# Environmental Psychology

## Prof. Federica Biassoni

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

The course aims to organise the scientific knowledge based on the person-environment interaction, in order to be able to intervene systematically on the key variables involved.

*Intended Learning Outcomes*

Knowledge and Understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to know the main theoretical models of Environmental Psychology

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to apply their newly-acquired theoretical models; in particular, they will be able to develop their ability to assess the peculiarities of space in terms of psychological functioning, and plan cognitive, relational, organisational, and social interactions with the different environments, in order to make them as functional as possible for the specific targets that will be using them.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will explore the theoretical foundations of Environmental Psychology through the study of cognitive maps, proxemics, territorial and architectural perception, the emotions arising from person-environment interactions, and environmental sustainability.

The first part of the course will analyse the different theoretical models defining the contribution of Psychology applied to the interdisciplinary analysis of environmental contexts. The second part of the course will focus on the practical application of the theoretical knowledge acquired during the first part, through the presentation of case studies that can be directly applied to different contexts, with a focus on the research methodology of Environmental Psychology.

Module 1: An introduction to the course and the History of Environmental Psychology

Module 2: Environmental Schemes and Ergonomics

Unit 2.1: The Elements at the Basis of Environmental Schemes and Cognitive Accessibility

Unit 2.2: Human factors and environmental design

Module 3: The management of the environments

Unit 3.1: Proxemics and space

Unit 3.2: Territorial behaviours

Module 4: Emotional aspects in the man-environment relationship

Unit 4.1: Environment and emotions, Place Attachment, Place Identity

Unit 4.2: Environment and well-being in the life cycle

Module 5: The Psychology of Sustainability and the main theories on behavioural change

Module 6: Environmental Psychology methodologies

Unit 6.1: Applied “Psycho-Environmental” research methods

Unit 6.2: On-site lecture: “Multi-actor environments”

***READING LIST***

M.R. Baroni, *Manuale Psicologia Ambientale,* Il Mulino, Milan, 2008.

In order to prepare for the final exam, students will have to study the textbook indicated above and the additional teaching material that will be made available on Blackboard. According to the interest shown by students towards specific topics of Environmental Psychology, the lecturer will indicate other textbooks on Blackboard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be divided in frontal lectures aimed to provide students with the theoretical foundations and the methodological tools of Environmental Psychology and practical activities. There are also exercises to be carried out during real on-site lectures, in which students will have the opportunity to apply their newly-acquired knowledge in the field of Environmental Psychology from a professional perspective.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be asked to write a paper that will describe an intervention of Environmental Psychology to be submitted to the lecturer one week before the selected exam date. The paper will be returned and discussed during the oral exam. The assessment of the paper will be presented during the oral exam, and based on the following criteria:

* the degree of coherence and accuracy of the theoretical and methodological contents presented during the course;
* the ability to interpret the concept of need in relation to a specific environment, and plan interventions on the basis of this interpretation, also considering their feasibility.

In particular, the assessment criteria will focus on the students’ ability to: introduce the relevant theories from a scientific perspective; apply in an effective way the most appropriate methodology to suggest a professional answer to the need of the base of the intervention; plan and implement an intervention analysing the most relevant topics of Environmental Psychology adapted to the specific environmental setting under analysis.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Since this is an introductory course, there are no prerequisites for attending it.

They assume interest and curiosity for the topics presented and willingness to work actively on the stimuli-application exercises presented. Students are expected to be interested in and curious about the topics presented and to be willing to work actively on the exercises and applications presented.

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.