# Psychology of Health and Communities

## Prof. Giovanni Aresi

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

The course aims to provide students with the concepts and tools needed to analyse well-being as a product of the interactions between people, and between people and the communities they live in, and to set up a health promotion intervention plan.

***Intended learning outcomes***

*Knowledge and understanding*

* Main theoretical and methodological models for health promotion and the participatory analysis of health needs in local community contexts;
* Notions of Prevention Science and Community Science;
* Main approaches and tools for social planning and evaluation.

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*

* Applying social recognition as a participatory tool for community assessments, and a comprehensive and systematic approach for the design of health promotion programmes in local communities;
* Critically analysing a scientific article describing a health promotion intervention by evaluating its quality, effectiveness and appropriateness;
* Drawing up a social planning and evaluation plan;
* Identifying the key elements of a funding tender.

*Autonomous judging skills*

* Formulating autonomous and critical judgments on the best analysis and intervention strategies for promoting well-being and health in communities.

*Communication skills*

* Communicating effectively with clients and the users of their interventions in communities.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will be organised according to the following modules and units:

MODULE 1

Unit 1: main theoretical models, approaches and methodologies for health promotion within community health psychology

* Fundamentals of health promotion;
* Socio-ecological approach and community health psychology;
* Concepts of local community, participation and empowerment.

Unit 2: Approaches and methods for analysing population health needs and risk factors

* Action research;
* Tools for getting to know a community;
* Social reconnaissance.

MODULE 2

Unit 1: Prevention in local communities

* Key elements for successful interventions in the local community;
* Nature, potential and limits of Prevention Science.

Unit 2: Community Science

* Elements of Community Science;
* *Getting to Outcomes.*

MODULE 3

Unit 1: Social planning and evaluation

* Social design approaches, methods and tools;
* Project evaluation approaches, methods and tools;
* Fundamentals of planning funding tenders.

***READING LIST***

N. De Piccoli, *Salute e qualità della vita nella società del benessere. Prospettive interdisciplinari,* Carocci editore, Rome, 2014. Only part one (Health, equity, and wellbeing).

A. Wandersman, *Community science: bridging the gap between science and practice with community-centered models. American Journal of Community Psychology*, 31 (3-4), 2003, (227-242).

One of the following texts at students’ choice:

F. Cristini-M. Santinello (Eds), *Reti di protezione. Prevenzione del consumo di sostanze e dei comportamenti antisociali in adolescenza*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2012.

E. Marta-M. Santinello(edited by), *Il mentoring: una lettura in ottica di psicologia di comunità,* UNICOPLI, Milan, 2010.

For the path based on the lecture contents, students will prepare by studying the lecture notes and supplementary materials published on the Blackboard platform, in addition to the course reading list.

For the text-based path, on the other hand, students will prepare by studying the supplementary materials published on the Blackboard platform and the following texts and articles:

C. Campbell-M. Murray, *Community health psychology: promoting analysis and action for social change,* Journal of Health Psychology, 9(2), 187-195, 2004.

B. Zani, *Psicologia di Comunità*, Carocci, Rome, 2012. Only ch. 8 (*Il benessere della comunità* by E. Cicognani)

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures, discussion of empirical research, use of online media on the Blackboard platform.

The course also includes class group exercises based on case studies, intervention for the promotion of health and empirical research. There are no compulsory activities planned outside of lectures, but interested students will be able to draw up a project and summary report to deepen the exercise carried out in the classroom on the research and analysis of an evidence-based health promotion intervention. This work, carried out in group, will involve the collection of contextual data on the identified territory.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

An oral exam on the texts, articles, chosen text and supplementary materials presented in class and downloadable from the course blackboard page. Students will be asked a question on the chosen text, and two to four questions on the texts and remaining materials. The questions will focus on the student's knowledge of the notions, their personal reworking ability, including making connections between course topics, and the application of their knowledge to concrete cases.

Students will be assessed, in order of importance, on their knowledge of the materials, their ability to draw connections between the course contents and apply their knowledge to concrete cases, and their language and terminological command.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Basic knowledge of the foundations of Social Psychology is a prerequisite for attending 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](http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)or on the Faculty notice board.