# Psychology of Eating and Lifestyles

## Prof. Patrizia Catellani

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

The course aims to promote the understanding of the psychological dimensions (cognitive, emotional, value-related, social, and behavioural) involved in food choices and lifestyles, as well as in their change. In particular, it will focus on the analysis of the strategies aimed to support people, through customised online communication, during their path towards health, well-being, and sustainability.

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

*Knowledge and Understanding*

* Know the main theories of social psychology applied to the promotion of health, well-being, and sustainability.
* Understand the most important research methods used by psychology for the assessment of interventions aimed at the promotion of health and well-being.
* Interpret the results of psychological research in the field of the promotion of a healthy diet and sustainable lifestyles.

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*

* Apply psychosocial theories and models to promote behavioural change, through the use of different methodologies and technologies.

*Independent judgment*

* Apply their critical thinking skills to the different strategies and policies adopted to influence food choices and lifestyles.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The first part of the course will define the area of study of the social psychology of food, and analyse the processes and phases of food choices and the different psychological factors involved. The second part of the course will focus on the most effective communication modes to support the change process towards well-being.

Unit 1 - Area of study

Unit 2 - The choice process and phases

Unit 3 **-** Cognitive factors

Unit 4 **-** Emotional factors

Unit 5 - Rules, identity, and values

Unit 6 - Habits and behavioural change

Unit 7 - Communicating healthy eating

Unit 8 - Types of messages

Unit 9 - The beneficiaries’ peculiarities

Unit 10 - Digital communication and artificial intelligence

***READING LIST***

*For the option based on the content of the lectures*

* Lecture notes and further teaching material that will be made available on Blackboard.
* Reading of research articles available on Blackboard:

M. Milne-Ives-C. Lam-C. De Cock-M.H. Van Velthoven-E. Meinert, Mobile apps for health behavior change in physical activity, diet, drug and alcohol use, and mental health: Systematic review*. JMIR mHealth and uHealt*, *8*, e17046, 2020.

A. Kankanhalli-J. Shin-H. Oh, Mobile-Based interventions for dietary behavior change and health outcomes: Scoping review. *JMIR mHealth and uHealth*, *7*, 1-13, 2019.

Two research articles specifically related to the selected group work.

*For the option based on textbooks*

* P. Catellani-V. Carfora, *Psicologia Sociale dell’Alimentazione,* Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2022.
* Reading of research articles available on Blackboard:
* S.A. Wright-A.E. Schultz, Too gritty to indulge: Grit and indulgent food choices. *Journal of Business Research*, 139, 173-183, 2022.
* P.G. Hansen-M. Schilling-M.S. Malthesen, Nudging healthy and sustainable food choices: three randomized controlled field experiments using a vegetarian lunch-default as a normative signal. *Journal of Public Health*, 43, 392-397, 2019.
* S. Blondin-S. Attwood-D. Vennard-V. Mayneris, *Environmental messages promote plant-based food choices: An online restaurant menu study*. World Research Institute, 2022.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures, discussions based on empirical research, teaching material available online on Blackboard.

Students will be invited to join group research works based on: a) the reading of two research articles; b) their presentation from an educational perspective; c) the creation of contents for a Mobile App promoting healthy eating, starting from the results of the articles under analysis.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final assessment will consist in a written test, with the possibility, upon request of the Exam Committee and/or the student, of a supplementary oral exam to be taken according to the conditions laid down by the Committee.

Students will have the possibility to choose between two different assessment options.

The students selecting the *option based on the content of the lectures* will have to take a written exam based on: lecture notes, the teaching material available on Blackboard (focused on the topics explained during the lectures), and their personal contribution to the group works carried out during the course. It will consist in ten multiple-choice questions and four open-ended questions. For each multiple-choice question, students will be awarded with a mark from 0 (in case of wrong or no answer) to 1 (in case of correct answer). For each open-ended questions question, instead, they will be awarded with a mark from 0 (in case of wrong or no answer) to 5 (in case of fully correct answer). One of the open-ended questions will be focused on the group work, and the mark obtained in the answer to this question, summed to the one obtained in the group work, will range from 0 (in case of wrong or no answer) to 5 (in case of fully correct answer). Students’ preparation will be assessed through the relevance, precision, and accuracy of the answers, as well as the appropriate use of a specific terminology. The same assessment criteria will be applied to the oral exam, if any. The highest mark 30 cum laude (with honours) will be assigned to the students showing an excellent performance in all the course activities.

The students selecting the *option based on textbooks* will have to take a written exam based on: the textbook and the research articles indicated in the Reading list and available on Blackboard. It will consist in ten multiple-choice questions and four open-ended questions. The assessment criteria will be the same as the ones described for the option based on the content of the lectures (please see above).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students should have a basic knowledge of the theories and methods of social psychology.

At the link *http://blackboard.unicatt.it* enrolled students can find further online teaching material for the course.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified 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.