# Psychology of Interpersonal and Social Relations

## Prof. Anna Bertoni; Prof. Giulia Lopez

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

**Course Aim**

The course aims to provide students with the basic elements of Psychology of Interpersonal and Social Relations by taking a relational and applied perspective, to ensure that the contents learned can be applied to the field of psychosocial research and interventions aimed at families, groups and wider social contexts.

**Intended learning outcomes**

Knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to recognise and understand the basic categories of the realities of various microsocial (couple, family, small groups) and macrosocial (social groups, communities) contexts from a relational perspective.

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to review what they have learned regarding the design and implementation of research and interventions within complex interpersonal and social relationships from an applied perspective.

***COURSE CONTENT***

A first part of the course will be mainly devoted to a foundational reflection on the topic of complexity and belonging to a group or community, as constituent aspects of an individual's identity, and on the relationship between the interpersonal and social dimensions.

The course will be devoted to an in-depth study of interpersonal relationships (couples, friends, family members, informal and professional group members) within microsocial contexts and then the course will focus on the macrosocial dimension, with particular attention to intergroup dynamics and the in-depth study of current specific phenomena in which these dynamics occur (outgroup discrimination vs. pro-ingroup favouritism), such as interethnic and intercultural relations and competitive relationships within the sports, professional and social spheres.

In particular, the course will address the issues of conflict and cooperation between intergroups, and present different interpretations of these phenomena in the psychosocial field. Particular space will be given to examining latest research on the subject. The lecturers will alternate throughout the course, which will be divided into the following work units:

Unit 0: Introduction to the psychology of interpersonal and social relations

* The social dimension of the individual
* Relational identity in its complexity
* The individual-group relationship
* The connection between interpersonal and social

Unit 1: Interpersonal relationships: examples of research and intervention

* The keywords of horizontal and vertical interpersonal relationships
* Researching interpersonal relationships
* Acting on and with interpersonal relationships
* Stressful interpersonal relationships
* Interventions on stressful interpersonal relationships

Unit 2: Intra- and inter-group relationships: examples of research and intervention

* Intra-group relationships: structural and procedural aspects. Examples of research and intervention.
* Inter-group relationships: recent research developments
* Inter-group conflict resolution strategies: contact hypothesis and its recent developments
* Intervening with and on intra- and inter-group relationships: the case of *Rondine Cittadella della Pace*
* Researching with and on intra- and inter-group relationships: examples of research

Unit 3: Working in its complexity

* Examples of social and community work
* Inter-group relationships and migration
* Sport and interpersonal and social relationships
* Volunteering experiences and inter-group relationships

***READING LIST***

For the path based on lecture contents:

Students will prepare by studying the lecture notes and materials published on the Blackboard platform, supported by the following texts:

AA.VV., *Comunità e Famiglia*, *Psicologia di Comunità (section on "Saggi"), 1*, 2007, pp. 9-158 (excl. essays 4, 5, 8).

L. Alici, *Dentro il conflitto, oltre il nemico,* Ed. Il Mulino, Bologna, 2008.

• A. Bertoni, *Passi di gruppo*, Edizioni San Paolo, Milano, 2021 (only pp. 20-30 and pp. 39-56).

• A. Bertoni - B. Bevilacqua, *Stress e Distress*, Ed. San Paolo, 2017

• R. Iafrate - A. Bertoni, *Gli affetti: promuovere i legami familiari e sociali*, La Scuola, 2010

A text to be chosen from:

1. R. Brown-D. Capozza-O. Licciardello, *Immigrazione, acculturazione, modalità di contatto*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2007 (first and third part).
2. C. Manzi-C. Gozzoli, *Sport: prospettive psicosociali*, Carocci, Rome, 2009.
3. D. Marzana-S. Alfieri, *Mi impegno in tutte le lingue del mondo,* Rubettino, Soveria Mannelli, 2015.
4. C. Regalia - E. Marta, *Identità in relazione. Le sfide odierne dell’essere adulto*, McGraw Hill, 2011 (tranne cap. 5)

For the text-based path

Students will prepare by studying the following texts:

* AA.VV., *Comunità e Famiglia*, *Psicologia di Comunità (Essays section), 1*, 2007, pp. 9-158 (excl. essays 4,5,8).
* L. Alici, (2018). *Dentro il conflitto, oltre il nemico*. Ed. Il Mulino, Bologna.
* A. Bertoni, *Passi di gruppo*. Edizioni San Paolo, Milano, 2021 (solo pp. 20-30 e pp. 39-56).
* A. Bertoni – B. Bevilacqua, *Stress e Distress*, Ed. San Paolo, 2017
* R. Iafrate – A. Bertoni, *Gli affetti: promuovere i legami familiari e sociali*, La Scuola, 2010

**Two texts to choose from**

* 1) R. Brown-D. Capozza-O. Licciardello, *Immigrazione, acculturazione, modalità di contatto*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2007 (first and third part).
* 2) C. Manzi-C. Gozzoli, *Sport: prospettive psicosociali*, Carocci, Rome, 2009.
* 3) D. Marzana-S. Alfieri, *Mi impegno in tutte le lingue del mondo*, Rubettino, Soveria Mannelli, 2015
* 4) C. Regalia - E. Marta, *Identità in relazione. Le sfide odierne dell’essere adulto*, McGraw Hill, 2011 (tranne cap. 5)

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures together with practical classes aimed at encouraging active learning of processes and interpersonal and group dynamics, as well as their possible applications in social interventions.

Opportunities for reflection and work will be provided by examples from literature, cinema, and other forms of expression and social communication.

A blackboard will be activated on which students will find all the teaching material produced during the course and any useful material for exam preparation.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam includes:

- a preliminary written test with 6 open-ended questions aimed at verifying the student's acquisition of basic knowledge and the specific language. To be admitted to the oral exam, students must have passed at least 5 of the 6 questions;

- an oral exam aimed at exploring the course contents in more depth and through which the student's ability to draw links between the various topics addressed will be assessed.

The written test and oral test will be held in the same session.

Assessment will be based on the accuracy of answers, the appropriate use of specific terminology, structured arguments and consistent discourse, the ability to make conceptual connections and formulate hypothetical intervention plans. The six open-ended questions in the written test will carry the same number of marks, and will be out of thirty.

The oral test can result in an increase or decrease varying from 0 to (+/-) 3 marks in the assessment of the written test. If the student displays obvious gaps during the oral test, they may be asked to retake the test in another exam session.

There is a single final mark, and it will take into account the result of the both the written test and the oral interview.

Students who choose to participate in the classroom activities proposed during the course will be given the opportunity to present the work done in class during the oral interview.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students should have basic knowledge of the concepts of social psychology, the methods and techniques of conducting groups and theoretical presuppositions.

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.