**Evaluation Methods in Dysfunctional Relational Contexts**

## Prof. Sarah Miragoli; Prof. Paola Covini

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

The course aims to provide students with a understanding of dysfunctional family relational contexts, with theoretical and applicative insights into their definition and evaluation (qualitative and quantitative) as well as their negative impact on the development of the children involved.

***Intended learning outcomes***

*Knowledge and understanding*.

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

Know and understand the main theoretical paradigms related to family dysfunctional processes, which at different levels of complexity, involve the different relational subsystems (dyadic, triadic and intergenerational).

Know and understand the main models of evaluation and intervention in the field of child protection, with particular reference to the *assessment* of couple adaptation, of parental and co-parenting skills, of the minor in a prejudiced situation, of damage repair processes, and of resilience and the recoverability of parenthood.

Know and understand the main clinical evaluation methods (questionnaire, observation and interview) used in the family environment.

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*.

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

Professionally enter the clinical and research fields of child protection, knowing how to identify and evaluate family situations that involve a risk for the psychological well-being of the minor.

Integrate the knowledge acquired at the theoretical level with the specificities of concrete cases, modulating interventions in a flexible way according to the characteristics of the individuals, any previous histories, and specific relational contexts.

Use quantitative and qualitative techniques in evaluating dysfunctional family relationships.

Design targeted and specific interventions in the field of child protection.

*Autonomous judging skills*

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

Reason critically on the dysfunctional characteristics of family contexts, and on the developmental trajectories of a child's and adolescent's development within a maladaptive familiar situation.

Propose paths of treatment and intervention in the context of relational dysfunctions.

*Communication skills*

Communicate with specialist (and non-specialist) interlocutors in the field of child protection in a qualified, effective and interdisciplinary way.

Communicate competently and pertinently in clinical scope, interfacing with the discomfort and suffering of dysfunctional contexts.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1: *Prof. Sarah Miragoli*

The 40-hour module aims to investigate the impact of dysfunctional family relational contexts on the development of children, illustrating the different levels of interaction (dyadic, triadic and intergenerational) and procedures (qualitative and quantitative) most suitable for their clinical evaluation. The theoretical presentation of the constructs is followed by a description of the observational procedures and self-report tools most often used in Italian and international literature, in order to gain practical experience through examples and exercises.

The following areas will be explored:

Unit 1: Couple relationship

Adaptation and couple satisfaction

Couple conflict

Unit 2: Coparenting relationship

Coparenting

Unit 3: Caregiver-child relationship

Maternal sensitivity

*Mind-mindedness*

Emotional availability

Reflective function

Unit 4: Triadic relationships

Triadic coordination

Family alliance

Unit 5: Intergenerational relationships

Attachment and intergenerational transmission

Atypical caregiving

Module 2: *Prof. Paola Covini*

Through the presentation of the different procedures for taking charge of families in child protection contexts, the 20-hour module explores the dynamics of dysfunctional family relationships that lead to prejudiced situations for minors. The systemic-relational perspective guides the reading of the clinical process and intervention. The analysis of cases, videos and recordings allow deeper appreciation of the importance of analysing risk factors and (possible) remedial resources in dysfunctional parents, within spontaneous and forced contexts.

The following areas will be explored:

Unit 1: Spontaneous request contexts

Request from a family member for another family member

Relational request from a couple

Individual request

Unit 2: Protection context: the absence of a request

Forced referral

Semi-forced referral

Assessment of damage suffered by the child

Assessment of recoverability of parenting skills

Unit 3: The clinical meeting in a forced context

Systemic and trigenerational diagnosis

Hypotheses and theories relating to domestic maltreatment and neglect

Unit 4: Clinical intervention and the different formats

Couple therapy

Family therapy

Individual therapy

Unit 5: The therapist

Emotions

Team work

***READING LIST***

E. Camisasca - P. Di Blasio - S. Miragoli (2022). *Mamma e papà litigano ancora! Dinamiche familiari e processi di sviluppo in situazione di conflitto genitoriale*. Milano: Unicopli.

Malagoli Togliatti, M., & Mazzoni, S. (2006). *Osservare, valutare e sostenere la relazione genitori-figli*. Il LTP clinico. Milano: Raffaello Cortina.

Cirillo, S., Selvini, M., & Sorrentino A. M. (2016). *Entrare in terapia.* Milano: Raffaello Cortina.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Theoretical lessons, alternated with tutorials and guided discussions in small groups, presentations and commentary on cases and videotaped material.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

A written exam (with three open-ended questions to be completed in one hour), with the possibility, at the request of the Examination Committee, of an in-depth supplementary oral exam to be carried out according to the modalities defined by the Committee.

The questions will be aimed at ascertaining and assessing the student's: a) acquisition and understanding of the notions, b) the completeness and relevance of the contents, c) the appropriateness and organization of the language and d) the ability to personally rework what they've learnt.

The three open-ended questions of the written exam will carry equal weight. Each answer will be assigned an assessment from insufficient to excellent. In order to pass the exam, students will have to obtain at least a sufficient rating on all questions.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students should possess a basic conceptual knowledge of the main reference theories of the psychology of typical and atypical development and the psychology of trauma.

*Should the current Covid-19 health emergency not allow face-to-face teaching, remote teaching in synchronous or asynchronous mode will be guaranteed; this will be communicated in good time to students.*

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.