UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Theories and Models of Educational Consultancy

2526-2-F5701R011

Course title

Clinical-pedagogical consultancy: a theoretical - interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of support practices for professionals, groups, organisations.

Topics and course structure

The course will approach pedagogical consultancy as knowledge equipped with a complex epistemology and as a device capable of enhancing and reformulating the system's - client's needs, questions and implicit knowledge in the phases of impasse and criticality that any organisation may go through and that has important implications for the sense of efficacy of professionals, work groups and the system as a whole.
The course employs a clinical-pedagogical approach that is capable of rereading the contribution of other paradigms (philosophical, sociological, psychological, etc.) in a transdisciplinary key, in order to develop a theoretical-experiential knowledge on consultancy that is able to focus on the different vertices of each organisational device, reading, in a critical key, the points of contact but also of possible conflict. Pedagogical consultancy establishes work settings in which reflexivity is put at the service of a process of change that reinforces, over time, the system's resilience and cohesion and its capacity to produce processes of transformation and innovation. In the first part of the course, the theoretical-methodological foundations of pedagogical consultancy will be explored, while in the second part of the course, a number of specific topics will be explored in depth by means of a didactic device with a theoretical-experiential focus on the value of learning by and in group

Objectives

The main teaching objectives concern both the promotion of the capacity for reflection, critical analysis
clinical-pedagogical understanding of consultancy and training processes and practices, as well as the acquisition

and consolidation of knowledge and skills relating to the various methods that the proposed consultancy approaches provide, in particular for the development of groups and work teams, methodologies that are fundamental for making organisations capable of autonomously promoting internal growth and development processes.

In particular, this teaching is intended to support the following learnings:

1. Knowledge and understanding

- Knowledge and comprehension of the main consultancy models with a pedagogical-clinical focus and their epistemological references;
- Knowledge and understanding of the theories and models proposed as frames of sense for a reading of consultancy questions in organisations.

2. Applied knowledge and comprehension skills

- Knowledge and understanding of the competences - key of the consultant and his/her professional role in supporting organisational development;
- Knowledge and comprehension of theories of group function and its dynamics;
- Knowledge and comprehension of effective relational and organisational models for the successful functioning of a team.

3. Autonomy of judgement

- Acquisition and consolidation of the ability to analyse and think critically in organisational situations, through a reflexive posture in relation to both one's own cultural and ethical/deontological posture;

- Development of meta-cognitive skills and self-awareness of one's own cultural assumptions.

4. Communication skills

- Knowledge and understanding of the central role of communication in the development of organisational processes;

- Knowledge and acquisition of soft skills to read and interpret different levels of functioning both within the organisation and in relations with stakeholders.

5. Learning capacity*

- Capacity to re-elaborate and meta-reflect on proposed knowledges;

- Ability to identify methods and tools to support one's own and others' personal and professional growth, in particular on the consultancy dynamics that guide a request for help in an organisation.

The Expected Learning Outcomes (disciplinary and transversal) are coherent with the cultural, scientific and professional profiles identified by the CdS. By the end of the course, students should be able to understand the underlying theories and models of consultancy and be able to apply them in practice through the application of some consultancy methodologies (cases, self-cases, etc.). More generally, they will have to show that they know how to activate processes for building generative relationships and support the development of personnel in organisations, as required by the outgoing professional profiles of the degree course. They will also have to show that they have transversal skills in communication, dialogue, relations, and the reading of explicit and implicit individual and group demands, which are indispensable for those who are called upon to manage and develop

human resources in order to operate in dynamic and complex organisational contexts.

Methodologies

**The teaching will be delivered in Italian.

A**ll the teaching and training activities planned in the 56 hours will be carried out in presence.
**

Each lesson will include a part of Didactic Delivery (theoretical explanation, in-depth study of the concepts and themes envisaged) and a part of Interactive Teaching oriented towards the involvement of individual students and the group by the following methods :

- dialogical discussions in plenary;
- small and large group works;
- development of specific exercises supervised by the professor (*examples: exercises on scientific articles, case works, elaboration of video-materials, etc.).

