**-. Educational Research and Experimentation**

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

***Course aims***

The Course aims to:

* provide basic knowledge
* promote the acquisition of application skills
* start the development of methodological skills useful for becoming familiar with the field of empirical research in the educational field as a tool for enhancing educational work in various professional fields (with particular reference to childhood contexts).

***Intended learning outcomes***

*Knowledge and understanding*

At the end of the course, students will know:

* the characteristics and specificities of research in the educational field, with particular attention to contexts and services aimed at children
* empirical research strategies in the educational field
* the structure of the empirical research process
* the main data collection tools
* the specific language of the discipline
* the main professional fields in which educational interventions are carried out

*Ability to apply knowledge and understanding*

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

* correctly use the specific language of the discipline;
* read, understand and critically analyse research reports;
* appropriately choose devices and tools for data collection
* critically reflect on strategies useful for enhancing educational work in various professional contexts

*“Independent judgement”, “Communication skills” and “Learning ability”*

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

* exercise articulated judgment skills particularly useful for distinguishing the quality of the devices and the results of empirical research projects in multiple application areas;
* effectively communicate and argue the methodological choices made both in research contexts and, more generally, in educational work;
* critically learn from one's own experience by implementing reflective ways of working.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The following thematic areas will be explored during the course:

a. Research as a resource for educational work

b. Research as an opportunity for educational services (with particular attention to children's services)

c. The main types of empirical research

d. The design of an empirical research (phases, tasks)

e. The tools for data collection (observational methods, questionnaires, interviews).

Space will be given to individual work and group work to learn the most widespread and effective online tools for structuring a questionnaire.

Through guided practical activities, the course will define examples of digital reports useful in the academic and professional fields.

f. Examples of empirical research in and for children's services

***READING LIST***

K. Montalbetti, C. Lisimberti (2015). *Ricerca e professionalità educativa. Risorse e strumenti*. Lecce: Pensa Multimedia.

F. L. Zaninelli (2019). *Sperimentando lo zero-sei. Ricerca e formazione a Parma*. Edizioni Junior

*\* Different textbooks relating to empirical research conducted in other professional fields may be recommended upon request.*

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course involves the use of complementary teaching strategies: lessons and guided practical activities. These in particular will offer students the opportunity to critically reflect on research in the educational field and to mobilise the knowledge and skills acquired through the construction of simple empirical research devices. Individual work and the ability to work in a team will be valued.

The teaching material made available on Blackboard constitutes an integral part of the reading list.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

***Assessment method***

The final exam is oral and aims at verifying the students’ knowledge, application skills, and initial methodological skills; students will have to demonstrate critical and argumentative skills in rereading, reworking and presenting the proposed contents.

To access the oral interview, students must submit (at least 10 days before the exam date) a paper created starting from the guided practical activities presented in class. This paper must be drawn up according to the format made available on the Blackboard platform and constitutes the starting point of the oral exam.

More specifically, the oral interview will focus on the discussion of the essay and on the verification of the contents included in the reading list through the use of general and reasoning questions. The student's ability to bring practical examples useful for connecting theoretical knowledge to the professional fields experienced or discussed during lessons will be enhanced.

The essay mark, communicated during the oral exam, will accunt for 50% in the definition of the final mark.

***Assessment criteria***

The overall assessment will take into account the paper work discussed, with attention to the following aspects: completeness and relevance of the information included; clarity of the contents presented; argumentation of the methodological choices made; feasibility and sustainability of the developed proposal; originality of the contents.

Furthermore, during the exam the following criteria will be assessed: correctness and quality of knowledge of the texts indicated in the reading list and of the notions presented in class, command of language as well as the ability to critically rework the methodological contents.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Since the course is introductory there are non content-related prerequisites for attending it.

Students *are required to regularly consult* the teacher's web page and the *Blackboard* IT platform, where notices and updates will be communicated from time to time.

Information on office hours available on the teacher's personal page at <http://docenti.unicatt.it/>.