**Psychology of Interpersonal and Subjective Well-being**

## Prof. Stefania Balzarotti; Prof. Giuseppe Riva

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

The course aims to:

1. Introduce the key theoretical models to define and understand the concepts of quality of life and personal, psychological, and interpersonal well-being.
2. Present some of the cognitive, communication, and emotional tools of the psychological well-being.
3. Invite students to experience, from a more personal and practical point of view, some of the cognitive, communication, and emotional tools of the psychological well-being.
4. Introduce the techniques and the tools used to assess and measure personal and interpersonal psychological well-being.

*Intended learning outcomes*

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

*Knowledge and understanding*

* define and distinguish the different stages of psychological, personal, and interpersonal well-being.
* Know the most relevant theoretical models offered by literature on the key concepts of well-being, finding appropriate links and making comparisons between them.
* Know the main tools for well-being at the basis of cognitive, emotional, and relational processes, as well as some of the elements to assess and measure the concept of well-being.

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*

* Use the theoretical models explained during the course to interpret specific contexts.
* Acquire more self-awareness in the use of psychological tools for well-being.
* Plan and analyse interventions aimed to promote personal and interpersonal well-being.
* Use the key tools mentioned during the course (e.g. positive emotions, humour, narration, etc.) not only to promote personal well-being, but also to improve group interactions and analyse different forms of communication (e.g. simple and complex audio-visual narrations).

*Independent judgment:*

* Adopt a critical approach towards the theoretical models on the processes and the concepts related to psychological well-being.
* Face the complexity of the variables that are necessary to plan interventions in the field of the psychology of well-being.
* Make independent judgments on the degree and the quality of personal and interpersonal psychological well-being, based on a selection of data collected using the tools and the techniques explained during the course.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will be composed of two different modules. The first one will introduce the concepts of quality of life and personal psychological well-being, and analyse the theoretical models related to the concept of well-being. The second one, instead, will explore, both from a theoretical and practical perspective, some of the cognitive and emotional tools for the development of well-being.

*Module 1 – Theoretical background*

Unit 1. The dimensions of well-being

* Positive Psychology
* The quality of life, health, happiness, well-being, flourishing
* Hedonic and eudaimonic perspective: models and theories
* Personal, psychological, and social well-being
* The factors influencing well-being
* Stability vs. empowerment

Unit 2. Interpersonal well-being

* The Basis of intersubjectivity
* Tuning (Exercise Module)

*Module 2 - Tools for well-being: what can promote and what can sabotage well-being*

Unit 3. Design Thinking

* The Life Design
* The vision of work and the vision of life

Unit 4. The Flow

* The concept of optimal experience
* The Networked Flow

Unit 5. Positive personality

* Optimism
* Optimism and hope
* Strengths

Unit 6. Positive emotions

* Contribution by B. Fredrickson
* The "self-transcendent" emotions
* Gratitude

Unit 7. Rumination and self-compassion

* Rumination: what is overthinking
* Self-compassion

Unit 8. Humour

* The theoretical models of humour and comedy
* The functions of humour
* Sense of humour
* Humour and its effects on health and well-being

Unit 9. Narration: life stories

* Narrative thought
* Cognitive usability
* Autobiographical reasoning and life stories

***READING LIST***

The final exam will be based on the teaching material available on Blackboard, and on the following textbooks:

Module 1

M. Zambianchi, *La psicologia positiva*. Carocci Editore, Rome.

C. Ruini, *Psicologia positiva e psicologia clinica. Una prospettiva integrata*. Il Mulino, Bologna. Except: part III, paragraphs 3 and 4 of part IV.

Module 2

Textbook of reference:

B. Burnett, D. Evans, *Design your life. Come fare della tua vita un progetto meraviglioso.* Bur Rizzoli, Milan.

In addition, students are invited to choose one of the following textbooks:

A. Dionigi, P. Gremigni, *Psicologia dell’umorismo.* Carocci Editore, Rome.

K. Neff, *La Self-Compassion. Il potere dell’essere gentili con se stessi.* Franco Angeli, Milan. Chapters: 1-9.

M. Seligman, *Imparare l’ottimismo*. Giunti Editore, Firenze. Capitoli 1-5, 12, 15.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures, in which students will have the opportunity to use appropriate experimentation, analytical, and intervention tools.

In addition, students will be invited to attend practical activities based on the concept of psychological well-being and tuning (doc. Vismara).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The assessment of the intended learning outcomes will be carried out through:

- an oral exam with open-ended questions aimed to test the knowledge of the textbooks indicated in the reading list and the teaching material used during the lectures and available on Blackboard (Unit 1, 2, 5-9). During the oral exam, students will be asked questions testing a) the knowledge and understanding of the contents; b) the ability to reformulate topics from a personal perspective; c) the ability to identify contexts of application, with reference to the practical activities proposed during the course. The mark of the oral exam will be expressed in thirtieths and based on the accuracy of the information provided by students and the ability to find connections and identify possible applications.

- a practical activity, to be carried out in small groups, consisting in the development of a Life Design project using the Design Thinking method (Unit 3). The practical activity will be assessed considering the following factors: a) The ability to understand and describe, in a coherent and exhaustive way, the path taken by a person (METHOD); b) The ability to help someone to define and build their possible worlds (PROCESS); c) The ability to explain the choices made and the analysis proposed. The mark of the project will be expressed in thirtieths.

The final mark will be expressed in thirtieths, resulting from the average between the oral exam and the project. The course will include two practical activities and some assignments aimed to experiment the different devices presented in class (syntonisation, positive emotions, strengths, self-compassion, and humour). The students completing 75% of these practical activities will be awarded with 2 extra points that will be added to the final mark.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students should have a basic knowledge of psychology and its key processes acquisite in an Undergraduate Degree in Psychological Sciences and Techniques.

Further information on the course and the teaching material (e.g. the pdf presentations used in class) will be made available on Blackboard, that is to say the E-Learning platform of the UCSC website.

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.