## **Developmental psychology**

## Prof. Luca Milani, Prof. Francesca Giordano

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

The course aims to provide students with the fundamental knowledge basis about developmental psychology, including research topics, methodology and guidelines about intervention. The course will span from classic theories about development to most recent elaborations and will focus on specific periods of life-span (i.e., childhood, pre-adolescence and adolescence).

*Learning outcomes*

*Knowledge and understanding*

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

* Know and understand the epistemology and the methodology of developmental psychology.
* Know and understand the main theoretical paradigms about the development of locomotor, sensorial, communicative, cognitive, emotional and relational skills.
* Know and understand the methods of evaluation and research in developmental psychology.
* Know and understand the main models about assessment and intervention in developmental psychology.

*Applying knowledge and understanding*

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

* Use the theoretical knowledge to identify evolutive needs of children and adolescents.
* Use the theoretical knowledge to think at developmental processes in a critical manner.
* Understand the connection between developmental psychology and health promotion.
* Use the theoretical knowledge to detect risk factors specific for the different courses and environments.

*Making judgements*

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

* Critically think at the characteristics of typical development patterns.

*Communication*

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

* Acquire and use the specific terminology of developmental psychology.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course comprises an introduction about the method and the objectives of developmental psychology, followed by an overview about the main theories of development – including most recent contributions. The course will be focused on a process-oriented framework – including analyses about risk and protective factors for different areas of development. In particular, the course will be organized in the following units:

* Unit 1: Methods of research in Developmental Psychology
* Unit 2: Neurobiological foundations of Human Development
* Unit 3: Cognitive Development
* Unit 4: The Development of play and drawing
* Unit 5: The Development of Communication and Language
* Unit 6: The Development of the knowledge of Self and of others
* Unit 7: The Theory of Attachment and its relevance in the Life Span
* Unit 8: The Development of Emotional competence
* Unit 9: The Social and Moral Development
* Unit 10: The Quality of Family Relations: risk and protective factors

***READING LIST***

Handbook:

Santrock, J. (2020). *Essentials of Life-Span Development.* New York: McGraw Hill.

Notes and learning materials provided by the professors.

Optional readings:

Giordano, F., Ragnoli, F., Brajda Bruno, F., & Boerchi, D. (2019). Testing Assisted Resilience Approach Therapy (ARAT) with children victims of violence. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 96, 286–293.

Lombardi, E., Traficante, D., Bettoni, R., Offredi, I., Giorgetti, M., & Vernice, M. (2019). The impact of school climate on well-being experience and school engagement: a study with high-school students. *Frontiers in psychology*, *10*, 2482.

Mascheroni, E., & Ionio, C. (2019). The efficacy of interventions aimed at improving post-partum bonding: a review of interventions addressing parent-infant bonding in healthy and at risk populations. *Journal of Neonatal Nursing*, *25*(2), 61-68.

Milani, L., Camisasca, E., Caravita, S. C., Ionio, C., Miragoli, S., & Di Blasio, P. (2015). Violent video games and Children’s aggressive behaviors: An italian study. *SAGE Open*, *5*(3), 2158244015599428.

Miragoli, S., Procaccia, R., & Di Blasio, P. (2014). Language use and PTSD symptoms: Content analyses of allegations of child sexual abuse. *Journal of Forensic Psychology Practice*, *14*(5), 355-382.

Olivari, M. G., Wahn, E. H., Maridaki-Kassotaki, K., Antonopoulou, K., & Confalonieri, E. (2015). Adolescent perceptions of parenting styles in Sweden, Italy and Greece: An exploratory study. *Europe's journal of psychology*, *11*(2), 244.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The teaching method will comprise lectures, class discussions on specified topics, video excerpts. Students’ participation in the class will be stimulated by individual and small-group activities.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The assessment will be an oral examination with 4 open questions on different parts of the program. The aim of the exam is to evaluate: a) the knowledge about the topics covered in the course, b) the understanding of the concepts provided in the course and c) the ability to elaborate on the topics.

For the students that opt to study on the contents covered in the lectures, the questions will focus on 1) the handbook, 2) the materials provided in the lectures and 3) on one of the optional readings.

For the students that opt to study only on the readings, the questions will focus on 1) the handbook and 2) on all of the six optional readings.

*Evaluation Criteria*

The answers will be evaluated on a 0-3 points scale on the basis of the following guidelines:

• coherence of the answer with the topic of the question;

• comprehensiveness of the answer;

• synthesis;

• coherence of the answer with the broader theoretical background.

Criteria for evaluation are as follows:

0 = the answer is wrong or is missing.

1 = the answer contains some correct elements, but part of the answer is characterized by incorrect or not pertinent elements.

2 = the answer is correctly contextualized and provides sufficient contents but is not fully correct or is characterized by sub-optimal clarity of expression.

3 = the answer is fully correct.

To pass the exam students must answer all questions with an evaluation of at least 1.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

A basic knowledge of cognitive and learning psychology is required. Also, the knowledge of the scientific method in psychology is a prerequisite.

*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.*

*Contact*

Professor Luca Milani will receive students at the Department of Psychology (L.go Gemelli) by e-mail appointment.

Professor Francesca Giordano will receive students at the Department of Psychology (L.go Gemelli) by e-mail appointment.