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Education

Master's Degree in Lifelong Learning Sciences (LM-57)

Current Positions

- Research fellow
- Assistant Professor
- PhD and Doctor Europeus in Health Promotion and Cognitive Sciences cycle XXXVII

PhD project title and a short abstract

**Inclusion as a Vector of Well-Being: UDL and Teacher Training in Lower Secondary School
(Inclusione come vettore di ben-essere: UDL e formazione degli insegnanti nella scuola secondaria di primo grado)**

Abstract: The concept of inclusion has increasingly become central to contemporary pedagogical discourse, establishing itself as a foundational dimension of modern education systems. This paradigm shift has moved the focus from categorising educational needs to valorising individual specificities, aiming to provide tailored responses that guide students' educational pathways based on their characteristics and potential. From this perspective, inclusive education must be understood as a dynamic process that engages the entire educational system, modifying structures that hinder students' full participation. It unfolds within a relational framework characterised by continuous interaction between individuals and their environment, underscoring inclusion as a fundamental right ensuring the necessary conditions for academic success, far beyond mere access to educational opportunities. Building on these premises, this study examines the role of Universal Design for Learning in the professional development of lower secondary school teachers, highlighting how the adoption of a Teacher Professional Development Research model for promoting inclusive practices can influence both teachers' agentic professionalism and students' learner agency. The first part of the thesis outlines the theoretical framework of inclusion, exploring its philosophical and pedagogical foundations while conceptualising the school as a laboratory of democracy. The second part presents an empirical study conducted through the Teacher Professional Development

Research paradigm and a Mixed Methods approach. The study involved 20 teachers, analysing their professional growth and its impact on classroom dynamics through focus groups, questionnaires, logbooks and classroom observations. The findings indicate that the programme enhanced teachers' awareness of inclusion and agency, fostering more flexible teaching practices and greater student engagement. The results confirm that a systemic and transformative approach to inclusion can drive meaningful changes in educational practices and stakeholder engagement.

Supervisor: Francesca Pedone

<https://www.unipa.it/persone/docenti/m/maria.moscato01/?pagina=curriculum>

Main research areas of interest

Special Pedagogy and Inclusive Education, with a particular focus on the themes of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Outdoor Education, the development of educational communities, and participatory research processes, with special attention to the paradigms of Action Research and Human-Centred Design Research, as well as the professional development of teachers and educators.

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