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Community Psychology and Family Business: An Integrated Perspective

PROF. MAURA POZZI, PROF. ADRIANO MAURO ELLENA

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| Area of study: | Community Psychology |
| Area Code: | ---- |
| Credit | 6 ECTS |
| Dates | 23 June – 5 July (2 weeks) |

Course description

The primary objective of this course is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the core theories and emerging trends in Community Psychology, particularly as they apply to the context of family businesses.

The first part of the course meticulously explores the intricate interplay between individuals and their environments, delving into the dynamic processes by which communities influence and are influenced by interpersonal and social relationships over time. The programme is meticulously structured to integrate both theory and practice within each lesson, ensuring a balanced and comprehensive learning experience. Each session begins with an in-depth exploration of theoretical concepts foundational to community psychology, providing students with profound insights into this captivating field. This theoretical portion is not merely preparatory but forms the bedrock upon which practical understanding is built. Following the theoretical exploration in the same session, the course dynamically transitions into practical application. This shift is not sequential but symbiotic, blending theory with practice within the same instructional period. Students actively engage in hands-on activities, directly applying the theoretical knowledge they have just acquired. This approach allows for immediate implementation of concepts, using essential tools relevant to real-world community work. By interweaving theoretical learning with practical exercises, the course not only solidifies students' understanding but also equips them with practical, valuable skills that are immediately applicable.

The second part of the course will center on the study of family businesses, which are enterprises owned, managed, and/or overseen by family entities. These Family Businesses (FBs) constitute a significant majority of firms both in Italy and globally, serving as quintessential models where interpersonal and social dynamics are intricately interwoven. The module is meticulously designed to enhance students' analytical proficiency in identifying the distinctive characteristics of FBs, along with evaluating their principal challenges and potential opportunities. This module is specifically tailored for those aspiring to offer consulting or professional services to family-run enterprises. Emphasizing a highly interactive pedagogical approach, it incorporates a range of dynamic instructional methods including role-playing exercises, multimedia presentations, guest lectures, and facilitated discussions. This multifaceted approach not only engages students in theoretical learning but also immerses them in practical scenarios, thereby equipping them with the essential skills and insights needed to navigate the complex landscape of Family Business consultancy.

In sum, the course aims to impart an in-depth understanding of Community Psychology's core principles and its evolving trends, with a focus on their application in family business contexts.

Course Objectives:

- To explore the interaction between individuals and their environments, emphasizing the influence of communities on interpersonal and social relationships over time.
- To integrate theoretical knowledge and practical application, enhancing understanding of community psychology.



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- To apply theoretical concepts in practical scenarios, using hands-on activities to develop skills relevant to community work.
- To analyze the unique dynamics of family businesses, focusing on their challenges and opportunities.

Course Contents:

- Theoretical foundations of community psychology.
- Practical applications in community settings.
- Analysis of the interplay between individual and environmental factors in communities.
- Study of family businesses, their characteristics, challenges, and opportunities.
- Development of analytical skills for consulting in family-run enterprises.
- Interactive pedagogical methods including role-playing, multimedia presentations, guest lectures, and facilitated discussions.

Special Focus:

- Application of community psychology in the context of family businesses.
- Development of practical skills for consultancy in family-run enterprises.
- Interactive learning experiences blending theory with real-world application.

Prerequisites

The course is introductory community psychology and family businesses and does not require any previous knowledge of those concepts. A basic knowledge of social psychology is a facilitating factor.

Method of teaching

Together with the traditional lectures, the learning process is supported by stimulating teaching methods such as case discussions, guest speakers and participatory methods. During the course there will be also some field trips.

Course requirements

Students have to comply with the following requirements:

- a) students are expected to regularly attend class sessions and actively contribute to in-class debate;
- b) students have to take a mid-term written exam at the end of the first teaching module;
- c) students have to take a final written exam at the end of the second teaching module.

Grading

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| In class participation | 20% of final grade |
| Mid-term written exam | 40% of final grade |



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Final written exam

40% of final grade

MID-TERM EXAM

The written exam consists of an essay related to topics covered in the program. The written exam is passed if the grade is sufficient (above 18/30).

FINAL WRITTEN EXAM

The written exam is a mix of closed questions and open questions related to topics covered in the program. The written exam is passed if the grade is sufficient (above 18/30).

Course readings and materials

Readings and slides: all mandatory readings and lecturers' slides will be available on Blackboard.

Suggested book and articles:

- David W. McMillan; David M. Chavis (1986). *Sense of community: A definition and theory*. , 14(1), 6–23. doi:10.1002/1520-6629(198601)14:1<6::aid-jcop2290140103>3.0.co;2-i
- <https://theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf>
- Zimmerman, M.A. (2000). Empowerment Theory. In: Rappaport, J., Seidman, E. (eds) *Handbook of Community Psychology*. Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-4193-6_2
- Francescato, D., & Aber, M. S. (2015). Learning from organizational theory to build organizational empowerment. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 43(6), 717-738. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21753>
- Ruggieri, R., Pozzi, M., & Ripamonti, S. (2014). Italian Family Business Cultures Involved in the Generational Change. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 10(1), 79–103. <https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v10i1.625>
- Pozzi, M., Pistoni, C., Ripamonti, S., & De Leo, A. (2022). Generation and Gender Differences in Family Businesses: A New Psychological Perspective. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-022-09881-w>
- Pieper, T. M. (2010). Non solus: Toward a psychology of family business. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 1(1), 26-39. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfbs.2010.02.003>
- Pozzi, M., Poli Martinelli, D., Greiner, A., Pistoni, C. (2024). Comparing Psychosocial Well-being in Italian Family Businesses: Seniors vs. Juniors. *European Journal of Family Business*, 14 (2), 188-197. <https://doi.org/10.24310/ejfb.14.2.2024.19614>

