UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Child Psychopathology

2425-5-G8501R030

Course title

Developmental Psychopathology

Topics and course structure

From the development of the normative system to the evaluation and classification with children and adolescents in educational settings, the course in developmental psychopathology aims at providing an integrated view of the emotional and clinical cognitive aspects from which maladaptive behaviors arise.

Emphasis is on risk factors and promotion aspects triggering mental health as well as on describing characteristics of disorders that are first evident in childhood. In our framework, the developmental psychopathology perspective represents an opportunity to think originally about the critical research and clinical outcomes that may arise from it.

Seventy-five percent of the lessons are lecture-based, while twenty-five percent will involve classroom discussions, case presentations, group work, and exercises (Interactive Teaching).

Interactive teaching takes place in the classroom.

Objectives

1) Contextualize the historical overview of developmental psychopathology.

2) Demonstrate the ability for critical evaluation of key aspects of developmental psychopathology.

3) Demonstrate the knowledge of different type of empirical tools for assessing and evaluating children' behaviors.

Applying Knowledge and Understanding
3. Acquire practical skills in the assessment, classification, and monitoring of behavior in educational contexts, using tools specifically designed for children and adolescents.
4. Apply theoretical principles of developmental psychopathology to the analysis of clinical cases and the design of educational and clinical interventions.

Making Judgements
5. Develop the ability to critically analyze empirical research findings in developmental psychopathology, reflecting on their implications for clinical practice and interventions.
6. Evaluate protective and risk factors for mental health in relation to various developmental contexts.

Communication Skills
7. Communicate analysis and evaluation results clearly and effectively, using appropriate scientific language during classroom discussions, group work, and clinical case presentations.

Learning Skills
8. Promote original and critical reflection on the empirical and theoretical outcomes of developmental psychopathology, integrating new knowledge for the continuous improvement of professional skills.

Methodologies

Lecture-based classes (75%)

Case studies (25%)

Online and offline teaching materials

The instructor provides additional and alternative materials to support non-traditional students in studying and preparing for the exam (e.g., full recordings of in-person lectures, supplementary slides, audiovisual, and multimedia materials).

Further readings will be provided during the course.

Some of the materials used during the course are multimedia.

Programme and references

1) Course Introduction

2) Historical contextualization

3) Paradigms and cognitive clinical model

4) Attachment theory

5) Principles of diagnostic

6) Tools for clinical diagnosis

7) Psychosomatic and Somatoform Disorders

8) Childhood eating disorders

9) Emotional regulation disorders

10) Autism Spectrum Disorder

11) Anxiety disorder

12) Mood disorders

13) Disruptive, impulse-control and conduct disorders

14) Trauma and stress-related disorders

Readings (one text):

1) Tambelli, R. (2017) Manuale di psicopatologia dell'infanzia. Bologna, IT: Il Mulino.

Students with special needs must contact the instructor in advance to discuss and agree upon alternative programs and tools, in coordination with the B-Inclusion Office at our university.

Erasmus students should contact the teacher to select an alternative textbook in English

Students who choose to take the course as part of their 'biennalizzazione' track must contact the instructor in advance to discuss and agree upon an alternative bibliography.

Assessment methods

Written (5 multiple-choice closed questions, 3 theoretical definitionsand and 1 open-ended question) + Oral examination
Note: Students (also if they will not attend the classes) who consistently participate in course activities can replace the exam with a paper (individual or group) agreed upon with the instructor (autoethnography + group work).

1. Low Range (0-17/30): Insufficient
Knowledge and Understanding: The student demonstrates limited and fragmented knowledge of the topics covered, with difficulty understanding the key concepts of developmental psychopathology.
Applying Knowledge and Understanding: Inability to apply theoretical concepts to concrete cases or contexts.
Autonomy of Judgment: Lack of critical thinking and independent evaluation; strong dependence on information provided by the instructor.
Communication Skills: Poor oral/written expression; technical language is absent or used inappropriately.
Learning Skills: Limited ability to process knowledge and connect concepts; poor autonomy in study.
2. Middle Range (18-24/30): Sufficient - Good
Knowledge and Understanding: The student has a general understanding of the main topics of the discipline, although there may be uncertainties or gaps in specific concepts.
Applying Knowledge and Understanding: Decent ability to apply acquired knowledge to simple situations but struggles with more complex problems.

Autonomy of Judgment: Partial independence in formulating critical assessments, often limited to rephrasing known information.
Communication Skills: Good clarity of expression, with an acceptable use of technical language, though not always precise.
Learning Skills: The student demonstrates sufficient ability to learn and link topics but requires support for autonomous study.
3. High Range (25-30/30): Very Good - Excellent
Knowledge and Understanding: The student demonstrates thorough and well-structured knowledge of the topics covered, mastering the complexity of developmental psychopathology.
Applying Knowledge and Understanding: High ability to critically and autonomously apply theoretical knowledge to complex situations, case studies, and practical contexts.
Autonomy of Judgment: Excellent critical thinking, independence in evaluating theories and data, demonstrating originality and problem-solving skills.
Communication Skills: Precise and appropriate use of technical language; clear, fluent, and rigorous expression both orally and in writing.
Learning Skills: The student exhibits excellent autonomous learning abilities, integrating knowledge and making interdisciplinary connections.

Office hours

On request.

Programme validity

Course tutors and assistants

Tutor:

Federica Cavazzoni:
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Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS