# Social Psychology of Communication in Groups and in Organisations (with a Module on Qualitative and Quantitative research)

## Prof. Carlo Galimberti; Prof. Carla Mazzoleni

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

The course is mainly experiential, giving an opportunity for *learning by doing* on topics related to working group communication within organisational contexts.

The main aim of the course is to give students the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour in a working group, both with reference to past experiences and to those which will be carried out within working groups proposed during the semester.

Hence, the course’s specific topic – the consequences of ‘phygitalisation’ in the workplace on communication processes in groups and organisations – more than a traditional subject matter will be an occasion for students to:

a) become sensitised to the **use of *soft skills*** (communication, group work, public speaking etc.) which nowadays are considered crucial for entering the world of work;

b) test their **ability to work in a group** within a Project Work, a working mode which will be offered often during the two years of attendance of the CIMO CdS;

c) acquire **tools for the analysis** of communication processes (Conversation Analysis) and of group interaction (Focused Ethnography), learning to design, analyse and assess communicative interaction aimed at collaboration in working groups.

The teaching modes useful for working on the three above-mentioned objectives will be adjusted in relation to the number of course participants.

At the end of the course students will be capable of:

– discerning and describing the psychosocial phenomena which characterise the main working group dynamics in organisational contexts (knowledge and understanding);

– analysing communication processes according to a dialogical argumentation perspective (knowledge and understanding);

– analysing real interpersonal exchanges, discerning their inner expressions of subjective and social issues (ability to apply knowledge and understanding);

– assessing-adjusting their position in communication processes and in group interaction so as to valorise their interlocutors, choosing tools and defining adequate communication processes (ability to apply knowledge and understanding to their behaviour);

* moving strategically within ‘phygitalised’ work contexts (ability to apply knowledge and understanding);
* proving that they have acquired analytical and original argumentation skills with regard to course topics, with particular reference to case studies and material discussed in the lecture room (autonomous judgement);
* expressing concepts and using the psychosocial categories proposed by the course with argumentative skills and propriety of language (communication skills);
* understanding the main characteristics, general and specific, of presented theories, methods and operational techniques (learning skills).

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided in Part 1 (Prof. Carlo Galimberti, 30 hours) and Part 2 (Prof. Carla Mazzoleni, 20 hours).

Both Parts will cover the ‘phygitalisation’ process of workplaces, consisting of the combination of digital tools with physical elements of workspaces (including, for example, systems for the booking of workstations, face and voice recognition applied to the customisation of workspaces, the organisation of interactions and distance handling of physical and digital objects, Apps for the management of clients and suppliers etc.). Such a process, which has speeded up following the measures taken since March 2020 to limit the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, seems to be crucial by now in defining work processes, with particular reference to the physical environment of workplaces and to the purposes which they will have in the immediate future. Part 1 will focus on the consequences which these transformations are presently having on communication within groups and organisations, showing that it is unavoidable to take into account the role of digital technologies and of their applications in everyday life. Part 1 aims to assist students attending the course in attaining what is specified in the paragraph on “Course aims and intended learning outcomes” offering Project Work to be carried out working in a small group (min. 6, max. 10 members per group depending on the number of registrations for the course). The PW involves realising a communication artefact (radio broadcast, podcast, video, photography exhibition, performance event etc.) which develops one of the topics proposed during theoretical lectures or during the accounts given by exponents of the world of work. The coverage of each subject included in Part 1 includes: theoretical introduction, meeting with professionals-speakers specialised in the assigned topic, analysis of texts and audiovisuals, small group work. Part 2 aims to train students in the use of a Qualitative analysis model of conversations during working groups. Consistently with the general course approach, also Part 2 will include *learning by doing* by offering students the opportunity to analyse communication dynamics which will take place in the work groups in which they will participate in order to carry out the Project work (cf. Part 1). The focus of the work will be in particular on *impression management* and on self-presentation in interpersonal processes. Starting from the acknowledgement of the contractual nature of every communication, Part 2 aims to provide students attending the course tools to define, describe and analyse the 'mutual understanding' process which is carried out in every conversation, through the intertwined management of content (the *'subject'*) and the forged relationship (*'how and with/through whom one speaks about it.*

At the beginning of the course a detailed Syllabus will be presented which will indicate a preparatory reading list, content and working modes for each teaching unit both for Part 1 and Part 2, besides specifying the Project Work’s nature and modes.

Moreover, in order to facilitate the acquisition of skills useful for the preparation of the presentation of the degree thesis, the course includes the opportunity to participate voluntarily in a Workshop held by Alberto Stracuzzi on the topic “Get to know your neighbour – market research as cognitive tool”.

