

Master's Degree in Cognitive Science and Theory of Communication (Classes LM-55/LM-92) University of Messina - Department of Cognitive, Psychological, Pedagogical Sciences and Cultural Studies (COSPECS)

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINARY TUTORS

Index

Introduction

1. Regulatory and institutional reference framework
2. The educational model of the Course of Study
3. Tutoring system of the Course of Study
4. Profile, requirements, and skills of the Disciplinary Tutor
5. Operational process of the Disciplinary Tutor
6. Quality standards and minimum requirements for online teaching
7. Monitoring, Quality Assurance, and Review
8. Evaluation of learning and the role of the Disciplinary Tutor
9. Ethics, transparency, inclusion, and student protection
10. Final provisions

Introduction

The University of Messina identifies the Internal Quality Assurance System as the main tool to guarantee the effectiveness and efficiency of educational processes, in line with the objectives of scientific and technological excellence. Constant quality monitoring allows for the activation of a continuous improvement process, aimed at the timely identification of strengths and weaknesses of the educational process and the definition of corrective actions. In this perspective, these Guidelines constitute an essential operational tool for the management of online teaching and for the harmonization of tutoring activities. The Department of Cognitive, Psychological, Pedagogical Sciences and Cultural Studies (COSPECS) also promotes initial and continuous training for professors and disciplinary tutors, aimed at knowledge of the educational and tutoring model, and the Guidelines for the conscious use of the e-learning platform. The Department has adopted a tutoring model available at the following link: <https://cospecs.unime.it/it/didattica/orientamento>.

1. Regulatory and Institutional Reference Framework

1.1 AVA3 System and requirements for online teaching

These Guidelines are drafted in compliance with the Self-Assessment, Evaluation, and Accreditation system (AVA3) defined by ANVUR, with particular reference to the quality requirements provided for Courses of Study delivered in online or blended modes. In this framework, disciplinary tutoring constitutes a structural element of the teaching quality system, contributing to:

- guaranteeing the effectiveness of online educational interaction;
- ensuring the traceability of teaching activities;
- monitoring student participation and learning;
- supporting the continuous improvement of the Course of Study. The activities of the disciplinary tutor must be documentable, verifiable, and consistent with the quality indicators provided by the periodic accreditation systems.

1.2 University Quality Assurance System

This document is part of the Quality Assurance System of the University of Messina, in consistency with:

- the University Quality Assurance Board (Presidio della Qualità);
- the University Teaching Regulations;
- the SUA-CdS Form;
- the Annual and Cyclic Review Reports;
- the reports of the Joint Teaching-Student Committee. The disciplinary tutor contributes to the collection and systematization of data useful for the monitoring and review of the Course of Study.

1.3 Framework in the Degree Course Teaching Regulations

These Guidelines constitute an integral attachment to the management processes of the Master's Degree Course in Cognitive Science and Theory of Communication (Classes LM-55/LM-92). They regulate:

- the functional profile of the disciplinary tutor;
- the operational modes of tutoring;
- the minimum quality standards for the teaching delivered;
- the monitoring and reporting procedures.

1.4 Purpose of the document

This document pursues the following purposes:

- a) clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the disciplinary tutor;
- b) ensure operational homogeneity between subjects;
- c) guarantee compliance with ANVUR requirements;
- d) strengthen the traceability and quality of online teaching;
- e) support the continuous improvement of the Course of Study.

2. The Educational Model of the Course of Study

2.1 Characteristics of the teaching delivered

The Master's Degree Course in Cognitive Science and Theory of Communication (Classes LM-55/LM-92) adopts an educational model oriented towards:

- the scientific quality of contents;
- interdisciplinary integration;
- student-centeredness;
- methodological innovation;
- the traceability of teaching processes. Teaching is delivered in online/blended mode, through an institutional platform that allows for:
 - asynchronous consumption of content;
 - scheduled synchronous interaction;
 - execution of e-tivities and collaborative activities;
 - monitoring of access and participation. The design of the subjects is structured by teaching modules, each of which provides:

- multimedia teaching materials;
- active learning activities;
- guided discussion moments;
- intermediate formative assessments. All activities are tracked and documentable for Quality Assurance purposes.

2.2 Student centrality and active learning

The educational model is based on a student-centered approach, which recognizes the student as an active subject in the learning process. In this perspective:

- the professor assumes scientific responsibility for the teaching;
- the disciplinary tutor facilitates teaching interaction;
- the student is involved in analysis, application, and critical reflection activities. Teaching activities prioritize:
 - problem solving;
 - case studies;
 - guided discussions;
 - collaborative works;
 - production of papers. The disciplinary tutor helps to sustain motivation, prevent isolation, and encourage active participation.

