

Final dissertation proposal – Course “Urban Planning”

Proposal 1 – “Precarious lives: the role of platforms”

The digitalization of our everyday life, magnified and accelerated by the Covid19 pandemics, has increased the importance of platforms as providers of services, such as take-away restoration, short-distance mobility, and professional services. However, their success has given space to new forms of work which are at the boundaries of informal and unregulated work, and extremely precarious. The so-called gig economy has now been consolidating, putting at serious risk the capacity of those workers who are employed through them to reach economic security and to access welfare systems in many countries. In this thesis proposal, I invite students to study the phenomenon of platform work by collecting life histories of workers and observing their job, focusing on a city of their choice.

Required skills and languages: basic competencies in participant observation and qualitative interviews

Preferable skills and languages: speaking the language of the city in which you would like to work

Places available: 1

Proposal 2 – “The Covid19 pandemics: an intersectional phenomenon in the city”

The Covid19 pandemics has been a disruptive event that impacted the life of all the people in the world. However, there are comparatively few studies that focused on the extent by which different social groups have been impacted by the phenomenon, especially in terms of the socio-economic consequences due to restrictions and the social distancing measures. Scope of this thesis proposal is to use the intersectional analytical framework to analyse a city of choice of the student and understand the impact of Covid19 as an intersectional phenomenon. You will be required to assume a critical perspective over inequality, focusing on gender, age, ethnic and locality structures of disadvantage and the complex relationships that might have between each other.

Required skills and languages: basic competencies in data analysis

Preferable skills and languages: speaking the language of the city in which you would like to work

Places available: 1

Final dissertation proposal – Course “The Art of Asking Questions”

Proposal 1 – “People like me. Symbolic boundaries in home design’s choices”

Consumption practices are one of the ways by which individual define their symbolic boundaries with people who are “not like me”, based on distinction (from the lower classes) and imitation (of the upper classes). Stemming from a debate that started in France during the ‘80s with the publication of Pierre Bourdieu’s book “La distinction”, Boltanski and Thevenot “La justification” and Michele Lamont’s “Money, Morals and Manners: The Culture of the French and the American Upper-Middle Class”, this dissertation focuses on the home design’s choice of people. Its scope is to investigate to what extent people are marking class boundaries within their house when they are choosing their home design.

Required skills and languages: competencies in qualitative interviews

Preferable skills and languages: French.

Places available: 0

Proposal 2 – “Life-style migrations in Southern Europe. Impact on Touristification and Gentrification”

Life-style migrations are on the rise, with a constant influx of self-employed professionals that move to Southern Europe locations to enjoy the good climate, the quality of life and the type of cultural offer while benefitting of the higher incomes ensured by their working networks located in the North. The scope of this dissertation is to collect interviews with expat professionals that decided to migrate for their lifestyle in Southern Europe, analysing their cultural consumption and discourses of class-belonging. Scope of the dissertation is to put lifestyle’s choices of expats in relation with the on-going processes of touristification and gentrification occurring in the (once) working-class neighbourhood of Southern European cities. Students can opt for the city in which they are more interested in to.

Required skills and languages: competencies in qualitative interviews

Preferable skills and languages: speaking the language of the city in which you would like to work

Places available: 1

Proposal 3 – “Mapping Social Innovation in Milano: focus on childcare 0-3”

Social innovation is a term that has gained a certain success to identify bottom-up solutions to solve welfare needs left unanswered by the current welfare states. It indicates experienced based on the participation of the civil society and directly by citizens, which propose innovative solutions that are social “in their ends and means” (BEPA, 2010). The scope of this dissertation is mapping the current offer in Milano of childcare services (0-3) which may be defined as social innovations and investigate the impact of the local political discourse on the development of socially innovative actions.

Required skills and languages: basic competencies in data analysis

Preferable skills and languages: Italian

Places available: 1