Title: *Virtual environments and change: new challenges in psychological research*

Prof. Andrea Guazzini

University of Florence
email: andrea.guazzini@unifi.it

Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to provide students with the foundational theoretical knowledge and practical insights essential for a comprehensive understanding of the potential inherent in virtual environments, particularly in the context of designing, conducting, and executing social intervention projects. The course will be organized into three core objectives, each aligning with the fundamental competencies underpinning the course's educational goals. These modules are as follows:

Objective 1: Modeling Individual and Community Empowerment Processes in Virtual Environments

This objective aims to cultivate the capacity to model empowerment processes at both the individual and community levels within virtual environments. Students will explore pertinent theories and practical methodologies to empower individuals and communities effectively within virtual realms.

Objective 2: Modeling and Simulating Macroscopic Psychosocial Dynamics in a Hyperconnected World

Within this objective, students will delve into the modeling and simulation of macroscopic psychosocial dynamics within an intricately interconnected digital landscape, focusing on the multifaceted interactions between individuals in a hyperconnected world.

Objective 3: Modeling Participatory and Deliberative Processes and Impact Assessment in Virtual Group/Community Interventions

The third objective is dedicated to the modeling of participatory and deliberative processes, equipping students with the ability to structure comprehensive impact assessments for virtual interventions at the group and community levels.

By the course's conclusion, students are expected to accomplish the following:

- Develop a capacity for modeling and analyzing empowerment processes, both at the individual and community levels, within virtual environments.

- Acquire proficiency in modeling and simulating macroscopic psychosocial dynamics in an intensely interconnected digital world, with a particular focus on interindividual interactions.

- Master the skills to model participatory and deliberative processes, alongside the ability to construct comprehensive impact assessments for virtual interventions at the group and community levels.

The course structure will consist of a combination of lectures, seminars, practical exercises, and interactive discussions. Students will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on projects and case studies to deepen their comprehension of the course content.

Program and Suggested lectures
- Lecture 1:
  - Title: "From Psychology of Virtual Environments to Community Empowerment and change"
  - Teachers:
    - Prof. Andrea Guazzini - Università degli studi di Firenze
    - Dr. Flora Gatti - Università Federico II di Naples

- Lecture 2:
  - Title: "Gossip, Fake news and Change at the time of web: how to simulate, predict and design the social change"
  - Teachers:
    - Dr. Mario Paolucci - Direttore dell'Istituto di Ricerche sulla Popolazione e le Politiche Sociali (IRPPS). Roma - mario.paolucci@cnr.it
    - Dr. Daniele Vilone - Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies (ISTC) at CNR - Rome, Italy.

- Lecture 3:
  - Title: "Self, technologies, participation and gamification: how to s(t)imulate the (social) change"
  - Teachers:
    - Prof. Atte Oksanen- Tampere University
    - Prof. Franco Bagnoli - Università degli studi di Firenze

Requirements
Enrollment in this course requires a strong foundation in social sciences and a working knowledge of virtual environments.