Sociology of the Family and Personal Services

## Prof. Elisabetta Carrà

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

The course aims to offer a critical reading of the main transformations that families are undergoing nowadays, and present, also through direct experimentation, specific research *tools*; furthermore, it aims to introduce Welfare models, showing how the adoption of a *family-centred* and *community-centred* perspective in the planning and implementation of policies and services can guarantee, on the one hand, more effective policies and practices and, on the other hand, the *empowerment* and *flourishing* of family relations.

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

* Describe the features of contemporary families and carry out a critical reading of their ongoing transformations.
* Study in a direct way, through the participation to a research project, a topic related to the sociology of the family, using some specific tools (such as the *Family Network Map*, the *Life line*, the scales for the analysis of family social capital, etc.)
* Develop their communicative skills through the participation to the research activity, that will allow them to implement their ability to work in teams and present the results of their work.
* Describe the features of personal services.
* Develop their critical thinking skills in the field of the analysis of personal services, applying the *FamILens®.COM* (*Family & Community Impact Lens*).

***COURSE CONTENT***

The first part of the course will focus on family transformations, while the second one will explore the features of the Italian welfare system and personal services, identifying the prerequisites that welfare and services should have in order to meet the needs of people and families.

In particular, the course will introduce the following topics, also with the help of subject-matter experts:

1. The relational/relationist approaches to family,
2. Young people and their families,
3. Couple formation and relational reflexivity,
4. Parenthood,
5. Couple instability,
6. Families with elderly people,
7. The work-family balance
8. Migration from a family perspective.
9. *Welfare* and social service models,
10. The customisation of services,
11. The concepts of family-centredness, familiness, and the *FamILens®.COM* (*Family & Community Impact Lens*) model.

Students will be given the possibility to join, in small groups, empirical research in progress at the Family Studies and Research University Centre, in order to study in a direct way a specific aspect of family life.

Furthermore, thanks to the contribution of subject-matter experts, the course will introduce some of the best practices related to interventions, to which students will be asked to apply the *FamILens®.COM* (*Family & Community Impact Lens*) in class.

***READING LIST***

1. The slides and the teaching material available on Blackboard
2. Castiglioni, M. & Dalla Zuanna, G. (2017). *“La famiglia è in crisi”(Falso!)*. Bari: Laterza.
3. In addition, students will have to choose one of the following textbooks (especially the students who are not going to be part of the progressive assessment option, illustrated in the section Assessment method and criteria):
   * Rossi, G. & Bramanti, D. (edited by) (2012). *La Famiglia come intreccio di relazioni: la prospettiva sociologica*. Milan: Vita&Pensiero.
   * Ruspini, E. (2011). *Studiare la famiglia che cambia*. Rome: Carocci.
   * Saraceno, C. & Naldini, M. (2021). *Sociologia della famiglia* (Fourth edition). Bologna: Il Mulino (the first 6 chapters)
   * Di Nicola, P. (2017). *Famiglia: sostantivo plurale. Nuovi orizzonti e vecchi problemi* (Updated second edition). Milan: FrancoAngeli.
   * Satta, C., Magaraggia, S. & Camozzi, I. (2020). *Sociologia della vita famigliare. Soggetti, contesti e nuove prospettive*. Rome: Carocci.
4. OECD (2013). Concept and validity. In OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being, OECD Publishing, p. 27-59. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK189563/>)
5. Prandini, R. (2013). La persona come medium e forma di politica sociale. Un cambiamento di paradigma per i servizi di welfare. *Sociologia e politiche sociali*, 16(3), p. 43-78.
6. Carrà, E. (2020). Il Family Impact Lens. Framework teorico e modello operativo. *Consultori familiari oggi*, 28(2), p. 11-35. (<https://consultorifamiliarioggi.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CfO-2-2020-Carra.pdf>)

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will include frontal lectures (also with the participation of subject-matter experts), practical activities held in class and online, and group works.

Students will be given the possibility to join a research activity taking place at the Family Studies and Research University Centre, to be carried out in small groups of 4/5 people, that will allow them to experiment in a direct way the application of some quantitative and qualitative tools of family research through the use of interviews. Then, the groups will be asked to write a short paper, showing a correct use of the tools, as well as the ability to analyse and summarise the results. In addition, for the students interested in this option, there will be the possibility to join, after the end of the course, the phase in which the results are analysed, according to the schedule defined by the research group.

The part of the course focused on the sociology of personal services will include activities for the practical application of the topics illustrated in class.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The assessment of the acquisition of the required competencies will be structured as follows:

* a *progressive assessment* of the acquired skills, carried out through online tests on Blackboard; for each test, students will be awarded with up to 3 points; for those who take all the online tests and attend the research activity, the average mark will contribute to the definition of the final mark;
* in the assessment of the *group work* related to the *research activity*, students can obtain up to 10 points; the assessment criteria will be based on the correct use of the tools during the interviews (4 points); the accuracy of the analysis of the results (6 points);
* the students taking all the progressive assessment tests and joining the research activity will have the possibility to take two *final tests* online – one for the sociology of the family part and one for the sociology of personal services part – based on the same exercises; in each test, they can get up to 10 points. The average between the two tests will contribute to the definition of the final mark;
* on official exam dates, the students who have taken the final tests online will have the possibility to take a *written exam on Blackboard*, consisting in 2 open-ended questions, 1 for the sociology of the family part and 1 for the sociology of personal services part; in each question, they can get up to 4 points.

The final mark will result from the sum of all the points obtained.

The students not taking part to the progressive assessment nor the other activities proposed during the course, will have to take a first written test consisting in 15 closed-ended questions (pass mark: 12 points) of 1 point each, followed by a second one based on 4 questions – 2 on the sociology of the family part and 2 on the sociology of personal services part – of 4 points each.

In terms of learning, the assessment criteria for the written tests will take into account:

* the ability to understand the question (1);
* the argumentative skills (1);
* the correctness of conceptual connections (1);
* the critical ability to reformulate the topics (1).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Attending students will be involved in engaging activities that, if carried out on a regular basis, will promote the progressive acquisition of the required skills to pass the final exam. Students are strongly advised to join the research activity, since it is an integral part of the process for the acquisition of the intended learning outcomes mentioned above.

Those who have never attended a basic nor an advanced Sociology course, may benefit from a preliminary reading of the textbook Carrà, E. (2008). Un’osservazione che progetta. Strumenti per l’analisi e la progettazione d'interventi nel sociale. Milan: Led

Students are invited to check Blackboard and their mailbox on a regular basis.

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.