UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Psychology of Cultural Processes

2627-1-F5702R007

Course title

Psychology of cultural processes.

Topics and course structure

The course aims to explore the basic processes that define the dimensions of culture and cultural belonging and how they are expressed within the most recent digital expressive languages. This implies the appropriation of the processes through which minds trained to interpret and read the reality of things, through multiple cultural lenses, become more open, more creative, more flexible, and therefore in possession of strategic skills to govern cultural diversity. The appropriation of these processes constitutes the premise for operating effectively on a training level in the field of expressive languages, in order to develop new forms of coexistence in the name of plurality, participation and sharing.
At the same time, considering the fact that we live in a society where change occurs at an exponential rate, we need to implement active and effective adaptation to identify new solutions and new forms of life that allow us to make the most of resources and to be able to transform constraints into opportunities. During the course, the working mechanisms of our mind will be explored in depth according to the most recent research. They largely concern simulation, understood as a general human competence to reproduce complex phenomena of reality at various levels, to anticipate possible worlds and to create new scenarios. To reach this goal, it is necessary to think of new forms of learning, flexible, dynamic and active, based on the reflection of one's own experience, which implies the need to observe and carry out operations. This is an approach focused on embodied cognition, which shifts the focus of attention from symbolic to sensorimotor aspects as central to any form of learning.
Hence the need, which this course supports, to place at the center of the training path the acquisition and enhancement of all those skills necessary for conducting an interview: ample space will be dedicated to work on communication skills (both verbal and non-verbal), cognitive (construction and sharing of meanings, processes of categorization of experience, etc.), emotional (from coping to emotional competence) and organizational (conducting styles, leadership, etc.).
At the same time, the course invites us to reflect, in a psycho-pedagogical key, on new learning and training

methods, which are able to synthesize in a synergic and effective way three dimensions that have remained disconnected from each other for too long:
simulation dimension;
training dimension;
playful dimension.
Today more than ever we need to think about global, 360-degree learning, which concerns not only the contents (the what, declarative knowledge) but also the processes (the how, procedural knowledge). Within this scenario, ample space will be dedicated to the analysis of videogame expressive languages (videogames, edutainment, serious games) understood as emerging devices for learning and training in every professional field (research, management, free time management, teaching activity etc.). Through simulation and using the most sophisticated cybernetic technologies, they promote the resources of people at any age, at any level of responsibility, for any psychological domain (leadership, communication skills, decision making, emotional regulation, definition of future strategies etc.).

Objectives

The course targets the following aims:

1. Knowledge and understanding:

- Acquire knowledge of expressive, performing, and participatory languages to implement training activities within contexts where art, culture, and new technologies dialogue with one another.
- Develop the ability to analyze diverse professional contexts and identify their specific needs.

2. Applying knowledge and understanding:

- Ability to apply artistic languages within organizational contexts.
- Ability to apply artistic languages in informal and non-formal educational environments.

3. Making judgements:

- Develop original reflections and project designs in response to the needs of multicultural work environments.
- Promote innovative research based on the synergy between educational and artistic competences.
- Foster critical and divergent thinking, analyze diverse professional contexts, and identify their needs.
- Design, implement, and evaluate educational actions using artistic languages, while also considering the emerging sustainability and social ethics issues within the intervention contexts.

4. Communication skills:

- Ability to work in multidisciplinary and multicultural teams within the complexity of professional contexts, and to communicate effectively with both partners in educational, organizational, and artistic-cultural fields, as well as with a wider audience.

- Ability to use artistic-expressive languages as training tools to promote critical and divergent thinking, and as innovative means of communication.

5. Learning skills:

- Utilize personal self-promotion methods and tools to support one's own professional growth.
- Develop reflective and metacognitive skills to monitor the adequacy of one's knowledge and competences, and to identify any areas requiring further study.

Methodologies

The course consists of 19 lessons (18 lessons of three hours and 1 of two hours, for a total of 56 hours of lessons), and includes didactic activities such as frontal lessons and interactive teaching activities such as participatory lessons.
During classroom work, role playing activities, dialogue, discussion and small group exercises will be used to promote communication, planning and problem solving skills.
Speeches from guests from the world of corporate training are also expected.
Most of the lessons include interactive moments in large and small groups, individual work in the classroom and delivery moments. Indicatively, it is estimated that for each lesson a percentage of about 50% of interactive teaching and 50% of delivery teaching will be provided.
The teaching activities will take place in person and some lessons or parts of lessons (especially the delivery part) they will be recorded and uploaded to the platform.
Where available, the teaching material will be uploaded to the e-learning platform.

The course will be held in Italian.

Online and offline teaching materials

Materials, resources and tools will be available on the course's e-learning platform.

Both attending and non-attending students are advised to register to also access the in-depth material.