2.3 Integration between teaching, tutoring, and monitoring

The educational system integrates in a structured way : teaching design , tutoring activity , continuous monitoring , and assessment of learning. The disciplinary tutor performs a linking function between : teaching design , delivery of activities , analysis of student

participation , and identification of any critical issues. The systematic collection of data related to forum participation , completion of e-tivities , and formative assessment results allows for the activation of timely corrective actions, in consistency with the ANVUR AVA3 system and with the Quality Assurance System of the University of Messina.

2.4 Alignment between educational objectives, learning outcomes, and assessment

The teaching design of the Course of Study is based on the principle of constructive alignment, ensuring consistency between:

- qualifying educational objectives;
- expected learning outcomes;
- teaching activities;
- final verification methods. Learning outcomes are defined in accordance with the Dublin Descriptors and articulated in the following dimensions:
 1. Knowledge and understanding
 2. Applying knowledge and understanding
 3. Making judgments
 4. Communication skills
 5. Learning skills The disciplinary tutor helps to verify the operational consistency between activities proposed on the platform , expected skills , and assessment tools.

3. Tutoring System of the Course of Study

3.1 Tutoring system architecture

The Master's Degree Course adopts an integrated tutoring system, designed to guarantee : quality of online interaction , personalized student support , continuous monitoring , and

consistency with AVA3. The system is divided into three functional figures:

1. Disciplinary Tutor
2. Pathway/Methodological Tutor
3. Technological Area Tutor This allows for the separation between scientific responsibility (Professor) , teaching mediation (Disciplinary Tutor) , organizational support (Pathway Tutor) , and technical assistance (Tech Tutor).

3.2 Disciplinary Tutor

Operates within virtual classes and performs functions of : learning facilitation , communicative mediation , support for teaching activities , and monitoring of course progress. They do not assume scientific responsibility or final evaluative functions, which remain with the professor. Tasks include moderating forums , providing methodological clarifications , validating e-tivities , and reporting issues.

3.5 Distinction of responsibilities between Professor and Tutor

The Professor is the scientific lead , defines outcomes , designs exams , and is responsible for the final grade. The Tutor supports delivery , facilitates participation , and contributes to reporting. The tutor cannot replace the professor in final evaluation.

3.6 Responsibility Matrix (RACI)

Activity	Professor	Disciplinary Tutor	Pathway Tutor	Tech Tutor
Defining	R	C	I	I

objectives				
E-tivity Design	R	A	I	C
Forum Moderation	C	R	I	-
Participation Monitoring	C	R	C	A
Technical Support	I	I	-	R
Final Evaluation	R	C	-	I
Quality Report	R	A	C	C

Legend: R = Responsible; A = Operational Actor; C = Consulted; I = Informed .

4. Profile, Requirements, and Selection of the Disciplinary Tutor

4.2 Scientific-disciplinary requirements

Minimum requirements:

1. Degree consistent with the Scientific-Disciplinary Sector (SSD) of the course.
2. Master's degree or equivalent; PhD is preferred.
3. Documented competence in the discipline.
4. Scientific curriculum consistent with the course content.

4.3 Teaching and methodological skills

Must possess knowledge of online teaching methodologies , forum management , collaborative learning facilitation , and structured formative feedback skills.

4.9 Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Maximum response time: 48 hours.
- Weekly active presence on the platform.
- Activation of at least one thematic discussion per CFU.
- Systematic monitoring of inactive students.
- Drafting of a structured final report.

5. Operational Process of the Disciplinary Tutor

The process is divided into five phases:

- **Phase I - Formalization of the assignment:** Defined at least 30 days before the start .
- **Phase II - Teaching design:** Between 30 and 15 days before the start to align

activities and outcomes .

- **Phase III - Teaching delivery:** For the entire semester; includes moderating forums and responding within 48 hours .
- **Phase IV - Evaluation and exam support:** Support for organization and sharing course progress with the professor .
- **Phase V - Monitoring and reporting:** Drafting a report with participation analysis and KPI calculation .

6. Quality Standards for Online Teaching

Mandatory standards include:

- At least 1 thematic forum per CFU.
- At least 1 e-tivity per teaching module.
- At least 2 synchronous moments per course.
- Response time within 48 working hours.
- Feedback on activities within 7 days of delivery.

7. Monitoring, Quality Assurance, and Review

The tutor's final report feeds into the Annual Review (Riesame annuale) by analyzing student participation and identifying recurring critical issues . Data collected (KPIs) contribute to internal quality indicators.

8. Learning Assessment and the Role of the Disciplinary Tutor

Final assessment responsibility belongs exclusively to the professor. The tutor provides formative feedback on e-tivities , clarifies conceptual errors , and suggests improvement

paths. Feedback is not a final grade.

9. Ethics, Transparency, and Inclusion

The tutor must ensure impartiality , respect for personal dignity , and compliance with privacy regulations. