UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Learning, Thinking and Decision Making

2324-2-E2004P008

Learning area

2. STUDY OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS UNDERLYING COMMUNICATION.

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- Human cognition
- Development of knowledge and beliefs
- Psychological factors biasing human knowledge and its employment

Applying knowledge and understanding

- Applying what is known of human cognitive processes to the comprehension of common social and communication contexts
- Devising debiasing methods for the correct communication of information

Contents

The course analyses, also with practical examples, the main empirical studies and theoretical models concerning learning, concept development, deductive and inductive reasoning, hypotheses testing, problem solving, and decision making.

Detailed program

- Learning.
- Concepts and categorisation.
- Reasoning, exploration and testing of hypotheses, problem solving.
- Decision making.

Prerequisites

None.

Teaching methods

Different teaching methods will be used:

1. Lessons. They will be used to: a) present and explain the contents; b) answers the questions and scrutinise the most complex topics; c) discuss together theoretical/methodological issues of particular interest.
Some lessons (approximately 5) will be used to work on assignments and discuss/comment together the results of these assigments. The aim of these assignments is trying to apply the theoretical knowledge acquired during the lessons to real cases of communication. For the assigments, students will work in group.

2. Short self-evaluation questionnaires. Every week, students will be asked to fill in a short questionnaire with multiple-choices questions on the topics presented during the last lectures. These questionnaires will NOT be evaluated. However, students will be able to self-evaluate their learning progresses. Filling the questionnaires is not mandatory, but encouraged.

Assignments are only for students attending the course; self-evaluation questionnaires are mainly for students attending the course.

Assessment methods

The modality of the exam will be defined and updated on the basis of the University rules for COVID-19 emergency.

Written exam (step 1) with optional oral exam (step 2).

Step 1: Four computer-based open questions. Answers have a length of approximately 15 lines (maximum time for the exam: 45 minutes). Questions may be on both theoretical and empirical/methodological arguments that are part of the textbooks and reading materials (and independently of wether they have been discussed in class). Each question is evaluated with a scale that goes from 0 (unanswered question, or totally not consequential or patently wrong answer) to 7.5 (well-argued complete and correct answer). The sum of the scorse of the 4 questions gives the final grade of the exam or – if the grade is at least 18 – the starting grade of the optional oral exam.

The student has three days from the publication of the grades of the written exam for accepting the grade, retiring from the exam, or else requiring an oral exam (please remember that also the teacher can ask for an oral exam: in this latter case, the student cannot accept the grade of the written exam and, in case he/she is absent from the oral

exam, he/she will be considered retired).
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Step 2: optional oral exam (for students that have obtained at least 18 in step 1). The oral exam has two parts. Firstly, the open answers to the written exam will be discussed and possibly self-corrected and completed by the student. This part enables the student to understand why his/her exam was so graded. Secondly, each student receives new questions to test his/her depth of understanding and abilities at communicating effectively one or more critical issues of the program. The grade obtained at step 1 (written exam) is adjusted on the basis of the answers given by the student during the oral exam. Note that the oral exam may either increase or decrease the grade of the written exam.

For students taking part to all lessons (and that have obtained at least 18 in step 1 - written exam): Each practical exercise will be evaluated with a score from 0 to 2. At the ends, the average score will be computed and this score will be summed to the grade obtained in step 1 (and possibly in step 2). The score is rounded down for decimal of .5 or below and up for decimal of .6 or above). Note that this score is summed to the other scores only if the student obtain at least 18 in step 1.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Cherubini P., Bricolo E., Reverberi C. (a cura di) (2021). *Psicologia generale* (nuova edizione). Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore.

Chapters covering the following topics: Learning, Concepts, Problem solving, Decision Making. In particular:

- Chapter 1 > only 1.1, 1.2, 1.4.
- Chapter 6 > the whole chapter except for: figure 6.1, box 6.2, box 6.5, paragraph 6.4.1; with regard to 6.4.2, only weighted deltaP and evidence integrarion should be considered.
- Chapter 7 > the whole chapter excep for: paragraph 7.3.3.2, paragraph 7.5.1.3, paragraph 7.5.2.1, paragraph 7.5.2.2, figure 7.2, figure 7.4, box 7.1, section 7.6.2.
- Chapter 8 > the whole chapter excep for section 8.3.1.
- Chapter 14 > only 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.5, 14.7, 14.9, 14.10, 14.12.

Note that the topics that are not explained in lectures, but are present in the indicated paragraphs of the textbook, are part of the exam programme.

Erasmus students can contact the teacher to agree upon an English bibliography and/or the possibility to make the exam in English.

Sustainable Development Goals

GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES