

Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Community engagement and outreach in social work
Course Code	51110
Course Title Additional	
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	GSPS-05/A
Language	English
Degree Course	Bachelor in Social Work
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	dr. Diletta Mauri, Diletta.Mauri@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/home/research/competence-centre-social-work-social-pedagogy-social-policy/team-and-body/person/50967
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	1
CP	4
Teaching Hours	24
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	76
Planned Office Hours	12
Contents Summary	<p>The course offers a theoretical-methodological introduction to community and proximity social work, placing it within the international debate and with particular attention to the Italian context. Intervention models, roles and competences of professionals are examined in depth, together with the operational phases of social work. The analysis of case studies and the active participation of students in the design of interventions are envisaged.</p>
Course Topics	1. Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Community and Outreach Social Work

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Placement within the historical evolution of social work - Key theories and definitions at the international level - Intervention perspectives across micro and macro levels - The Italian context: an overview of community and outreach social work <p>2. Introduction to Community Social Work Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main theoretical and operational models for community-based intervention - Roles and core competencies of the social worker - The phases of community work: initiation, facilitation, management, and monitoring - Methods and techniques for working with communities <p>3. Introduction to Street Work and Outreach Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of outreach social work - Main goals and challenges of outreach interventions - Involving hard-to-reach populations - The non-linear phases of outreach work and the management of uncertainty <p>4. Analysis of case studies, to be defined based on the interests of the students.</p>
Keywords	Social work, community, outreach, participation, territory
Recommended Prerequisites	None
Propaedeutic Courses	
Teaching Format	This elective course is delivered remotely in synchronous mode.
Mandatory Attendance	In accordance with the regulation
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	<p>1. KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acquire knowledge of the historical evolution and international theoretical foundations of community and outreach social work. - Understand the main models of intervention at micro and macro levels, and how these are applied in different contexts, including the Italian experience. - Become familiar with key concepts such as anti-oppressive practice, advocacy, and policy practice within community work. - Explore a range of strategies, methods, and tools used in

outreach social work, with particular attention to hard-to-reach populations.

- Develop awareness of the stages of outreach work — including contact, joint needs assessment, service agreements, referrals, and informal/formal evaluation — and the complexity of managing these processes.

2. APPLYING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Students will:

- Apply theoretical models and practical methods to simulated or real-life case studies, with attention to different social contexts and types of marginality.
- Reflect on and analyze their own experiences (where applicable) in working with vulnerable or excluded groups.
- Design context-sensitive community and outreach-based interventions in various fields, considering both ethical and operational aspects.

3. MAKING JUDGEMENTS

Students will:

- Develop critical awareness of intersectional factors that influence vulnerability and social exclusion.
- Recognize the limits and opportunities of community-based and outreach interventions, especially when operating in unpredictable or rapidly changing environments.

4. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Students will:

- Learn and practice basic communication strategies for initiating low-threshold contact and building trust in community and outreach settings.
- Develop skills for facilitating dialogue and participatory processes with individuals, groups, and communities.

5. LEARNING SKILLS

Students will:

- Enhance their capacity for context analysis and needs assessment in diverse territorial and social environments.
- Strengthen their ability to autonomously expand their knowledge base through reflection, critical reading, and discussion of case

	studies defined in collaboration with fellow students.
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	
Assessment	<p>1. Formative evaluation: During the course, students will be invited to present a potential intervention design co-constructed as a group. After each presentation, the lecturer will provide an individual commentary and invite students to carry out a self-assessment.</p> <p>2. Summative assessment: The final assessment will consist of an oral interview based on the project presented (which must also be submitted in written form) and on the content covered during the course.</p>
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project work: adaptation of the conceptualised strategies and methods to an awareness-raising intervention aimed at a specific context. - Appreciated content characteristics will be: critical reflection, reflections on one's own experience when relevant, creative solutions, attention to collaborative processes, centrality of agency and choice of target in the design of the intervention, awareness of relational asymmetries, risks and structural factors when discussing targeted interventions. - Appreciated formal characteristics will be: adherence to deadlines, accurate definition and representation of the phenomenon studied, appropriate use of technical language, active participation in collaborative work.
Required Readings	<p>Björn Andersson (2013) Finding ways to the hard to reach—considerations on the content and concept of outreach work, <i>European Journal of Social Work</i>, 16:2, 171-186.</p> <p>Grymonprez, H., & Roose, R. (2022). Towards a clearer understanding of the transformational potential of outreach work. <i>European Journal of Social Work</i>, 25(1), 26–40.</p> <p>Twelvetrees, A., & Todd, R. (2024). <i>Community Development, Social Action and Social Planning 6e: A Practical Guide</i>. Policy Press. (pp.7-58)</p>
Supplementary Readings	<p>Allegri, E. (2015). <i>Il servizio sociale di comunità</i> (Vol. 142, pp. 15-</p>

	<p>175). Carocci Editore.</p> <p>Calcaterra, V., & Panciroli, C. (2021). <i>Il Lavoro Sociale di comunità passo dopo passo. Metodologia e strumenti per progetti a valenza collettiva</i>. Centro Studi Erickson.</p> <p>Campanini, A. (2009). Social work in Italy: problems and perspectives. <i>Locus Soci@ I</i>, (3), 36-47.</p> <p>Fargion, S. (2018). Social work promoting participation: Reflections on policy practice in Italy. <i>European Journal of Social Work</i>, 21(4), 559-571.</p> <p>Ripamonti, E. (2018). <i>Collaborare: metodi partecipativi per il sociale</i>. Carocci Faber editore.</p> <p>Sanfelici, M. (2024). <i>Fondamenti del servizio sociale anti-oppressivo</i> (pp. 1-201). Carocci.</p>
Further Information	
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Peace, justice and strong institutions, Reduced inequalities