The workshop, consisting in 5 meetings, each one of the duration of 2 hours, aims to introduce to the understanding of the nature, objectives and tools of field research, applied to the knowledge of the market and consumers, in terms of real life experiences, behaviour and expectations.

***READING LIST***

Part 1

\* G. Albeggiani-C. Galimberti et Al., *Digital enterprise,* Hoepli, Milan, 2015 (pp. 17-28).

\* C. Galimberti, *Segui il coniglio bianco*, in E. Marta-C. Regalia, *Identità in relazione. Le sfide odierne dell’essere adulto*, McGraw Hill, Milan, 2011 (pp. 73-127).

\*\* C. Galimberti-C. Mazzoleni-P. Pirrello, *Decidere nei piccoli gruppi: negoziazioni conversazionali e presa di decisione come organizzatori dell’interazione nei piccoli gruppi*, in E. Magrin (edited by), *La coda di Minosse*, F. Angeli, Milan, 1996, pp.79-146.

\* A. Gaggioli (2017). Phygital Spaces: When Atoms Meet Bits. Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 20(12), 774-774.

\* Il Prisma, *Now We Work*, McGrawHill, Milan, 2015, pp. 23-57, ISBN: 9788838674914 (Chaps. 1, 2, 3, 4, Case Studies)

\* R. Sennett, *Insieme: rituali, piaceri, politiche della collaborazione*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 2012.

\*\* I. Vergine, E. Brivio, T. Fabbri, A. Gaggioli, G. Leoni, & C. Galimberti. (2019). Introducing and implementing phygital and augmented reality at work. Studi Organizzativi, 2, 137-163. doi:10.3280/SO2019-002006

\* Viewing of the episode ‘I Am the Hotel’ (Season 1, Episode 3) of the TV series *Altered Carbon* (Netflix, 2018–in production). It is suggested to pay particular attention on the sequence from 03’58’’ to 05’52’.

\* http://ecosistemaurbano.org/english/new-workspaces-connecting-the-physical-and-digital-spheres/

Part 2

\* C. Mazzoleni-C. Galimberti, *Analisi delle Conversazioni. Linee guida ed esempi,* EDUCatt, Milan, 2013.

\* C. Mazzoleni-F. Lauber Pedroni, *Self-handicapping. Strategie di presentazione del sè,* Armando Editore, Rome, 2015.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Various teaching methods will be used:

* in person presentation of content by the lecturer
* in person or distance participation by specialists
* activities in small groups in the lecture room or remotely through a platform chosen by the group
* distance activities using Digitally Augmented Teaching which support the work carried out in person (specific indications will be provided in person and through the Blackboard platform)
* viewing of audiovisual material.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Exams will differ depending on the course participation mode.

Students who will not have attended the course, or who will not have attended at least 75% of the course, will take an oral exam which will focus on the content of the texts recommended in the reading list (marked both with \*, and with \*\*). The final mark will take into account the correctness of answers (weight 70% - see the above-mentioned with regard to learning results related to ‘knowledge and understanding’, ‘ability to apply knowledge and understanding’ and ‘learning ability’) and the argumentative and communication skills shown during the discussion (weight 30% - see the above-mentioned with regard to learning results related to ‘autonomous judgement’ and to ‘communication skills’).

For students who will have attended at least 75% of lectures and participated in working groups, the exam will be based on:

a) assessment on Part 1 Project Work (weight 40% - see the above-mentioned with regard to the result of ‘learning skills’) and of the analysis, with regard to Part 2, conducted on a conversation produced in one of the working groups (weight 40% - see the above-mentioned with regard to learning results related to ‘the ability to apply knowledge and understanding’) assessed by a commission formed by the Course Director and by at least 2 judges chosen amongst the specialists who have participated during the course;

b) discussion (20%) on the texts marked \* in the reading list and on the subjects covered during lectures, summarised in the teaching material made available online (see the above-mentioned concerning the learning results related to ‘knowledge and understanding’). The discussion will be held in *focus group* mode (see the learning results related to ‘autonomous judgement’ and to ‘communication skills’).

Students who attend the Workshop “Get to know your neighbour – market research as cognitive tool” will get an extra point added to their final mark.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Notes: In the event that the health emergency should recur, both teaching activities and any forms of learning monitoring will also be provided remotely through our University's BlackBoard platform, the Microsoft Teams platform and any other tools envisaged and notified at the beginning of the course, so as to ensure the full achievement of the training objectives set out in the degree curricula and, at the same time, the safety of our students.

 Prerequisites: With regard to content, since it is introductory, teaching does not strictly require prerequisites related to content. However, an interest in psychosocial topics and in communication process theories can facilitate the understanding of the presented content. As concerns participation modes, the motivation to get involved in group interaction and the willingness to reflect on one’s experience will benefit the fuition of the offered activities and the reaching of the aims of the course.

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.