The overall distribution can be approximately quantified as 50% DE and 50% DI.

Online and offline teaching materials

The teaching materials (slides, selection of video-recorded lectures, in-depth articles on topics, work traces etc.) used during the course will be made available on the e-learning page of the course.

Programme and references

Course topic 2025-2026:*Clinical-pedagogical consultancy: a theoretical - interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of support practices for professionals, groups, organisations.

Thinking of consultancy with a clinical pedagogical approach, starting from a focus on the client system's needs, means giving back to an organisational system the responsibility and the tools to grow and evolve in autonomy, contemplating an ability to build an environment in which the promotion of wellbeing, inclusiveness, and equal opportunities is supported by individual and collective support interventions and practices. The negotiation dynamic between the client and consultant system in each phase of the intervention focuses on joint research and diagnosis processes that contemplate an interactive, relational dimension where a central role is assumed by the consultant's clinical posture and by his professional deontology.
Also in the psycho-socio-educational field, as well as in the enterprise sector, the need for second-level consultants able to promote a concerted work between the organisation's objectives, the task of the work groups and a reading of the needs of the beneficiaries of the interventions has become increasingly urgent:n front of new demands that concern different spheres that include, among many others, the prevention of youth discomfort and deviance, school and work orientation, etc., practitioners express demands for new cultural and intervention models and techniques that place them up to the challenges that concern the new areas of intervention in the educational

contexts.
These are contexts where professionals are called to an exposure and a quality of presence that cannot but include appropriate devices and settings for the maintenance and elaboration of the lived experience.
The process of understanding and reading consultancy demands relies on time: reflecting on one's own internal processes, attributing sense and meaning to needs and transforming them into questions, in a logic of sense making, allows for an active participation of the client system in the definition and design of interventions that support its autonomy and capacity to learn from experience. Revitalising the recovery of a sense for professionals is of vital importance today, with a specific focus on the new questions posed by the new generations entering the workplace, as well as assisting them in the search for targeted spaces to revive forms of reflexivity and planning, both within profit and non-profit organisations and the third sector.
he course will focus on the functioning of teams as driving forces in the life of an organisation. The effectiveness of a team lies in the convergence of all members towards a common goal. A functional team is a multiplier in both a quantitative and qualitative sense of the processes that develop within it and is a subject capable of coming up with new ideas and creative strategies. Solutions to a problem will certainly be more far-sighted, perspective-rich and elaborated if it is a group rather than an individual alone that elaborates them. Moreover, a work group is a networked and multi-stratified subjectivity that, in addition to a formal direction, made up of roles and functions, goes through alternating phases in which emotional/affective dynamics pose themselves either as resources or, at certain moments of organisational life, as obstacles: this is particularly evident in the phases of transition and management change that require the organisation to revisit its cultural and relational models.
Its productivity is related to the internal well-being and to that of each participant in it. Pedagogical consultancy works in the direction of supporting the group's resilience in relation to leadership styles and actions in order to promote reflective and meta-reflective processes that keep the group task-oriented even in the critical phases that any organisation may go through. Promoting in groups a good harmonisation between the sharing of objectives and the sharing of emotional experiences means developing the ability to consciously recognise the more intangible aspects that constellate organisational life and orient them towards the valorisation of the task. Underestimating these aspects or going so far as to deny them can, over time, produce deadlocks and impasses such as diffuse states of resistance that foster organisation bureaucratisation.
The course will focus on the theoretical and experiential nature of the group construct, consistent with the objectives outlined above.
The didactic device will focus on learning to inhabit a group, in order to experience its dynamics directly and from within. The course will think together clinical-pedagogical theories on consultancy and training models to translate such knowledge into skills that are formed in direct contact with significant experiences in the classroom context.The dialogical dimension, the focus on specific moments of interactive and laboratory work insmall and large groups, allows for the development of knowledge that is not only theoretically founded, but which calls upon each student to re-examine his or her own implicit epistemologies, allowing for the assumption of a clearer awareness of the value assumptions that will guide one's position within an organisation and developing communication and relational abilities that qualify as transversal skills of primary importance for effective integration in the working environment.
A complex knowledge is built through a pedagogical device in which the group assumes the role of active protagonist who, starting from specific and focused stimuli (analysis of cases taken from the scientific literature, shared construction of cases, etc.) is encouraged to train, in addition to one's own ability to process content, also an attention to the group work process so that an understanding of how a work group works is generated.
In particular, the content proposals of the course, developed during the lessons and then reworked by individual students and the group with interactive methods, will concern the following aspects:

