Sociology of the Family and Personal Services

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COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course aims to offer a critical reading of the main transformations that the family is going through today and to enable students to independently analyse family types or phenomena of interest to them; the aim of the course will also be to show that the study of the family and that of personal services are closely connected: to this end, students will be introduced to the study of welfare models (or systems of policies and services aimed at guaranteeing the well-being of citizens), illustrating the advantages of *community welfare* and *family-centred* interventions, which promote the *empowerment* of family relationships, through participatory and activation strategies. To this end, the course aims to introduce students to (and let them apply) a model for analysing interventions and personal services called *FamILens®.COM*, adevice aimed at analysing services in order to understand if and to what extent they respond to a *community welfare* model and what effects they have on family relationships. The ability to use this device, combined with the ability to read the social context in which families operate, will allow students to move with awareness and critical logic in the world of services.

At the end of the course, students will know:

* the main characteristics of families within both the Italian and international contexts;
* the transformation of welfare systems (policies and services) from welfare to community welfare;
* a model for analysing the family and community impact, *FamILens®.COM* of policies and services.

Students who have participated in all the proposed activities will be able to:

* Describe the characteristics of the contemporary family and critically interpret the transformations taking place;
* Gather together the necessary documentation to analyse a family phenomenon/type, also identifying policies and services that target the family phenomenon/type under consideration;
* Analyse using *FamILens®.COM* the family and community impact of a service.

In this way, students will be able to:

* Formulate independent judgments on the quality of services and interventions of a social or psychological nature;
* communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to specialist and non-specialist audiences, thanks to the acquisition of a well-structured methodology for collecting documentation useful for analysing the quality of a service or intervention.

COURSE CONTENT

With regard to the *Sociology of the Family* section, the following topics (subject to change) will be addressed, including with the help of experts:

1. Patterns for studying the family;
2. Young people and the family;
3. The formation of the couple and relational reflexivity;
4. Parenting;
5. Instability of the couple;
6. The family with elderly;
7. Work-family balance;
8. Migration from a family perspective.

With regard to the *Sociology of Personal Services* section, the following topics will be presented:

1. *Welfare* and personal service models;
2. The customisation of services;
3. The concepts of *family-centredness*, and the *FamILens®.COM* model.

Group work will be proposed, replacing the exam, which will involve analysing a family type and a service that responds to a need manifested by that type, applying *FamILens®.COM*.

READING LIST

1. Slides and material uploaded to Blackboard.
2. To supplement the slides and for a better understanding of the topics covered, the texts used to prepare the lectures are listed here:
3. Sulle trasformazioni della famiglia:
* Castiglioni, M. & Dalla Zuanna, G. (2017). *"La famiglia è in crisi” (Falso!)*. Bari: Laterza.
* For students who would like to have a family sociology manual, there are the following manuals (in particular, for those students not following the on-going monitoring pathway, illustrated in the Assessment Method section):
	+ Rossi, G. & Bramanti, D. (Eds.) (2012). *La Famiglia come intreccio di relazioni: la prospettiva sociologica*. Milan: Vita&Pensiero.
	+ Ruspini, E. (2011). *Studiare la famiglia che cambia*. Rome: Carocci.
	+ Saraceno, C. & Naldini, M. (2021). *Sociologia della famiglia* (Fourth Edition). Bologna: Il Mulino (first 6 chapters).
	+ Di Nicola, P. (2017). *Famiglia: sostantivo plurale. Nuovi orizzonti e vecchi problemi* (Second updated edition). Milan: FrancoAngeli.
	+ Satta, C., Magaraggia, S. & Camozzi, I. (2020). *Sociologia della vita famigliare. Soggetti, contesti e nuove prospettive*. Rome: Carocci.
1. On the concept of well-being:
* OECD (2013). *Concept and validity*. In *OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being*, OECD Publishing, pp. 27-59. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK189563/>)
1. On welfare models:
* Prandini R. (2013). La persona come medium e forma di politica sociale. Un cambiamento di paradigma per i servizi di welfare. *Sociologia e politiche sociali*, 16 (3), pp. 43-78.
1. On the Family Impact Lens and FamILens.COM:
* Il Family Impact Lens. Framework teorico e modello operativo. *Consultori familiari oggi*, 28 (2), pp. 11-35. ([link to full text](https://consultorifamiliarioggi.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CfO-2-2020-Carra.pdf))
* Family Impact Lens e welfare community: una relazione virtuosa rappresentata nel FamILens.COM. *Consultori familiari oggi*, in press.

Other more specific texts will be indicated in class and on Blackboard.

TEACHING METHOD

The course includes lectures, with the participation of experts (in class or remotely), classroom and online exercises, group work.

A project to be carried out in groups of 4/5 people will be proposed, aimed at producing a paper that will replace the exam; using a guide proposed by the lecturer, each group will analyse a family type of their choice and not covered in class (e.g. a family with young children, with non-self-sufficient elderly members, with a disabled person or sufferer of a psychiatric disease, etc.), using *FamILens®.COM* to study a service that responds to a need of families belonging to that specific type (e.g. centre for families, nursery school/kindergarten, nursing home, DAMA, etc.). The service will be identified and contacted by the group, which will have to collect the necessary information to complete the proposed guide, including the carrying out of at least one interview. Some after-hours remote meetings will be offered to support the group work.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

The assessment will comprise:

* *ongoing monitoring of the* competences acquired through online tests on Blackboard; each test can carry up to 3 marks; for those who take all of the tests and participate in the group work, the average mark will be considered in the final mark;
* those who have completed all the monitoring tests and participated in the group activity, will be able to take an online *summary test*, which can be worth up to 15 marks;
* the *group work* aimed at producing the paper can carry up to 12 marks; the assessment criteria will be based on completeness of the family type analysis (4 marks), correct application of the *FamILens®.COM* (4 marks), and quality of the final critical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the service (4 marks); the mark given to the teamwork can potentially be improved after the first lecturer review;
* any distinction granted will be at the lecturer's discretion;
* if a student is not satisfied with the mark obtained in the online tests and group work, they can opt for the traditional exam described below.

Students who have not completed the on-going monitoring pathway and all other proposed activities, must take an exam based on all the material in the programme (including the lecture slides and insights suggested on Blackboard); this will be a written exam, consisting of a *closed-ended test* that can total a maximum of 15 marks (minimum mark to move on to the next test = 12) and *2 open-ended questions* (which will test the student's capacity for critical analysis using all the knowledge learned) worth 8 marks each. The questions and test will cover the entire programme, including slides and in-depth material uploaded to Blackboard.

In the assessment of the written tests, the following will be considered with regard to learning: ability to understand the question (2 marks), argumentative ability (2 marks), correct linking of concepts (2 marks), and critical ability to rework the arguments (2 marks).

NOTES AND PREREQUISITES

Students attending lectures are offered an engaging project that, if carried out on a constant basis, will facilitate the progressive acquisition of the competences required to pass the exam, and better acquisition of competences, thanks to the practical and critical application of what has been learned. For this reason, participation in the group work is strongly recommended, because it is an integral part of the competence-acquiring process indicated above.

Students who have not previously attended a course in basic or advanced Sociology could benefit from a preliminary reading of the first part of Carrà, E. (2008). *Un’osservazione che progetta. Strumenti per l’analisi e la progettazione d'interventi nel sociale*. Milan: LED

Students are invited to regularly consult the Blackboard platform and their email inbox.

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.