# Developmental Psychopathology and Models of Intervention

## Prof. Giovanni Giulio Valtolina

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

*Course aims*

The course aims to address developmental psychopathology, contextualising theories and proposed interventions within scientific and methodological reference frameworks offered by clinical psychology.

The analysed issues will be dealt with from both a theoretical and an applied perspective with regard to diagnostics and to intervention models

The social impact of analysed approaches will be highlighted by paying special attention to the role of interpersonal relationships both in the field of psychopathology and in the relevant prevention and intervention programmes, systematically drawing attention to the implications of the theories and of intervention programmes for social work.

*Intended learning outcomes*

Students will have to understand the specific characteristics of the approach underlying developmental psychopathology, as a perspective which also integrates the knowledge gained in different branches of psychology. Furthermore, they must be able to organise and critically discuss the fundamental concepts of developmental psychopathology as regards some dichotomies – normality/pathology, health/illness – and terminology such as distress, disorder, deviance.

At the end of the course, students must be capable of undertaking critical reflection on the knowledge which they have acquired, pointing out the potential and limits of the various approaches to developmental psychopathology in the possible real-world contexts in which the acquired knowledge and gained competences can be applied, particularly in social work. Also the prefiguration of possible scenarios for the application of knowledge, as well as the analysis of directly experienced situations, in which such knowledge can be useful, are part of intended learning outcomes.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The main psychopathological disorders of childhood and adolescence will be presented, linking the diagnostic schema with the broader consideration of the minor’s life contexts (family, school, out-of-school time spaces). Specifically, course topics include the modern developmental psychopathology framework, consistent with state-of-the-art diagnostic criteria, defined by age group, by the evolutionary trajectories in children and adolescents within their relational systems, by assessment tools and by models of intervention.

***READING LIST***

F. Celi - D. Fontana, *Psicopatologia dello Sviluppo. Storie di bambini e psicoterapia,* McGraw-Hill, Milan, 2022.

L. Cancrini, *Ascoltare i bambini,* Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milan, 2017.

L. Cancrini, *La cura delle infanzie infelici,* Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, 2012.

All the lecture slides and content uploaded on Blackboard are considered part of the reading list.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will include frontal lectures and group discussions on issues and experiences which students are interested in. Moreover, during the course learning paths will be constantly monitored, through self-assessment, so as to rethink, if required, certain teaching methods.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final assessment will consist in a written exam, during which students’ knowledge on course topics will be assessed and their competences in the possible ways of applying acquired knowledge will be examined. Students’ ability to link the analysed theoretical approaches and to discuss them in a relevant and coherent manner will also be assessed. Critically analysed theoretical knowledge and competences pertaining to the contextualisation of this knowledge in social work professions will be considered equally relevant for assessment purposes.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

In general, it is considered that a requisite which facilitates learning is the willingness to reflect on issues concerning human beings, with a specific curiosity for psychological aspects and a strong interest in psychic suffering. In addition, a possible previously acquired knowledge of psychology – particularly clinical psychology – is considered a useful prerequisite.

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.