Schedule

| Lesson | Title | Readings |
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| 1 | Course presentation and introduction. Community Psychology and the Brofrenbrenner's Bio-ecological model (4h) | Slides |
| 2 | Sense of community + Participatory methods (4h) | Slides READING: - David W. McMillan; David M. Chavis (1986). <i>Sense of</i> |



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| | | community: <i>A definition and theory.</i> , 14(1), 6–23. doi:10.1002/1520-6629(198601)14:1<6::aid-jcop2290140103>3.0.co;2-i |
| 3 | Participation + The World Café (4h) | Slides READING: - https://theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf |
| 4 | Individual, group, organizational and community empowerment + Feedback empowerment oriented: group session (4h) | Slides READING: - Zimmerman, M.A. (2000). Empowerment Theory. In: Rappaport, J., Seidman, E. (eds) <i>Handbook of Community Psychology</i> . Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-4193-6_2 |
| 5 | Participatory Multi-faceted Organizational Assessment as a tool for participatory diagnosis and change + Focus Group (4h) | Slides READING: - Francescato, D., & Aber, M. S. (2015). Learning from organizational theory to build organizational empowerment. <i>Journal of Community Psychology</i> , 43(6), 717-738. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21753 |
| 6 | Mid-term exam (2h) | |
| 7 | Description and presence of family businesses in Italy and worldwide (4h) | Slides READING: - Angus, P. M. (2020). <i>What Role Should a Family Business Play in Its Community?</i> https://hbr.org/2020/02/what-role-should-a-family-business-play-in-its-community - Sanderson, R. (2019). <i>Corporate Italy keeps it in the family. Powerful dynasties wield control over country's business fabric.</i> https://www.ft.com/content/e80b8172-f5af-11e9-a79c-bc9acae3b654 - Ruggieri, R., Pozzi, M., & Ripamonti, S. (2014). Italian Family Business Cultures Involved in the Generational Change. <i>Europe's Journal of Psychology</i> , 10(1), 79–103. https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v10i1.625 |
| 8 | The FB experience. External visit expected (8h) | |
| 9 | Psychological processes characterizing family businesses (4h) | Slides READING: - Pozzi, M., Pistoni, C., Ripamonti, S., & De Leo, A. (2022). Generation and Gender Differences in Family Businesses: A New Psychological Perspective. <i>Journal of Family and Economic Issues</i> . https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-022-09881-w |
| 10 | Tools for analysing the family, the family business, and its | Slides READING: - Pieper, T. M., & Klein, S. B. (2007). The Bulleye: A Systems |



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| | relations (4h) | Approach to Modeling Family Firms. <i>Family Business Review</i> , 20(4), 301-319. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-6248.2007.00101.x - Pieper, T. M. (2010). Non solus: Toward a psychology of family business. <i>Journal of Family Business Strategy</i> , 1(1), 26-39. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfbs.2010.02.003 |
| 11 | Final exam | |

Rules of conduct

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and no absence/s will be excused. Please consider that Field Trips are considered equal to regular classes and indeed you are expected to attend the visits. Unexcused absences will not be accepted. An excused absence will only be granted if you are seriously ill and can support your claim with a local doctor's certificate dated the day you missed class (therefore you must go to the doctor that same day) that has to be delivered to the Professor or to UCSC International Office. Any other absence will not be excused and will result in not being admitted to the final exam, which corresponds to a 0 (zero) in the final exam.

Exam Date: The exam date cannot be re-scheduled. Should the dates of the final exams be moved for force major reasons, UCSC International Office and the Professor will promptly inform you in class and/or via e-mail on the new date agreed. Unexcused absences to the exams will result in a failing grade in the course. In cases of unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or injury on the day of the exams, you must submit a medical certificate and communicate your absence to the Professor and UCSC International Office via email prior to the exam. If the student does not justify his/her absence through sufficient documentation and with adequate notice before the final test, you will receive an automatic Failed. Absences for other unforeseeable circumstances will not be accepted and will result in a failing grade.

Bio of instructors

Maura Pozzi

Maura Pozzi is an Associate Professor of Social Psychology at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan and Brescia. She earned her degree in Work and Organizational Psychology from the Libera Università di Urbino. For years, she has been dedicated to the study of family businesses, with a particular focus on relational aspects. As a member of the University Center for Family Studies and Research, and the Research Center for Community Development and Organizational Quality of Life (CERISVICO), she publishes on this subject both nationally and internationally. The guiding principle of her approach to studying family SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) is the belief that they represent a complex and unique reality, being a result of an interweaving between typical family dynamics and, at the same time, business operations. In her recent work, she underscores the importance of studying family SMEs using a dialogic and co-constructed methodological approach, especially during the phase of leadership transition. She has developed a tool that highlights discrepancies between the perceptions of family generations, thus providing more precise intervention guidelines for professionals who collaborate with family SMEs that are about to face, or are already in, the phase of generational transition.

Adriano Mauro Ellena

Adriano Mauro Ellena is a Research Fellow in Social and Community Psychology at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. He received a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology from Sigmund Freud University in Milan and Vienna, and a doctorate in Psychology from the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. His work focuses on topics such as social identity, participation, youth, and NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), approached from a community psychology perspective. Additionally, he has



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experience as a business consultant where he has applied an empowerment approach to organizations. Currently, he teaches Social Psychology at the Faculty of Psychology at the Università Cattolica of Milan and is involved in national and international projects. He is also a member of the Youth Observatory of the Toniolo Institute and the European Rural Youth Observatory (ERYO).