UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

# COURSE SYLLABUS

# Childhood Pedagogy - A-L

**2324-2-E1901R143-AL**

## Course title

Children, childhood educational contexts and experiences

## Topics and course structure

The course aims to foster a reflection around childhood pedagogy, moving first of all from a discussion of the numerous and even contradictory images of childhood that underlie educational thoughts, projects and actions.
It also aims to support a discussion regarding what it means to educate with children, deepening experiences, methodologies, tools, contexts - in and outdoors - and materials - from the most to the least structured - within educational services for children from zero to six years old.

These are the main thematic cores:

- childhood images,
- guidance documents,
- educational planning and children's exploratory research,
- the role of the adult in the educational relationship,
- peer relationships and the group dimension,
- childhood educational contexts, physical and relational, in and outdoor,
- the participation of key adults.

## Objectives

The teaching aims primarily to support the aptitude to problematize educational situations and events, to analyze

them in depth and process them in a reflective form; to make judgment on educational situations and events after taking accurate documentation; and to renew educational practices through openness to research, experimentation and innovation.

Specifically, the course aims to develop the following learning in terms of knowledge and skills:

- to be able to recognize the many different images of childhood that guide educational work with children;
- to know how to reflect on educational professionalism, identifying and critically analyzing the choices and actions implemented; - to know how to analyze educational contexts for children aged 0-6, with particular reference to the provision of environments, in and outdoor, and materials;
- knowing how to develop adequate documentation for the purpose of monitoring and sharing educational action.

The acquisition of the expected learning outcomes is supported through the solicitation of reflection from the discussion of content, experiences, contexts and materials, as well as through the proposal of opportunities for observation, research and documentation.

## Methodologies

The course is divided into moments of theoretical framing and synthesis, presentation and discussion of experiences in children's educational services, and individual and group activation. As such, active and critical participation is required of attending students.
The course is held in Italian.

During the course, late afternoon meetings are planned for students workers interested in delving into the core areas of Childhood Pedagogy: the schedule of meetings will be published at the beginning of the semester.

## Online and offline teaching materials

Brief summaries, in presentations, maps or videotaped pills, of the issues discussed and pointed out links, articles and videos of interest will be offered during the course.

## Programme and references

The program will include discussion of the issues and themes covered in the course, useful for introducing and framing childhood pedagogy and educational experiences for children aged 0-6. The many possible representations of girl and boy that those who educate may hold will then be shared and analyzed, to probe how much and how they may condition educational experiences. The main reference documents relating to services 0-3, 3-6 and 0-6 will be discussed. Theoretical and methodological approaches useful for learning about, but also for designing, educational experiences for boys and girls will then be presented, with particular reference to ways that enhance exploration and play through an educational role that invests in observation, documentation and shared research between adult and child. Finally, children's educational services, such as nurseries, preschools, childcare centers, and outdoor educational experiences will be encountered, including through the voices of educators, coordinators, and atelierists, in order to explore the many different possible modes of educational contexts capable of responding to the intelligences and supporting the skills of young children.

The bibliography consists of the following texts:

1. Guerra M., Luciano E. (ed.) (forthcoming in October 2023), *Accanto a bambine e bambini. Questioni e prospettive per educare nel 0-6*, Edizioni Junior-Bambini, Parma
2. Guerra M. (2019), *Le più piccole cose. L'esplorazione come esperienza educativa*, FrancoAngeli, Milan
3. a text to be chosen from:
   • Edwards C., Gandini L., Forman G. (a cura di) (edizione 2017), *I cento linguaggi dei bambini. L'approccio di Reggio Emilia all'educazione dell'infanzia*, Edizioni Junior-Bambini, Parma
   • Gigli A. (a cura di) (2021), *L'alleanza con le famiglie: una potente risorsa educativa*, Edizioni Junior-Bambini, Parma
   • Guerra M. (2020), *Nel mondo. Pagine per un'educazione aperta e all'aperto*, FrancoAngeli, Milano
4. a collection of documents and papers uploaded to the platform and freely downloadable
   It is also required to read Smith K. (2008), *How to be an explorer of the world*, Penguin Books, in order to better understand the author's proposal and to be fully aware of the exploration to be conducted.

ERASMUS STUDENTS
Students from foreign universities can contact the lecturer to arrange program and bibliography in English.

## Assessment methods

The course includes a final examination, which consists of an oral exam from a previous paper.
The paper is a personal research work from an exploration chosen from those proposed in Keri Smith's book *How to become an explorer of the world* (Corraini, Mantova, 2011), to be documented and reworked with reference to the texts in the bibliography and to what was shared and experienced in class. To support the work, a preliminary reading of the book *Le più piccole cose* (FrancoAngeli, Milan, 2019) is suggested.
The work is developed in three steps.
In the first, each student will experience an exploration chosen from those proposed in Keri Smith's text: the exploration does not involve an educational or didactic translation, but requires the activation of each in a personal research experience.
Documentation of the exploration constitutes the second step, as well as the first material to be included in the paper. If the exploration consists of the production of any artifact, it can be photographed, both in its stages of creation and in its final outcome, and then included in the paper.
In the third step of the paper, this documentation must then be analyzed in the light of the texts in the bibliography and what has been experienced and discussed in class. This analysis constitutes the second and final part to be included in the paper.
The manner of documenting the experience and designing the overall paper is at the discretion of the student.
The paper should be submitted 15 days prior to the roll call to which one intends to present. An evaluation on the paper - a starting point for the next part of the exam - will be sent before the oral exam, which will take into account the following aspects:

- relevance, correctness and articulation of the content illustrated and discussed
- level of explicitness of the methodological steps
- accuracy of the documentation
- connection with the theoretical elements at hand
- personal reflexivity
- correctness of terminology, spelling and syntax
  The address to send the papers to is esploratoridelmondo@gmail.com. Before sending, files should be named with exploration number, surname and first name, numbering them in case there are more than one. Ex: 38 Guerra Monica 1-2 (first of two), and reduce the weight of the images, so as to avoid excessively heavy papers. Any heavier and non-reducible materials can be shared on Drive of the same address.

The oral test will open with a discussion about the evaluation of the paper and will ascertain the knowledge of the

topics and the ability to critically use the acquired knowledge, also referring to experiences, situations, examples discussed in class or belonging to the students' educational and/or professional experience.
During the interview, the following will be assessed with appropriate requests for further study and, for those who took part in the lessons, through references to the lived experience during the course:

- students' acquired knowledge;
- the critical and reflective argumentation skills around the themes and issues covered;
- the ability to develop an independent discourse on the topics explored;
- the expressive skills: the adequacy of the language used and the ability to return one's "educational gain";
- the ability to reread situations and experiences by reading them through the lens of the perspectives and tools used;
- the ability to connect what they have learned with their own personal, internship and possibly professional experience, identifying and critically analyzing the educational models implemented.

Students with a PUOI are invited to write to the professor in advance to agree on the most coherent examination mode.

## Office hours

The receiving is listed on the professor' page.

## Programme validity

The programme is valid for two academic years.

## Course tutors and assistants

Course tutors:
Dr. Alessandra Bocchi
Dr. Monica Colombini
Dr. Letizia Luini
Dr. Alice Rampa
Dr. Angela Rinaldi
Dr. Francesca Rota
Dr. Angela Sangalli
Dr. Cilene Tineli

## Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS | PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS