

SOCIOLOGY OF THE BODY

Instructor: Alexandrina Vanke, Candidate of Sciences in Sociology

Phone: +7 962 9196537

E-mail: aleksandrina.vanke@gmail.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This MA level course considers theoretical approaches to the body from the sociological perspective including references to other social disciplines. We will study the body as a result of social processes and differentiations, interpersonal interactions and cultural production. What are the differences between the sociology of the body and body studies? What are the main concepts in this field of research? How is the corporeality examined in different theoretical traditions? How is the body controlled and disciplined? The first part of the course is dedicated to critical discussions of abovementioned questions. The second part of the course contains examination of the body in social contexts and expects empirical research that will be conducted by students. We will discuss the body through the perspectives of gender, class, and professional milieu, as well as through leisure activity, e.g. sporting and consuming bodies. Besides, we will explore some social aspects of collective feelings and senses of perception that are connected with the corporeality. The course is intended for students who are interested in studying social theory and conducting qualitative research.

GOALS OF THE COURSE

The instructor should present the main approaches to the sociology of the body, organize discussions, explain particularities of examining the body in social contexts, and help students to construct a research plan, as well as discuss intermediate results of their empirical research. Students should read the readings, put critical questions, participate in class discussions, and integrate theoretical ideas from the readings into their own research plans. Students should conduct a qualitative research on the body and write a research paper.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- 1) analyze the body from the sociological perspective;
- 2) examine classical and contemporary approaches to the corporeality;
- 3) explore the body as a product of social actions, interactions, organizations, cultures, institutions and the state;
- 4) organize a research plan;
- 5) participate in research discussions;
- 6) facilitate research discussions in small groups;
- 7) conduct a sociological research on the body.

GRADING COMPONENTS

- Class discussion - 25%
- Facilitation of small group class-discussions - 10%
- Preparation for class - 20%
- Group research presentations – 10%
- Final research paper (approximately 12 pages in length) - 35%
- Attendance.