

Sociology of educational knowledge: Educational policy, educational knowledge, pedagogic identities – 5 ECTS

Lecturer- co-ordinator: Prof Anna Tsatsaroni

Course Description

The course aims at a systematic and critical approach to educational policies, focusing on the new forms of governance of educational systems, in relation to educational knowledge and pedagogic identities. This thematic unit utilises the main sociological theories, which are the object of study of the First Semester, in order to review, study and analyse critically the research production in the fields of the sociology of educational knowledge and educational policy, with particular emphasis on contemporary studies, referring to the following topics: (a) Globalisation and educational policy in the European space. (b) New models of “professionalism” in the field of education. (c) Changes in the organisational structures, the programmes of study and the pedagogical practices. (d) Knowledge and governance in the framework of contemporary educational policies. (e) The methodology of (pedagogic) discourse analysis. The study of these topics as well as the examination of the work of contemporary sociologists, such as Stephen Ball and Roget Dale, creates a wide base and a rich theoretical background that helps to initiate students to the research practices of these specialised fields.

Objectives

The main objectives of the course are:

- The creation of a wide and rich theoretical basis for studying educational policies and practices, through the systematic and critical reading and reviewing of the field of research.
- The recognition that new forms of governance in the field of education provide an important axis in the critical examination of dominant forms of knowledge and identity.
- The systematic engagement with methodological issues in the sociological educational research.
- The initiation of students into the methodology of discourse analysis, for the critical

examination, reading and systematic description of political/pedagogical texts and practices.

Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of the course students should be able to:

- Understand the significance of specialised sociological knowledge in analysing changes in the forms of governance of the field of education.
- Understand, describe and analyse critically the relationships between forms of governance and the value fields of knowledge and identity.
- Use adequately the relevant scientific literature in the study of European and national policies for education, in the contemporary globalised environment.
- Have basic theoretical knowledge and methodological tools for analysing policies and for the critical reading of the relevant research.
- Pose critical questions, in relation to the content and the processes of policy formation in the current conditions.
- Identify the critical policy issues and developments in a rapidly changing environment.
- Develop specialised tools of discourse analysis for the critical exploration and description of specific policies.

Competencies: Search different sources, organise information, critical reading of texts, critical appreciation of theories, analysis and synthesis of information and data, work in international environments, teamwork.

Teaching/ learning methods

Teaching is in the form of lectures and seminars. It presupposes individual study, team-work, and students' participation in: (a) the discussion of the proposed literature week by week, and (b) the critical reading, presentation and discussion of the relevant research work.

Students' assessment

The evaluation takes account of:

- Students' active participation in the educational process, which presupposes systematic study, week by week, of the proposed literature sources (20% of the total score).
 - Students' performance in a written essay reviewing the literature or doing a book review.
- The essay will be up to 5.000 words, and will be the product of students working in small groups of three (80%).

Bibliography

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Important scientific journals in the field

European Education Research Journal

Journal of Education Policy

British Journal of Sociology of Education

Globalisation, Societies and Education

International Studies in Sociology of Education