

## COURSE DETAIL

### CONSUMER CULTURE

**Country**

Italy

**Host Institution**

University of Bologna

**Program(s)**

University of Bologna

**UCEAP Course Level**

Upper Division

**UCEAP Subject Area(s)**

Sociology History

**UCEAP Course Number**

178

**UCEAP Course Suffix****UCEAP Official Title**

CONSUMER CULTURE

**UCEAP Transcript Title**

CONSUMER CULTR

**UCEAP Quarter Units**

6.00

**UCEAP Semester Units**

4.00

## **Course Description**

This course is part of the Laurea Magistrale program. The course is intended for advanced level students only. Enrollment is by consent of the instructor. The course focuses on the historical development of consumer capitalism, the fundamental elements of contemporary sociological theories of consumer action, and the main issues related to the politics of consumer culture. Emphasis is placed on how theories work in practice, by addressing key contemporary empirical phenomena in the sphere of consumption, with particular attention to social boundaries and social identities, commercial institutions, and the new challenges posed by environmental issues and the process of globalization/localization. The course aims at providing a theoretically informed sociological understanding of contemporary consumer cultures and practices. While adopting an interdisciplinary outlook, it deals mainly with the sociology of consumption, concentrating on contemporary social phenomena of global relevance. The course begins with a discussion of the historical development of so-called consumer capitalism, highlighting the relevance of urbanization, colonialism, changes in social stratification (class, gender) and international commerce. It then focuses on the most important theories of consumer action, considering how economics, sociology, and anthropology have provided several distinctive perspectives on the functions, meanings, and mechanisms of consumption. Finally, the course considers the politics of consumer culture and addresses cultural industries as a vehicle for hegemonic views of the “consumer,” commercially mediated spaces as institutional contexts for a variety of dominant or alternative consumer practices and identities, and the process of globalization/localization that takes place through the global standardization of commodity chains and alternative, locally grounded market circuits.

## **Language(s) of Instruction**

English

## **Host Institution Course Number**

95729

**Host Institution Course Title**

CONSUMER CULTURE

**Host Institution Campus**

BOLOGNA

**Host Institution Faculty****Host Institution Degree**

LM in CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY; LM in GEOGRAPHY AND TERRITORIAL PROCESSES; and LM in HISTORY AND ORIENTAL STUDIES

**Host Institution Department**

History and Cultures

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