- A theoretical-interdisciplinary reconstruction of the models that guide pedagogical consultancy;
- An in-depth analysis of the clinical pedagogical paradigm for consultancy;
- The scenarios and models underlying organizational cultures in the profit and non-profit sectors;
- The reading and analysis of an organization's demand in its manifest and latent aspects;
- The centrality of the organizational context in forming the meanings that professionals attribute to work;
- The languages and symbols that circulate in a work group and in an organizational reality;
- The relationship between group work and work group;
- The phenomena of retroaction and feedback within work groups;
- The emotional dynamics that characterize the life of a work group between the construction of individual meanings and collective mentalities;

- The levels of functioning of the group between content and relationship;
- Consultancy work as co-construction of change processes;
- Trust and empathic movement in consultancy processes;
- Active listening as an indispensable resource for a consultant an implicit understanding of the context;
- Observation and meta-reflection in the work of consulting;
- The phenomena of resistance underlying the request for a helping relationship.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: MANDATORY texts for all students

1. E. Schein (2001), *La Consulenza di Processo* Milano: Cortina;

2. L. Regogliosi & G.Scaratti (2007), *Il consulente del lavoro socioeducativo. Formazione, supervisione, coordinamento*. Roma: Carocci;

3. C. Kaneklin (2010), *Il gruppo in teoria e in pratica. L'intersoggettività come forza produttiva*.* Milano: Cortina.

Assessment methods

TEST TYPE

The examination will consist of an **oral colloquium**.
No intermediate examinations are planned.

Each examination will be structured in a discussion lasting approximately 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the general progress of the discussion.

The choice of the oral discussion as exam mode is coherent with the objectives of the course, as it allows, thanks to a dialogical communicative situation, a discussion with the student aimed at verifying the ability to critically understand the topics of the course, both in relation to the theoretical dimensions and to those connecting theory and field experience.

In particular, assessment will follow the following criteria:

Knowledge and understanding

- Knowledge of the pedagogical consultancy models will be assessed by means of an oral interview aimed at verifying, by means of appropriate questions, the level and extent of understanding of the concepts and fundamental sense nuclei of the texts in the bibliography;

- The ability to critically elaborate the proposed knowledge will also be ascertained, both in relation to the individual text and with a view to dialogue and comparison between authors and models;

- The correctness of the exposition and the mastery of the scientific vocabulary inherent to the disciplines will be evaluated.

**Ability to connect theories and practices

- The ability to read concrete cases will be tested

- The ability to read the processes of group dynamics will be tested;
- Skills for managing effective communication and relations in organisational contexts will be assessed;
- The ability to self-reflect on one's own role positioning within a work context and a work group will be subject to assessment;
- Reflexive and meta-reflexive skills will be tested by means of questions aimed at connecting and linking the proposed knowledge and its declination in consultancy experience reading skills;
- The formative and self-formative implications produced by the experience of the course and the reference texts will be verified.

Erasmus students may contact the lecturer to arrange the possibility of studying on an English-language bibliography and/or to request the possibility of taking the examination in English.

Office hours

**In the 2025/2026 academic year, the reception will be delivered, by appointment, on Thursday afternoons. **

Students may choose between face-to-face and distance learning.

To request an appointment, please write to the following address:
stefania.ulivieri@unimib.it

Programme validity

The programmes are valid for two academic years.

Course tutors and assistants

Dott.ssa Daniela Del Colle.
Dott. Matteo Fantoni.

Sustainable Development Goals

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