UCLouvain

bsoca1312

2025

Socio-anthropology of the symbolic

The version you're consulting is not final. This course description may change. The final version will be published on 1st June.

5.00 credits	30.0 h	Q1

Teacher(s)	Delchambre Jean-Pierre ;				
Language :	French				
Place of the course	Bruxelles Saint-Louis				
Prerequisites	The prerequisite(s) for this Teaching Unit (Unité d'enseignement – UE) for the programmes/courses that offer this Teaching Unit are specified at the end of this sheet.				
Learning outcomes	At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to: This course in the BAS3 program aims not only to present and discuss in depth the question of symbolism, central in sociology and anthropology (and more broadly in the human and social sciences), but also to consider possible applications and repercussions. of this question through contemporary issues, addressed in part through classical questions (the symbolic function and the role of language, culture and the imagination, the study of myths and rites, symbolic effectiveness and its conditions, the question of belief and illusions, the tension between "active life" and "contemplative life", etc.), but also on the other hand through recent problems or those which have acquired a new acuity (the "demand for meaning "and the" meaning resources "between interpretative and pragmatic approaches, meaning and the" bringing into play "of meaning, the components of a" symbolic economy "in current social configurations - see in particular what escapes an axiomatic of need and interests -, the new ways of "inhabiting the world" in an era which requires questioning productivism and rethinking our relationship to "nature", the question regimes of belief and knowledge in a world that can be said to be both "disoriented" and marked by pluralization and decentring, the challenges and dead ends of the cultural and interpretive turn - are we doomed to "relativism"? see the distinction between cultural relativism and methodological relativism -, the virtues and the limits of deconstructionist approaches, the metamorphoses of the religious fact, the rise in importance of issues linked to mental health and to the "language games" of psychology, 'experiential and psychic well-being).				
Evaluation methods	Oral exam. The EU evaluation has two components whose weight in the overall score is calculated as follows: - knowledge of the subject of the theoretical course: 60% of the overall mark (12/20) - knowledge of additional texts: 40% of the overall score (8/20). Note that the part relating to the reading of texts will be taken into account only if the student obtains at least one third of the points for the part of the examination corresponding to the theoretical course (4/12, on basis of minimum 2 Questions). Indeed, the part of the exam on the theoretical course evaluates basic skills which, if they are not acquired, do not allow to consider to take into account the reading part of texts. In other words, it is considered that a deficiency that is too serious in terms of basic skills (less than 4/12) can not be compensated by knowledge of texts with a complement status. The principle applied here refers to a logic of learning outcomes and not an arithmetic logic. If the text reading part is not taken into account at the evaluation level, the score out of 12 is adjusted in score out of 20 according to a rule of proportionality: 1/12 = 1.66 / 20 rounded to 2/20; 2/12 = 3.33 / 20 rounded to 3/20; 3/12 = 4.99 / 20 rounded to 5/20. The evaluation method is unchanged in the second examination session.				
Teaching methods	The theoretical course is completed by readings of texts that the student must perform on his own. The knowledge of the subject of the theoretical course and that of the complementary texts are the subject of an evaluation during the same examination (see below). In the course of the lecture, the professor exposes the theoretical aspects and the elements of problematization. It introduces students to the conceptual development exercise, using illustrations, and taking empirical objects as analyzers. The teacher also gives keys to read and adapt more easily the texts that are part of the reading portfolio (see below). Students are invited to ask questions and to debate, the small size of the audience allowing an interactive pedagogy. The theoretical course is completed by a text portfolio. It is expected that students read these texts thoroughly, understand them and appropriate them (it is strongly advised to make a personal synthesis of them). Knowledge of compulsory reading is assessed on the examination.				

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Content	As indicated in the learning objectives, the aim is to approach the classical question of the symbolic through current issues and questions. The theoretical course will comprise several sequences and will be supplemented by an involving activity in the form of reading texts.				
	Theoretical course outline :				
	1. Introductory sequence: the question of meaning and how it is "put into play" from the point of view of the social sciences.				
	2. Approaches to the question of the symbolic: an overview.				
	3. Putting the question of meaning into practice: some contributions from studies on ritual and play.				
	4. An exercise in transposing and applying some concepts and hypotheses borrowed from Max Weber's sociology of religion to the current field of mental health and psychology.				
Bibliography	Voir indications données lors du cours.				
Faculty or entity in	ESPB				
charge					

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)							
Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes			
Bachelor in Information and Communication	COMB1BA	5	BESPO1160	٩			
Bachelor in Information and Communication (French- English)	COAB1BA	5	BESPO1160	٩			
Bachelor in Information and Communication (French-Dutch- English)	COTB1BA	5	BESPO1161	٩			
Bachelor in Sociology and Anthropology	SOCB1BA	5	BESPO1160	٩			
Bachelor in Sociology and Anthropology (French-English)	SOAB1BA	5	BESPO1160	٩			
Bachelor in Sociology and Anthropology (French-Dutch- English)	SOTB1BA	5	BESPO1161	٩			
Bachelor in Political Sciences	SPOB1BA	5	BESPO1160	٩			
Bachelor in Political Sciences (French-English)	SPAB1BA	5	BESPO1160	٩			