Course description ("scheda SUA dell'insegnamento")

Faculty:
"Scienze della Comunicazione".

Degree program:
Management and Business Communication (LM59).

Course name:
Semiotics of Consumption and Advertising.

Course instructor:
Prof. Marianna Boero

Course topics:
The purpose of this course is to understand how semiotic methodology can be applied to consumption and advertising. Semiotics research has established a fruitful dialogue with the marketing world over the last thirty years. Providing advantages in terms of “greater intelligibility, greater relevance, greater differentiation” (Floch), the semiotic method helps to read the hidden strategies behind the signs and can be used as strategic support across a range of activities in the field of brand communication: from the analysis of an advertisement to the study of more extensive communication campaigns, from the control of communicative coherence to the design of logos, packaging and retail space. On the one hand, this course aims to present the state of the semiotic research in the field of marketing, advertising and consumption, on the other hand it aims to provide direction for future research, focusing on how social change is reflected in the consumption system.

Instructor curriculum related to the course:
The instructor is PhD in Cultures, Languages and Politics of Communication. She has been Postdoctoral Researcher (Abruzzo Region - University of L'Aquila, 2016); Research Fellow (University of Teramo - Pomilio Blumm srl, 2014-2015); Post-doctoral Research fellow (University of Teramo, 2012-2014); Visiting Research Fellow (University of Toulouse, France, 2013); Adjunct professor in Semiotics of text (2011-2012; 2009-2010) and in Italian writing laboratory (2004-2005; 2005-2006). She has published several articles on the theme of advertising, consumption, and media representations of the "Other" in double blind peer-reviewed national and international journals, such as Semiotica, Lexia, Carte Semiotiche, E/C, Il Sileno. She has presented at national and international conferences. The instructor's research interests include semiotics of advertising and consumption, semiotics of culture, gender and ethnic stereotypes, semiotics of new media, media representation of "Otherness".

Program year the course is offered:
2-nd year.

Semester the course is offered:
1-st semester.

Type of educational activity:
□ Basic;
■ Characterizing;
□ Related;
□ Elective;

Number of ECTS credits:
6
Number of lecture hours:
36

Possible prerequisites:
Some background in structural semiotics is required.

Course objectives (according to the Dublin Descriptors):
The course delivers the following abilities:
- Knowledge and understanding of the contemporary semiotic debate and of the main issues related to the semiotic study of consumption and advertising.
- Applying knowledge and understanding by explaining semiotic theories and methodological tools finalised at investigating case studies related to consumption and advertising.
- Making judgements in a critical and autonomous way to analyse and understand advertising messages.
- Communication skills to efficiently relate case studies to the consumption context in which they were produced and to the contemporary debate.
- Learning skills to autonomously analyse advertising, applying the structural semiotic method

Teaching methodology:
Problem-based and case-oriented, with many examples and exercises.

Final exam and grading:
1st part: Written examination (multiple choices and short answers)
For both attending and non-attending students:

2nd part: Oral examination
Attending students: discussion of a workshop agreed during the course

Student registration and relationships management:
The student registration for the final exam must be done through the institutional Web site. Consultation will be set weekly, in presence (previous e-mail appointment request) and by computer communication. During lectures, consultation will be possible even before and after class. Course materials, including lecture notes of the teacher, solved exercises and additional reading, will eventually be made available on dedicated websites.

Eventual student research activities in support of education:
Workshop tutorials include individual and group research activities on a theme weekly agreed during the course.