UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Developmental Psychology

2627-1-E3902N005

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

The course aims to provide a deep knowledge of the main theories and specific topics of developmental psychology. A further aim is to encourage a better understanding of methodological aspects involved in the study of human development from early infancy to adolescence.

Applying knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, each student will learn fundamental knowledge necessary to critically assess the major research findings in developmental areas, and to evaluate the quality of information in order to distinguish empirical evidence from speculation. Furthermore, it will be encouraged the ability to apply theoretical and methodological principles of developmental psychology to real-life situations, in order to better understand some of the psycho-social issues related to early infancy and adolescence

Independent judgment

The student will develop the ability to formulate independent critical evaluations on topics related to human development, integrating theoretical perspectives and empirical data, and reflecting on the influence of individual, cultural, and environmental variables.

Communication skills

The student will be able to clearly and coherently communicate concepts, research findings, and critical reflections in the field of developmental psychology, using appropriate scientific terminology.

Learning skills

The student will develop effective strategies to autonomously update and expand their knowledge, with particular

attention to the critical reading of scientific literature and to reflecting on changes in theoretical models and applied contexts of human development.

Contents

PART ONE:

- Main questions and theories of Developmental Psychology

- Main methodological approaches in Developmental Psychology

- Prenatal development

- Motor and perceptual development

- Cognitive development and Theory of Mind

- Role of the family context

- Role of the peer context

- Risk and protective factors in dysfunctional caregiving

PART TWO:

- Human motivational systems

- Communicative and linguistic development

- Affective development

- Self-development

- Memory development and its suggestionability

Detailed program

The course is divided into two parts:

- The first module lays the foundation for understanding the very nature of the discipline, exploring the fundamental questions that drive it and the main methodological approaches used to investigate the processes of change that characterize the life cycle. It then delves into the key themes of prenatal, motor, perceptual, cognitive, and social development, paying particular attention to the role of the family and peer group in development as well as the relationships between typical and atypical developmental trajectories.

- The second module delves into specific aspects of human development, focusing on motivational mechanisms, communication, emotional and self-development, and morality, as well as memory development.

Prerequisites

Sufficient educational skills in logic and social culture; reasonable capacities in learning, writing and oral communication.

Teaching methods

27 lessons of 2 to 3 hours each with lecture-based teaching (in-person classes using slides, audio, and video). The course also includes the viewing and discussion of films. The lesson slides and some scientific articles for further study are made available on the course's e-learning website.

Assessment methods

The exam is written and includes multiple choice questions and open questions.

Evaluation criteria are as follows: response accuracy for multiple choice questions, adequacy of contents, formal organization and terminology for the answers to open questions.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Slides of the lectures

Macchi Cassia V., Quadrelli E. (a cura di) *Nati per apprendere. La mente del bambino nel primo anno di vita*. 2023, Carocci

Santrock, J.W. (a cura di) *Psicologia dello sviluppo*. 2021, McGraw Hill

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING