UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cognitive Development

2526-1-F5113P001

Learning area

Typical development and educational contexts.

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding
• The crucial relevance of developmental processes.
• Foundations of human development.
• Neuroconstructivist and embodied approach to the study of development.
• The role of early experiences in shaping the human mind.
• The relevance of mind-body and mind-brain interactions during development.

Applying knowledge and understanding
• Promoting cognitive development through play and learning.
• Implications of the neuroconstructivist approach to atypical development.
• The neuroconstructivist approach to preterm birth.
• Application of knowledge and empirical evidence for prevention and intervention.

Critical and judgment skills
Through open discussions and classroom debates on the topics covered in the course, the program aims to foster a critical perspective on developmental processes, encouraging personal reflection and enhancing reasoning skills and independent judgment.

Comunication abilities
Communication skills will be strengthened through continuous interaction between the instructor and students during lessons, aimed at improving the use of appropriate scientific and professional language and encouraging the analysis of complex processes, such as those involved in child development.

Learning skills
The ability to pursue independent study will be supported through the provision of in-depth materials and frequent reference to documentary and bibliographic sources related to developmental processes.

Contents

Students will be introduced to advanced knowledge regarding the emergence and the development of the human mind. The reciprocal relations between mind, body and environment that characterize the epigenetic process will be highlighted. References to empirical evidence about cognitive development and their implications for atypical development will be made.

Detailed program

• The foundations of a new developmental science.
• Promoting cognitive competences during infancy: play activity.
• Promoting cognitive competences during school age: learning.
• The neuroconstructivist approach to the study of cognitive development.
• Implications of the neuroconstructivist approach: atypical development.
• Implications of the neuroconstructivist approach: preterm birth.
• Adverse early experience and development.
• Early markers of developmental risk.
• The development of children's ability to understand others' actions, emotions and intentions.

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge about the classic approaches to the study of development is required. Students lacking such basic knowledge are encouraged to ask for a list of basic references.

Teaching methods

All lessones will be held in person and in Italian.
Together with classroom lectures (about 70% of lessons), the course will offer several opportunities of interactive teaching, such as guided discussions, video presentations, and practical trainings. Lectures and interactive teaching will be alternated also within the same lesson.
The material (slides, scientific articles and, when possible, videorecordings of lessons) is made available on the e-learning site of the course.

Assessment methods

The exam is written with open and multiple choice questions. Multiple choice questions provide an extensive

evaluation of acquired knowledge, open questions evaluate students' critical thinking on such knowledge. An oral interview can be requested by the student, in addition to the written exam, on all the topics of the course. In special cases, it is possible that the oral interview may be requested by the professor.The evaluation criteria are: adequacy of contents, organization and form of the answers.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Detailed information regarding the textbooks and other didactical material will be published on the e-learning page associated with the course.

International students can take the exam in English and/or ask for an English bibliography.

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING