COURSE DETAIL

LANGUAGE AND LATE CAPITALISM
Country Italy
Host Institution University of Bologna
Program(s) University of Bologna
UCEAP Course Level Upper Division
UCEAP Subject Area(s) Linguistics
UCEAP Course Number 179
UCEAP Course Suffix
UCEAP Official Title LANGUAGE AND LATE CAPITALISM
UCEAP Transcript Title LANG&LATE CAPITALSM
UCEAP Quarter Units 6.00
UCEAP Semester Units 4.00

Course Description

This course is part of the Laurea Magistrale Program and is intended for advanced level students. Enrolment is by consent of the instructor. This course engages the role of language—both as a symbolic code and as a material tool—in the spreading of late/neoliberal capitalism. While most analyses of the world's current order tend to focus on political and economic aspects, this course explores how certain ways of speaking and using language may partake in producing capitalist forms of reasoning and practical conduct. Throughout the course, students develop tools to analyze the discursive and semiotic forms that characterize our everyday lives. Students learn to view linguistic interactions and graphic artifacts (i.e., street signage, typefaces, letterforms, brands, logos, and other types of graphic media) as socially and politically meaningful semiotic technologies that shape our worlds. Students learn how to analyze new protocols of discourse that characterize our everyday lives: the customer satisfaction survey, the service encounter, the checklist, the logbook, the flowchart, the electoral mission statement, the training session, etc. Despite their apparent ordinariness, these discursive genres/textual artifacts are key for the production of the self-improving and self-reflexive subjects required by the regimes of moral accountability and the forms of market rationality that characterize our contemporary moment. While reading ethnographic analyses of specific technologies of discourse, students engage broader questions: How pervasive are neoliberal structures of practice? To what extent can neoliberalism be represented as an overarching and coherent global trend generated by the homogenizing forces of Western Capitalism? Is our moral and affective experience completely shaped by the extension of economic rationality to all areas of life? The course shows how, within a regime of advanced capitalism, life and labor unfold through complex interplays of semiotic codes, affective registers, and material objects.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
93426

Host Institution Course Title
LANGUAGE AND LATE CAPITALISM (LM)

Host Institution Course Details
https://www.unibo.it/en/teaching/course-unit-catalogue/course-unit/2021/455316

Host Institution Campus
BOLOGNA

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree
LM in HISTORY AND ORIENTAL STUDIES; and LM in CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

Host Institution Department
History and Cultures

Course Last Reviewed
2021-2022

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