# Sociology of Associative Processes for Children and the Community

## Prof. Lucia Boccacin

*(1st Module: Sociology of associative processes for the community; 2nd Module: Sociology of associative processes for children)*

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

The course aims to offer students the theoretical-conceptual, methodological, and empirical sociological tools to understand the associative processes at the origin of prosocial organisations. It also intends to offer students’ knowledge and observational and application elements regarding the interventions carried out by these prosocial organisations in the field of services for children and in community settings.

Specifically, the course pursues the following objectives:

– To pay attention to subject-specific lexis and its specificities.

– To know and understand the socio-cultural and relational context of contemporary society.

– To know and understand the characteristics that in this context qualify social help relationships in territorial communities.

– To know the services offered in partnership by public institutions and the third sector associations, with particular attention to those aimed at infancy and early childhood.

– To specifically know the action carried out by third sector organisations at the community-local level in responding to the needs of the territories.

At the end of the course, students will be able to achieve the following, both as regard childhood and other life cycle ages:

– Master subject-specific language.

– Operate by taking into account the main cultural and social transformations that have affected local communities, with particular attention to the presence of social relations between the public, private and third sector.

– Identify the actors involved in the communities and the help processes they carry out to meet local needs.

– Enhance services and interventions which refer to the community from an organisational profile and intervention method.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1: *Sociology of associative processes for the community*

Communities represent a meso-level area that is key in responding to traditional and emerging socio-educational needs in contemporary society.

During the course, the contributions offered by main classical and contemporary sociological approaches will be examined to understand the community both as a local context and as a reference context of meaning.

In the light of this theoretical framework, the course will subsequently analyse the relational dynamics of the processes of community belonging, the ways in which these processes occur, the various social actors involved, the institutions, market entities and third sector organisations in the territories.

The term “third sector” refers to an associative universe which includes voluntary groups and organisations, social cooperatives, pro-social associations, prosocial foundations, NGOs. It plays a fundamental role in responding to the traditional and emerging social needs of contemporary society by contributing to the generation and regeneration of community relations, through the provision of services, interventions, and practices.

Primary and secondary networks of social relations will also be considered along with the experiences of partnership between public, private and third sectors, which, at a structural, functional, and organisational level, refer to the community in terms of minors, initial reception, therapeutic, and residential communities for the disabled and the elderly. There will be a special focus on conceptual understanding of lexicon and its empirical implications for the work of professional educators.

Module 2: *Sociology of associative processes for children*

During the second module, particular attention will be paid to third sector realities that offer services and interventions aimed at children and early childhood.

The topics dealt with will concern the social functions performed by these services, and the meaning they have for families with young children. The topics covered will concern the distribution of care tasks within families with young children, the links between generations, the establishment of partnerships between the public, private and third sectors in interventions aimed at early childhood.

The module will also consider the approaches and concepts relating to early childhood services in terms of social investment for the future and the meaning that the practices of co-planning, co-governance, co-production, and innovation take on within them.

The course will also present some work tools aimed at recognising community social networks and identifying any good practices in early childhood services. Furthermore, the course will cover social policies supporting families with young children, with a specific focus on care policies and on education policies targeting early childhood.

***READING LIST***

Specific attention will be paid to the conceptual understanding of the terms and their empirical implications for the development of the profession of educator.

The course will also consider social policies to support families with young children, with a specific focus on care and educational policies aimed at early childhood.

S. Stanzani (edited by), *Bisogni delle famiglie e servizi educativi per l’infanzia*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2020.

S. Sabatinelli, *Politiche per crescere. La prima infanzia tra cura e investimento sociale*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2016. (Only chs. I and II)

L. Boccacin, *Terzo settore e partnership sociali: buone pratiche di welfare sussidiario*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2009.

 P. Terenzi-l. Boccacin-r. Prandini (edited by), *Lessico della sociologia relazionale*, Società Editrice il Mulino, Bologna, 2016, only the following items: Associazione, Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft (Community/Society), Civil culture.

A textbook chosen from the following:

W.a. corsaro, *Sociologia dell’infanzia*, Franco Angeli 2020 (only the Introduction and parts I and II).

C. Satta, *Bambini e adulti: la nuova sociologia dell'infanzia*, Carocci, Rome, 2012.

D. Bramanti-M.L. Bosoni (edited by), *Famiglia, infanzia e servizi educativi,* Vita e Pensiero, 2021.

L. Boccacin, a. Zimmer, (edited by), La morfogenesi del Terzo settore: approcci e prospettive internazionali, “Sociologia e Politiche sociali”, volume 18, 3, 2015

G. Rossi-l. Boccacin, *Riflettere e agire relazionalmente. Terzo settore, partnership e buone pratiche nell’Italia che cambia*, Maggioli editore, Sant’Arcangelo di Romagna (RM), 2011 (chs. 1,2,3,4,5,6).

G. Rossi-l. Boccacin, (edited by), *L’associazionismo multilivello in Italia. Reti relazionali, capitale sociale e attività prosociali*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2012.

L. Boccacin (edited by), *Generare relazioni di comunità nell’era del digitale,* Morcelliana-Scholè, Brescia, 2022, solo i capp. 1 e 11.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will consist of lectures and active teaching sessions carried out individually and in small groups, also through the *Blackboard* platform accessible from the website of the Catholic University.

During lectures, didactic materials (sum-up slides and analytical outlines) will be used to facilitate understanding of the topics examined. Students will have access to this supplementary material made available on the Blackboard platform.

The active teaching sessions proposed during the course will aim to favour the empirical application of the topics covered during lectures and related simulations.

Monitoring will be carried out with some online tools available on the Blackboard platform, to assess the skills acquired at the conclusion of the main topics presented; this monitoring will be part of the final score awarded during the exam.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam consists of an oral interview on the topics covered during the course.

The evaluation criteria refer to students' ability to adequately know themes, categories of analysis and methods presented during the course (from 1 to 15 points), appropriately master subject-specific lexis (from 1 to 5 points), argue using relevant topics (from 1 to 5 points), and elaborate themes in a personal and critical way (from 1 to 5 points).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Prerequisite for the course is a basic knowledge of general sociology or sociology of education.

Students without prior knowledge of the subject, could previously use a Sociology Manual: the lecturer is available to offer information in this regard.

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.