# Elements of Psychopathology

## Prof. Marco Farina

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

The course aims to provide future social workers with an overview of the main psychodiagnostic categories. The main objective of the course is to offer future professionals a competent and reciprocal dialogue with psychiatrists, psychologists and psychotherapists who often in collaboration with him take care of people socially at risk or in difficulty.

At the end of the course, students will be able to: identify the main psychological problem that could afflict one of their users and guide them within the social and health services network; understand the meaning of a psychological diagnosis included in a report or an expert report and adapt their intervention accordingly; understand the scientific literature concerning psychopathology in order to attend professional development courses.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Two models of psycho-diagnostics will be considered: the first will refer to the psychodynamic direction and aim at identifying the distinction between neurotic and psychotic personality structures; the second will be based on the diagnosis through signs and symptoms as expressed in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - 5* (DSM5). The following will be examined in detail: schizophrenia and psychotic disorders, mood disorders, anxiety, somatoform, dissociative and fictitious disorders, sexual and gender identity, food and sleep disorders, related to the use of substances, adaptation and personality disorders. Special attention will be paid to the changes introduced in the new edition, the fifth, adopted in Italy in 2014. Specifically, the focus will be on the following innovations: a single diagnostic category for disorders of the autistic spectrum, removal of the current diagnosis of substance abuse and addiction in favour of the new category of “addiction and related disorders”, the creation of a new diagnostic category for “behavioural addiction”, the introduction of new scales for assessing “risk syndromes” that are considered the precursors of severe mental disorders such as dementia and psychosis and the inclusion of binge eating disorder and more appropriate criteria for the diagnosis of anorexia and bulimia nervosa.

***READING LIST***

N. Mcwilliams, (2012, II ed.), *La diagnosi psicoanalitica*, Roma, Astrolabio.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures and clinical cases presented in class by the lecturer.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Assessment is based on two compulsory tests. The first (written) includes the analysis of a clinical case; students must demonstrate that they are able to identify the main problems of the person in difficulty, decide which services from the Health Service to activate, and formulate an intervention. The second test (oral) assesses students’ theoretical knowledge of psychopathology and treatment methods adopted in reference to the symptomatic framework.

Students must first pass the written test in order to take the oral test; both tests count for 50% of the overall mark. Assessment is based on relevance of students’ answers, appropriate use of specific terminology, and argumentative and coherent structure of the analysis of the problem and the hypotheses of intervention proposed.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

As it is an introductory course, there are no prerequisites to attend the course. Students are expected to show interest in human mental functioning with particular reference to the pathologies of thinking, behaviour and emotional life.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching and assessment 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.