# History of Special Education

## Prof. Simonetta Polenghi

***COURSE AIMS and INTENDED learning outcomes***

The aim of this course is to introduce students to some key points in the development of the history of special education and educational institutes for the disabled, from the Enlightenment right up to Law 517. Module II aims at introducing students to the interconnectedness of the history of special education and the history of the human senses in Post-World War II Europe.

Students will thereby:

* become aware of how the image of disabled child was constructed by various means and how it was perceived within a specific historical context:
* know and understand the connections between cultural ideas and environment and special education;
* understand how different kind of disabilities were historically differently considered and why.

***COURSE CONTENT***

It will focus particularly on the work of certain figures such as De l’Epèe, J.M.G. Itard, E.Séguin, J.L. Down, A. Binet, S. De Sanctis, G. F. Montesano, M. Montessori, A. Gemelli, Don C. Gnocchi, G. Pini, R. Galeazzi, F. Basaglia.

The course will highlight the main features of the history of education for people with motor disabilities and for the “abnormal” (so-called idiots, imbeciles, mentally retarded, the feeble-minded or insane). Psychiatric-educational theories will be placed within the context of the philosophical concepts and socio-political changes of the time. The course will look at the effects of positivism; and those of the First World War. It will compare Fascist and Nazi eugenics, and recall the changes which came about in the 1960s and 1970s, up to the legislation on inclusive education.

***READING LIST***

1. A. Debé Maestri “speciali” alla Scuola di padre Gemelli. La formazione degli insegnanti per fanciulli anormali all’Università Cattolica (1926-1978), PensaMultimedia, Lecce-Rovato 2017.

2. S. Polenghi, Gaetano Pini e l’Istituto dei Rachitici di Milano, in “Archivio storico lombardo”, 2005-06, pp.265-305

3. S. Polenghi, Raddrizzare gli arti, rieducare i mutilati. L’ortopedia di Riccardo Galeazzi all’Istituto dei Rachitici, in Milano scientifica 1875-1924, a cura di E.Canadelli, P.Zocchi, Milano, Sironi 2008, Tomo II, La rete del perfezionamento medico, ed.by Paola Zocchi, pp.217-235

4. A. Debé, S. Polenghi, Assistance and education of mutilated soldiers of World War I. The Italian case, “History of Education & Children’s Literature”, 2016, 2, pp.227-246

5 S. Polenghi, The History of Educational Inclusion of the Disabled in Italy, in “Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education”, in print and downloadable by accessing the OREE from the UCSC Library website.

6. Slides, study materials and written and visual sources will be downloadable from Blackboard platform.

Articles/essays are downloadable from Blackboard platform. The volume is available at the library or directly at the publishing house [*https://www.pensamultimedia.it/pensa/*](https://www.pensamultimedia.it/pensa/)

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures and discussion, reading and interpretation of sources, guided discussions, viewing and commentary of visual material.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The examination is oral and consists of an interview to assess students’ acquisition and correct understanding of the reading and visual material, the issues covered during lectures and the learning material on Blackboard. If the Covid-19 health emergency persists, the exam will take place online in written form.

The final mark will take into account the accuracy and quality of students’ answers, as well as students’ communicative skills demonstrated during the examination and their ability to support statements, analyses and opinions proving to be able to understand historically different educational context about disability.

***NOTES and prerequisites***

Students are *strongly* encouraged to make use of the online material and information. Being an advanced course, a general knowledge of the historical period taken into exam is expected.

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.