Programme and references

Anolli, L. (2011). La sfida della mente multiculturale. Nuove forme di convivenza. Milano: Cortina. (Chapters: 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13).

Anolli, L. e Mantovani, F. (2011). Come funziona la nostra mente. Apprendimento, simulazione e Serious Games. Bologna: Il MUlino. (Chapters: 1, 2, 3, 4)

Viola, F. e Cassone, V. I. (2017). L'arte del coinvolgimento. Emozioni e stimoli per cambiare il mondo. Milano: Hoepli.

Foreign students can bring an English language program agreed with the teacher.

Assessment methods

Written examination with 3 open questions. The written test is particularly suitable for verifying the skills acquired within the discipline, in particular with regard to critical and reflective thinking skills and the ability to translate theoretical and methodological knowledge into applied contexts, and vice versa.

The written test will be held in Italian. Foreign students can take the test in English.

During the course 4 activities will be performed by the students in order to empower communicative skills and emotional intelligence. Such activities will grant up to 4 points that will be added to written and oral examination score. For students who cannot attend the course in presence, the activities will be available on the course web page.

In the written test, the following will be evaluated:
the level of knowledge of theory and models (Knowledge);
the ability to exemplify concepts (Ability to understand);
the ability to use and apply (Applied knowledge and understanding);
the adequacy of language.

For the evaluation, the Dublin Descriptors will be followed: below are the level bands

Low Level: Not sufficient
Knowledge and Comprehension: The student demonstrates limited and fragmentary knowledge of the texts and topics covered, with misunderstandings of the proposed texts.
Ability to Apply Knowledge: is not able to verify on texts the general considerations on cultural processes, cognitive processes, emotional experiences and expressive techniques; is very partially able to synthesize the contents of the texts presented, is not able to contextualize and compare them.
Making judgements: they lack critical capacity and autonomy of evaluation; depends exclusively on information provided by the teacher or on the critical bibliography.
Communication Skills: has a stunted, approximate, stereotyped written expression; shows a poor mastery of the specific language of the discipline.
Learning Skills: has a limited ability to rework knowledge and connect it to their own experience in the educational field; shows a lack of awareness of the cognitive and cultural foundations of expressive techniques and of the usefulness of the latter as a means of promoting psychological well-being, personal growth, inclusion and social adaptation, with a view to a more articulated ductility in the face of different educational situations.

Medium level (18-24/30): Fair - Good
Knowledge and Understanding: The student demonstrates a general knowledge of the texts and topics addressed, even if with some gaps, inaccuracies on specific but non-essential aspects, or some misunderstandings in the analysis of the texts.
Ability to Apply Knowledge: is able, albeit with some difficulty, to verify on texts the general considerations on cultural processes, cognitive processes, emotional experiences and expressive techniques; will be able to discreetly summarize the texts presented, interpret them, contextualize them and compare them correctly.
Autonomy of Judgment: shows partial autonomy in formulating critical evaluations, often limited to the re-proposal of other people's judgments.
Communication skills: has a clear and sufficiently precise written expression, a fair command of the specific language of the discipline.
Learning Skills: has a fair ability to rework knowledge and connect it to their own experience in the educational field; shows a fair/good awareness of the cognitive and cultural foundations of expressive techniques and of the usefulness of the latter as a means of promoting psychological well-being, personal growth, inclusion and social

adaptation, with a view to a more articulated ductility in the face of different educational situations.

High Level (25-30/30): Distinguished - Excellent Knowledge and Understanding: The student demonstrates in-depth and solid knowledge of the texts and topics addressed; understands and analyzes the proposed texts without uncertainty. Ability to Apply Knowledge: will be able to find in the texts, with confidence and effective personal observations, general considerations on cultural processes, cognitive processes, emotional experiences and expressive techniques; with adequate argumentative properties will be able to analyze, synthesize, interpret, contextualize and compare the texts presented, also making use of interdisciplinary connections.
Making judgements: demonstrates excellent critical skills, autonomy of judgement, originality in the analysis and interpretation of texts.
Communication Skills: has a clear, rigorous, fluid and appropriate written expression, an excellent command of the specific language of the discipline.
Learning Skills: shows excellent/excellent autonomous learning skills, knows how to effectively re-elaborate knowledge and link it to his/her own experience in the educational field; manifests a full awareness of the cognitive and cultural foundations of expressive techniques and of the usefulness of the latter as a means of promoting psychological well-being, personal growth, inclusion and social adaptation, with a view to a more articulated ductility in the face of different educational situations.

Office hours

Fixed by mail at: valentino.zurloni@unimib.it

Programme validity

Two years.

Course tutors and assistants

Dr. Giulia Tossici will support the course in some didactic aspects (in particular, correction of the midterm test, correlation of thesis work).

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION