# Psychotechnologies for Well-Being

## Prof. Giuseppe Riva; Prof. Daniela Villani

COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The general aim of the course is to explore, from a psychological perspective, the possibility of using communication technologies (*I&CT Information & Communication Technologies*) as tools for promoting well-being. More precisely, the course aims to:

* Provide a theoretical framework within which to conceptualise the new communication technologies for promoting well-being (Positive Technologies);
* Describe the psychological mechanisms involved in the use of different tools to support individual and interpersonal well-being within different areas (e.g. school, university, work, health, sport and leisure);
* Enliven the presentation of one's professional profile as a wellness psychologist using a digital narrative approach (videocurriculum);
* Initiate the planning of interventions that integrate new communication technologies within processes of change and the promotion of subjective, psychological and interpersonal well-being;
* Introduce the knowledge of digital wellbeing and theoretical reference models;
* Describe certain risky online behaviours and identify the role of individual personality characteristics.

Intended learning outcomes

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

*Knowledge and understanding*

* Define and distinguish the psychological processes involved in the interaction with different technologies (mobile devices, online platforms, simulation experiences with different levels of immersion and interaction);
* Know the main aspects involved in the planning, design and evaluation of the effectiveness of Positive Technology applications.

Applying knowledge and understanding

* Apply the theoretical models learned to the analysis of interactions with different technologies in different fields;
* Achieve greater self-awareness of one's own resources and professional competences so as to initiate a digital storytelling process (videocurriculum) with which to present oneself as a wellness psychologist to the working world;
* Identify the emerging tools in the field of interactive technologies and define their strengths, create a benchmark of existing technologies, and create personas and scenarios that describe the potential users of the service offered and their methods of use;
* Lay the foundations for the design of interventions that integrate new communication technologies within processes of change and the promotion of well-being.

COURSE CONTENT

The course will consist of two modules.

Module 1: *Positive Technology: The Applications of New Media in Well-being in Empowerment and Social Change* (Prof. Giuseppe Riva).

Unit 1. Positive Psychology and Technology

* Cognitive ergonomics and an analysis of the interaction with technology;
* The study of well-being and the main theoretical proposals of Positive Psychology.

Unit 2. Empowerment and Personal Branding

* The processes involved in implementing multimedia and web technologies for the improvement of well-being and for individual and social empowerment;
* Personal branding processes through new digital media.

Module 2: *Positive Technology in practice and Digital Well-being* (Prof. Daniela Villani)

Unit 1. Positive technologies

* Mobile and Internet interventions: processes and opportunities for well-being
* Virtual Reality and 360  video: processes and opportunities for well-being
* Video games and avatars: processes and opportunities for well-being

Unit 2. Planning, design and evaluation of Positive Technology applications

* PACT Method (People, Activities, Contexts, Technologies)
* Design process
* Methods for evaluating experience and effectiveness
* Acceptance of technologies

Unit 3. Digital Well-being

* Social media and well-being
* Video games and well-being
* Risky online behaviours and individual differences
* Positive digital media education

READING LIST

D. Benyon, *Progettare l’interazione: Metodi e tecniche per il design di media interattivi (chapters 1 to 9),* Pearson, Milan, 2012.

G. Riva-A. Gaggioli, *Realtà Virtuali. Gli aspetti psicologici delle tecnologie simulative e il loro impatto sull'esperienza umana,* Giunti, Milan, 2019.

L. Bernardelli, *Guida psicologica alla rivoluzione digitale. I pericoli delle tecnopatologie, le opportunità delle psicotecnologie.* Giunti, Milano, 2022.

D. Villani-S. Triberti, *La personalità online. Tracce digitali dell’identità.* Giunti, Milan, 2018.

G. Riva-D. Villani-P. Cipresso-A. Gaggioli, *Positive Technology: The Use of Technology for Improving and Sustaining Personal Change* (CHAP. 1). in D. Villani- P. Cipresso-A. Gaggioli-G. Riva (Eds), *Integrating Technology in Positive Psychology Practice*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 2016.

A. Chirico -A. Gaggioli, *La profonda meraviglia. La psicologia dei momenti di eternità*. San Paolo, Turin, 2021.

TEACHING METHOD

Lectures supplemented by multimedia presentations and material made available online, analysis of operational tools, practical activities and simulations.

The second module includes practical activities aimed at providing students with the opportunity to experience the different phases of the planning, design and evaluation process of a Positive Technology application.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

Learning will be assessed through the development of two artifacts:

1. the individual creation of a videocurriculum, aimed at presenting oneself as an expert psychologist in well-being and the opportunities offered by new technologies. The videocurriculum assessment will be based on the following parameters: the technical quality of the video (lights, audio, image, background, title); the narrative structure (editing, length, clarity and coherence of the message); and the communicative capacity (quality of verbal and non-verbal communication).

2. the implementation of a Positive Technology project, carried out in a group, in which students will have to answer questions posed by clients. Students will have to demonstrate their knowledge of the processes involved in designing positive technologies and interventions aimed at promoting positive use of digital media, with particular attention to the part experimented with during the practical activities.

The assessment of the paper will focus on a) the analysis of the well-being request and identification of the technological solution (from 0 to 3 marks), b) the identification of the psychological constructs on which to intervene (from 0 to 3 marks), c) the description of the proposed solution, including personas, usage scenarios and contents (from 0 to 5 marks), and d) the definition of a SWOT analysis and evaluation plan (from 0 to 4 marks). Any attachments supporting the project may be assessed with 1 additional mark.

Each paper will be given a mark from 1 to 16. There is a single final mark which is based on the sum of the marks obtained in each practical activities.

NOTES AND PREREQUISITES

Due to its introductory nature, there are no content or technological prerequisites for attending the course. However, an interest in the digital world and basic knowledge of the tools available on smartphones and/or PCs for video editing are assumed.

Should the current Covid-19 health emergency not allow face-to-face teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be communicated in good time 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.