## **General Psychology**

## Prof. Claudia Repetto

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

This course provides an introduction to general psychology, with particular reference to the elements that characterise the discipline as a science, providing an overall picture of mental functions and exploring some of these at depth. At the end of the course, students will know the nature and functioning of the main psychological processes related to the cognitive and emotional-motivational spheres. Furthermore, they will be able to re-read events and experiences of daily life in light of the theories learned on the functioning of mental processes.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Unit 1

*Introduction to the course and History of Psychology*

The precursors of psychology: Descartes, Gall, Fechner, Von Helmoltz

Wundt and Structuralism

James and Functionalism

Freud and Psychoanalysis

Watson and behaviourism

Gestalt

Penfield and the biological perspective

Cognitivism

Interactionism and Humanism

The embodied mind

Unit 2

*Sensation and Perception*

Definitions

The eye and sight

The ear and hearing

The sense of smell

The sense of taste

The sense of touch

Integration between the senses

Perception and its laws

Unit 3

*Learning*

Definition and general concepts

Classical Conditioning

Operant Conditioning

Modelling

Insight learning

Latent learning

Observational learning

Unit 4

*Attention*

Definitions and function of attention

Spatial attention

Attention control

Object-based attention

Experimental deficits and neurological deficits

Attention and consciousness

Unit 5

*Memory*

Definition

Memory processes

Types of memory

Forgetfulness

Eyewitness testimony

Memory disturbances

Mnemonic techniques

Unit 6

*Language*

Approaches to language

Areas of language study

The development of language

Thought-language link

Speech pathologies

Unit 7

*Communication*

Mathematical approach

Semiotic approach

Pragmatic approach

Psychological approach

The role of intentions

Semantic syntony

Origins of non-verbal communication

Voice system

Kinesic system

Proxemic and haptic system

Unit 8

*Thinking and Reasoning*

Categories and concepts

Categorisation

The forms of thought

Definition and concept of inference

Deductive reasoning

Hypothetical-deductive reasoning

Inductive reasoning

Heuristics and bias

Unit 9

*Motivation*

Motivation and instinct

Drive reduction theory

Arousal theory

Motivational hierarchies

Socio-cognitive theories

Unit 10

*Emotions*

Functions of emotions

Classical theories

Contemporary theories

Neural bases of emotions

Unit 11

*Intelligence*

Intelligence as a factor

Intelligence as a type

Multi-componential intelligence

Assessment of intelligence

Intellectual disabilities

Between nature and culture

***READING LIST***

For all students, the following reading list is indicated:

R.S. Feldman, *Psicologia generale,* McGraw-Hill, Milan, 2017 (paragraph 1.2 and Chapters 2, 4 and 12 are to be excluded).

D. Villani, C. Carissoli (curators), *Mai più dietro la lavagna? A scuola con il tablet. Una scelta consapevole* (Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2)*,* Edizioni Unicopli, Milan, 2018.

M. Turatto, *Attenzione e Coscienza,* In: Fondamenti di Psicologia Generale, Curators: M. Zorzi, V. Girotto, Il Mulino, 2004 (made available on Blackboard by the lecturers).

The slides on Blackboard constitute supplementary material to the indicated reading list.

In addition, students may choose whether to participate in the tutorials or supplement the previously indicated reading list with the following material:

D. Villani, C. Carissoli (curators), *Mai più dietro la lavagna? A scuola con il tablet. Una scelta consapevole* (Chapters 3 and 4, Conclusions)*,* Edizioni Unicopli, Milan, 2018.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures - which will comprise both explanations as well as examples and practical activities - will be supplemented with on-line materials made available on the Blackboard platform. The cycle of guided tutorials is aimed at stimulating the student's ability to link the concepts of general psychology to the cognitive and emotional-motivational processes involved in tablet use within the school context.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam includes two parts to be taken in the same session:

1. an assessment test consisting of: section A- ten multiple-choice questions, and Section B- two open-ended questions. The multiple-choice questions are assigned 0 marks in the case of an incorrect or missing answer, or 2 marks in the case of a correct answer; the multiple-choice question section, therefore, is worth 0 to 20 marks overall. The open-ended questions are assessed from a minimum of 0 marks for a missing or completely incorrect answer, to a maximum of 5 marks in the case of an exemplary answer; therefore, the open-ended questions section is worth 0 to 10 marks overall. A student will pass the assessment if they receive a sufficient mark in both sections (12/20 in section A; 6/10 in section B).

2. An oral test, which is taken only after passing the achievement test.

The assessment will take into account the relevance of the student's answers, their appropriate use of specific terminology, the reasoned and coherent structuring of their speech, their ability to create connections, and their critical rereading of the topics.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Given the introductory nature of the course, previous knowledge of the contents is not required.

Further information can be found on the lecturers’ webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board.