business*, Journal of Organizational Change Management, 1994, Vol. 7 No. 4, 1994, pp. 15-31.

S. Benn, E. Baker, *Advancing Sustainability Through Change and Innovation: A Co-evolutionary Perspective*, Journal of Change Management, 2009, 9:4, 383-397.

B. Siebenhüner, M. Arnold, *Organizational Learning to Manage Sustainable Development*, Business Strategy and the Environment, N. 16 2007, pp. 339–353.

M.I. Winn, S. Pogutz, *Business, Ecosystems, and Biodiversity: New Horizons for Management Research*, Organization & Environment, published online 26 May 2013, DOI:

10.1177/1086026613490173 [http://www.globalcompactnetwork.org/files/attivita/gdl%20ambiente/semin8luglio\\_roma/Organization%20Environment\\_2013\\_Pogutz.pdf](http://www.globalcompactnetwork.org/files/attivita/gdl%20ambiente/semin8luglio_roma/Organization%20Environment_2013_Pogutz.pdf)

Option 4 (new addition). THEMATIC PATH: IV Industrial revolution and organizational processes: the political, socio-economic and environmental implications of the second machine age:

P. Rossi, *L'innovazione organizzativa. Forme, contesti e implicazioni sociali*, Roma, Carocci, 2018. Only



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Chapter V: “L’innovazione dei processi di lavoro”

A. Foryciarz, D. Leufer, K. Szymielewicz, *Black-Boxed Politics: Opacity is a Choice in AI Systems*, Medium, 2019. <https://medium.com/@szymielewicz/black-boxed-politics-cebc0d5a54ad>

P. Fleming, *Robots and Organization Studies: Why Robots Might Not Want to Steal Your Job*, Organization Studies, 2019, Vol. 40(1), pp. 23–37.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0170840618765568>

F. Butera, *Lavoro e organizzazione nella quarta rivoluzione industriale: la nuova progettazione socio-tecnica*, L’industria / n.s., a. XXXVIII, n. 3, luglio-settembre 2017, pp. 291-316.

<https://www.rivisteweb.it/doi/10.1430/88846>

A.M. Braccini, E.G. Margherita, *Exploring Organizational Sustainability of Industry 4.0 under the Triple Bottom Line: The Case of a Manufacturing Company*, Sustainability 2019, 11, 36, pp. 1-17.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/su11010036>

R.N. Lanyon-Hogg, *How Sustainable is the 4th Industrial Revolution?*, ITNOW, Volume 61, Issue 4, Winter 2019, Pages 20–23. <https://academic.oup.com/itnow/article-abstract/61/4/20/5628390?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

### Non-attending students info

All the Students, particularly Non-attending students, Not Italian Native Speakers and Erasmus Students, are encouraged to get as soon as possible all the informations about courses, exams and other teaching issues from the Lecture’s Institutional website (below). To clarify any possible doubt, getting further information about courses, lectures and examinations held by the lecturer, or to discuss the syllabuses you can write an e-mail or access to the Office Hour (see below).

### Assessment methods

Exams are based on oral test according to the art. 23 of University Regulations on Teaching Activity. The third part of the program can be addressed in a different way, consisting of Practical Exam, that is a group oral presentation (2 or 3 people) to be performed in the classroom based on the contents of the texts of the chosen option. Those who choose this way will not be asked to answer questions on the third part of the program during the individual exam. Group presentations can be made in one of the three planned dates per year. Dates and other informations can be found on Lecturer’s Institutional website.

Based on the student’s choice exams can be carried out in English.

### Class web page

[https://people.unipi.it/matteo\\_villa/sociologia-del-lavoro-e-dellorganizzazione/](https://people.unipi.it/matteo_villa/sociologia-del-lavoro-e-dellorganizzazione/)

### Additional web pages

Students are encouraged to carefully check the institutional Professor’s web site to find additional information on programs and on their validity for courses of previous Academic Years and information on where to find the required texts

E-mail lecturer: [matteo.villa@unipi.it](mailto:matteo.villa@unipi.it)

Lecturer institutional website: [https://people.unipi.it/matteo\\_villa/](https://people.unipi.it/matteo_villa/)

Course Page: [https://people.unipi.it/matteo\\_villa/sociologia-del-lavoro-e-dellorganizzazione/](https://people.unipi.it/matteo_villa/sociologia-del-lavoro-e-dellorganizzazione/)

Other students’ info: [https://people.unipi.it/matteo\\_villa/studenti/](https://people.unipi.it/matteo_villa/studenti/)

### Notes

Students are encouraged to carefully check the institutional Professor’s web site to:

- Additional information on programs and on their validity for courses of previous Academic Years
- Where to find the required texts (also on the syllabus that can be downloaded from the lecturer's website).

Attention: Students are not authorized to use unofficial handouts or photocopies beyond legal limits for preparing exams.

Attention: the above syllabus has been modified according to the suspension of teaching activities in the classroom due to the coronavirus. The changes concern the options to be chosen in the third part (see



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below):

- Option 1 is suspended until it is possible to conduct the laboratory (Autumn 2020 or in the new year, June 2021).
- A new option number 4 is proposed and will remain valid for the duration of the programme.

*Updated: 12/05/2020 16:17*