UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Laboratorio: la Valutazione Psicodiagnostica in Età Evolutiva

2627-2-F5111P021

Learning area

Models and techniques for assessing psychological functioning

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

The course enables the student to:
• know the specific features of case formulation in childhood and adolescence;
• acquire the steps leading from the assessment process to the treatment indication;
• interpret mental functioning and developing personality in childhood and adolescence according to the PDM-3;
• study a narrative performance-based instrument for childhood and adolescence.

Applying knowledge and understanding

The student will be able to:
• structure an assessment setting and pathway with children and adolescents;
• select instruments useful for assessment in childhood and adolescence;
• interpret assessment data and orient them towards a case formulation in childhood and adolescence;
• analyse the complexity of the clinical case by integrating clinical, relational and contextual aspects;
• acquire standardised administration, scoring and interpretation procedures for a narrative performance-based test for childhood and adolescence.

Making Judgements

The course develops the ability to independently assess complex clinical situations in childhood and adolescence, integrating data from observation, interviews, test instruments, narratives, and family and institutional contexts.

Students learn to formulate coherent and well-grounded diagnostic hypotheses, critically evaluating the use, limits and ethical implications of observational and psychodiagnostic instruments in clinical contexts.
The activities supporting these skills include: discussion of clinical cases, Roberts-2 coding exercises, simulated assessments in small groups and guided reflections on the complexity of the diagnostic process with minors.

Communication Skills

The course fosters the development of communication skills specific to psychodiagnostic assessment in childhood and adolescence, with attention to the ability to convey complex information clearly, sensitively and appropriately to the minor's age and to the different interlocutors (parents, teachers, colleagues, clinical and legal professionals).
Supporting activities include: writing short psychodiagnostic reports, simulated feedback sessions, group work on the interpretation of protocols and oral presentations on instruments and clinical cases.

Learning Skills

The course provides theoretical foundations and practical tools that promote autonomous and lifelong learning in the field of developmental psychodiagnostics. Through the direct use of test materials (e.g. Roberts-2), critical analysis of the literature and work on clinical cases, students develop the ability to select reliable scientific sources and to update their diagnostic skills over time.
The activities facilitating these skills include: guided study of tests, coding exercises, independent reading of scientific contributions and active participation in classroom discussions.

Contents

To provide the student with the basic skills needed to set up and interpret a diagnostic process in childhood and adolescence. Diagnosis with children and adolescents raises specific issues of setting, relationship and choice of the instruments useful for making a diagnosis that is, by definition, dynamic and developmental.

Detailed program

Theory and technique of the diagnostic setting with children and adolescents: the consulting room, clinical observation, techniques for conducting the interview with the minor.
• The instruments of diagnosis: self-report and performance-based tests, both level-based and stimulus attribution.
• Roberts-2, a narrative performance-based instrument for children and adolescents aged 6 to 18, consisting of a set of 16 cards depicting social and interpersonal situations that are part of the everyday experience of children and adolescents, for which the child is asked to tell a complete story. The instrument is characterised by standardised administration, scoring and interpretation, organised into clinical scales and developmental scales which, when correctly interpreted, allow the assessment of the child's mental and personality functioning through the measurement of his or her performance on complex tasks.

Prerequisites

Skills related to clinical psychology (assessment, psychodynamic psychiatry, clinical reasoning).

Teaching methods

Teaching is 40% lecture-based and 60% interactive.
Teaching activities include: exercise-based activities, laboratory activities and activities supervised by the lecturer.
All teaching hours will be delivered in person.
Reference to clinical cases will be helpful as a practical illustration as well as for studying diagnostic functioning in childhood and adolescence. Exercises in the administration and coding of the Roberts-2 test will help to increase technical skills in handling test materials.
The course slides are shared in advance of each lesson, to help students approach the topics of the lesson.
As the final assessment of the laboratory, students will be invited to code some responses to the test in a small-group exercise.

Assessment methods

Students are required to attend at least 70% of the total hours of the laboratory and to pass an assessment consisting of writing an interpretive report on a Roberts-2 protocol.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Ammaniti M., (2001). Manuale di Psicopatologia dell'infanzia". Raffaello Cortina Editore Ammaniti M., (2002). Manuale di Psicopatologia dell'adolescenza". Raffaello Cortina Editore
Kernberg P.F, Weiner A.S., Bardenstein K.K, (2000) “I disturbi di personalita? nei bambini e negli adolescenti” Tr. It. Giovanni Fioriti Editore, Roma 2001
Lingiardi V., McWilliams N. (2025). "PDM-3. Manuale diagnostico psicodinamico”. Raffaello Cortina Editore
Lingiardi V., McWilliams N., Speranza A.M., (2020). "Manuale diagnostico psicodinamico. PDM-2 0/18 - Infanzia e adolescenza”. Raffaello Cortina Editore
Parolin, L., Locati F., De Carli P. (2014) “Il test di Roberts-2”. Hogrefe Editore
Speranza A. M., Williams R. (2009). “Fare diagnosi nell’infanzia e nell’adolescenza”. In “La Diagnosi in psicologia clinica”. Raffaello Cortina Editore

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING