## **Sociology of Family (2023/2024)**

## Prof. Diego Mesa

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

The course aims to provide students with the theoretical and methodological tools to analyse the family deeper from a sociological point of view as a complex, multidimensional and dynamic socio-cultural phenomenon, in order to promote understanding of the challenges that characterise it at relational and socio-educational practice level:

* provide awareness of the methods of sociological work through the reading of some short theoretical and research articles;
* delve into the changes in the family in relation to the changes in Italian society in recent decades;
* develop an understanding of the family as an institution and as a complex and multidimensional system of relationships;
* develop an understanding of the phenomena analysed through comparison with empirical data.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* approach the analysis of the family using the interpretation keys offered by the different sociological paradigms (functionalist, conflictualist, interactionist-phenomenological, relational);
* identify the different factors (socio-economic, cultural, relational) that characterise today's families and contribute to the definition of their modus vivendi;
* describe the methodologies and basic tools of social research used to study the family and the relationships between family and other socialisation contexts;
* apply theoretical concepts and some research methodologies to the analysis of concrete situations using specialist vocabulary.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Part 1: The transformations of the family in contemporary society

The family in a sociological perspective: definitional issues, interpretive approaches, and long-term changes. The family as a group and as an institution. Parenting, paternal and maternal identity in the contemporary family. Couple relationships, power, conflict. The pluralisation of family forms. Families with a migratory background. Families fleeing the war. Media and technologies in educational relations. Medically assisted fertilisation and surrogate motherhood. Transformation of welfare systems to support families. Families and educational services in early childhood.

Part 2: Do research within family contexts

Standard and non-standard approaches to the study of families. The main methods and tools of social research (inquiry; the use of social indicators; the experiment; observation; life stories; case studies; the analysis of secondary sources) and their application to the study of family contexts and relationships between family and other socialisation agencies.

***READING LIST***

Part 1

Di Nicola, P., (2017). *Famiglia sostantivo plurale. Nuovi orizzonti e vecchi problemi*. Milan: FrancoAngeli.

Classic and contemporary theoretical in-depth articles (one of your choice)[[1]](#footnote-1)

Ardigò, A. (1965). *La disintegrazione della famiglia nella sociologia dell'800*. Studi di Sociologia, 3(3), pp. 215-231.

Durkheim, E. (2009). *Il divorzio consensuale - (I classici della sociologia)*. Rome: Armando, pp. 59-76.

Bianco, A. (2011). *Georg Simmel: le forme dell'amore.* Rivista italiana di sociologia, 4(2), pp. 51-62

Bertocchi, F. (2002). *Gli approcci nella sociologia italiana della famiglia (1970-2000)*. Sociologia e politiche sociali, Fascicolo 2, 2002, Milan: Franco Angeli, pp. 117-146.

Biancheri, R. (2011). *Legami di coppia e affettività: dall'amore romantico alla relazione pura*. Rivista italiana di sociologia, 4(2), pp. 115-136.

Donati, P. (2018). *Che cosa significa dire che la famiglia è un 'bene relazionale'?* Revista d'Humanitats, (2), pp. 38-65.

Part 2

Besozzi, E, & Colombo, M. (2014). *Metodologia della ricerca sociale nei contesti socio-educativi.* Milan: Guerini (chs. 1, 2, 3 from pg. 15 to pg. 196; par. 4.2 on the family from p. 209 to pg. 230).

In-depth articles on specific topics (one of your choice)[[2]](#footnote-2)

Bellotti, E. (2008). *Forme e risorse delle reti amicali per i giovani single*. Rassegna italiana di sociologia, 49(4), pp. 607-638.

Bramanti, D., & Garavaglia, E. (2016). *Reti e scambi tra generazioni nell'età anziana. Evidenze italiane ed europee.* Studi di Sociologia, 54(2), pp. 153–167.

Mesa, D. (2023). *Il Parental involvement in chiave interculturale. Un confronto europeo sul rapporto tra famiglie immigrate e scuola*, (being published)

Micheli, M. (2015*). L'appropriazione di Internet da parte degli adolescenti: tra riproduzione sociale e mutamento culturale*. Quaderni di Sociologia, 69, online from 01 December 2015, pp.1-20.

Sabatinelli, S., & Pavolini, E. (2021). *Le politiche familiari fra servizi all'infanzia e conciliazione famiglia-lavoro ai tempi del Covid-19*. Politiche Sociali, Social Policies, 2/2021, pp. 305-326.

Satta, C. (2017). *L'ossessione della genitorialità. Infanzia e famiglia nella società dell'insicurezza*. Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia, Rivista trimestrale fondata da Camillo Pellizzi, 2/2017, pp. 449-458.

Valtolina, G.G., & Pavesi, N. (2023). *Famiglie e minori ucraini in fuga dalla guerra*, in Fondazione, I.S.M.U. "Ventottesimo Rapporto sulle migrazioni 2022." Milan (2023), pp. 265-275.

Valtolina, G.G., & Pavesi, N. (2022). *Famiglie migranti e minori con disabilità. Problematiche e prospettive della presa in carico*. MONDI MIGRANTI, (3), pp. 61-75.

The lesson slides and the coursepack containing some coding and variable analysis exercises are also a fundamental part of the course. The aforementioned materials will be available on the *Blackboard* platform.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Classroom lessons, group and individual activities in the classroom and online (analysis of texts and audio-video documents, short presentations and analysis of statistical data, discussion forums on specific topics). Some exercises in small groups regarding the use of the interview and the questionnaire will be proposed during the semester. Information on how to participate in sociology seminars promoted by the Laris and Cirmib university research centers will also be provided.

The materials used will be made available *online* via the *Blackboard* platform.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam is oral. Students can divide it into two parts with an interim written test (optional) which will take place during the January-February 2024 break. The interim test, structured with multiple choice questions and open-ended questions, will focus on the topics covered in the first semester. Registration is possible via the Blackboard platform.

The aspects that will be considered for the assessment are: knowledge of the concepts, theories and methodology of social research, the ability to recognise the different types of variables and interpret matrices and statistical tables, the understanding of the main questions taken into consideration from sociological studies on the family, the mastery of sociological vocabulary.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Prerequisites for the course is a basic knowledge of the fundamental concepts of sociology.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at <http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG> or on the Faculty notice board.

1. All the texts of the articles can be downloaded for free in the e-journals section of https://opac.unicatt.it/. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. All the texts of the articles can be downloaded for free in the e-journals section of https://opac.unicatt.it/. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)