UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Developmental Psychology

2526-3-E1901R081

Course title

Developmental Psychology

Topics and course structure

The course aims to explore some topics in developmental psychology with a focus on the period 0-6 years. The main developmental processes of perceptual, motor, communication, cognitive, and social-emotional skills in the early years of life will be addressed and discussed. Special interest will be given to the development of intersubjectivity and creative thinking. Topics will be covered in the dialogue between classical theoretical approaches and more recent developments. Finally, different ways of observing and promoting the child's competencies in different developmental contexts, with particular reference to early childhood education services, will be presented and discussed.

Objectives

This course, with constant and participatory attendance at lectures, is intended to stimulate a critical approach to the discipline and reflection on the implications and possibilities that the use of acquired knowledge and skills may have on the promotion of development in educational contexts. Specifically, it is intended to promote the following learnings, in terms of knowledge and skills:

1. Knowledge and understanding

Knowledge of the psychological competences of the child in the period 0-6 years; knowledge of developmental processes

2. Applied knowledge and understanding

Ability to apply the knowledge acquired to the phenomena observed in family and non-family contexts of growth, in

order to design educational pathways also making use of the skills acquired in the interdisciplinary workshops related to this course.

3. Autonomy of judgement

Ability to relate and critically compare different theoretical and methodological approaches. Ability to reflect using acquired knowledge in the observation of educational contexts in order to make decisions on development needs.

4. Communication skills

Development of the ability to communicate effectively both with professional partners in the educational and organisational sphere (educators, managers, principals, administrators, coordinators, consultants, supervisors, psychologists, social and sociomedical workers, etc.) and with non-professional partners (beneficiaries of services, families, widespread society) sharing observations of working methods to promote the well-being in the development of children within educational contexts.

Knowledge and use of the specific languages and vocabulary of developmental psychology, as tools for educational work and relations and communication in different contexts.

5. Learning skills

Ability to rework and organise knowledge.

Ability to identify methods and tools to support one's own and others' personal and professional growth.

Methodologies

The language of the course is Italian.

Approximately all the 56 hours of lessons are carried out in presence. Each lesson includes a part of Frontal Teaching (theoretical explanation, in-depth conceptual study) and a part of Interactive Didactics (dialogic exchanges, activities supervised by the teacher, such as individual or group exercises, with the support of video material, images, educational documentation, etc.), with an overall distribution that can be roughly estimated at 50% FT and 50% ID.

During classroom work, role playing, dialogue, discussion and individual, pair and small group exercises will be used to promote the ability to read the impact of different variables in psychological development and the promotion of well-being in educational and training contexts.

Each lesson will include deliverable and interactive moments: part of the lesson will be frontal didactics, to introduce content on which to then lead discussions and/or exercises. Some lessons will have a greater percentage of frontal didactics, always maintaining, in each of them, a part of participatory reflection on the topics addressed, also with the help of video, audio etc. Other lectures will involve more interactive involvement of students in the form of exercises, discussions and/or small group activities supervised by the lecturer.

Teaching activities will take place in-person and some lectures or parts of lectures (especially frontal lessons) will be recorded and uploaded to the platform.

Teaching materials will be uploaded to the platform.

Online and offline teaching materials

Lecture slides (available on the course webpage)
Articles (both for individual study and as practice material)
Web forums

Programme and references

Barone, L. (a cura di) (2019). *Manuale di psicologia dello sviluppo. Nuova edizione*. Carocci. Chapters:

1-2-4-5-6-7-8-9
Harris, P.L. (2023), *Psicologia del bambino. Le dodici grandi domande*. Raffaello Cortina.

One text of your choice among:

Baumgartner, E. (2023). *Affetti e relazioni nell'infanzia*. Carocci
Cassibba, R. e Salerni, N. (2023). *L'osservazione nei contesti educativi*. Carocci
Siegel, D.J. e Payne Brison, T. (2018). *Yes Brain. Come valorizzare le risorse del bambino.* Raffaello Cortina

Although this course is held in Italian, for Erasmus students, course material can also be available in English, and students can take the exam in English if they wish to do so.

Assessment methods

The exam consists of **a final written test** (no midterm) lasting **one hour**, consisting of the following:

- **10 multiple-choice questions**, with three alternatives, of which only one is correct (3 points awarded for each correct answer, 0 points for each incorrect or unselected answer)
- **1 open-ended question** aimed at deepening and reflecting on one of the course topics (answer scored in thirtieths)
- **1 open-ended question** aimed at reflecting on one of the topics in the text of your choice, with implications for the educational profession (answer graded in thirtieths)
  The written test was chosen as the exam method because it is consistent with the educational objectives of the course and is suitable for assessing the student's ability to understand, critically rework, and express the topics covered in the course. The final grade is calculated with a **weighted average** in which the multiple choice score weighs 20% and each open-response score weighs 40% of the total.

Responses to open-ended questions will be evaluated taking into account the following indicators:
relevance of the content
richness/articulation of the content
internal coherence of concepts and arguments
correctness of the concepts illustrated and discussed
explicit references to the texts studied
correctness of terminology, spelling and syntax
ability to reflect critically and personally rework the content, linking together the topics covered and educational work

Specifically, responses to the open-ended questions will be graded as follows:

1. Insufficient (0-17)
   Insufficient preparation on the main topics in the syllabus and bibliography of the course; very limited and poorly autonomous skills of argumentation, analysis and critical elaboration; insufficient ability to connect theory and practice and to identify relevant connections between the texts and
   themes of the course; incorrect expository competence and discipline-specific vocabulary.

2. Sufficient - More than sufficient (18-23)
   Generic and in some respects uncertain or deficient preparation on several topics in the syllabus and bibliography of the course; limited and poorly autonomous skills in argumentation, analysis and critical elaboration at times; difficulty in connecting theory and practice and in identifying relevant connections between texts and themes of the course; expository competence and discipline-specific vocabulary partially correct.

3. Fair/Good (24-27)
   Adequate preparation on the main topics in the syllabus and bibliography of the course, but little depth on some more specific topics; ability to argue, analyze and critically elaborate present, but not always punctual and autonomous; fair ability to connect theory
   and practice and to identify relevant connections between the texts and themes of the course; expository competence and discipline-specific vocabulary mostly correct.

4. Distinguished - Excellent (28-30/30L)
   Comprehensive and thorough preparation on the topics in the syllabus and bibliography of the course; articulate and autonomous ability to argue, analyze and critically elaborate; very good/very good ability to connect theory and practice and to identify relevant connections between the texts and themes of the course; very good/very good expository skills and mastery of the vocabulary proper to the discipline.

Office hours

Student reception times are announced monthly, on Prof. Farina's webpage.

Programme validity

Two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Barbara Girani De Marco

Chiara Deprà

Letizia Della Zoppa

Marta Sala

Elena Della Malva

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION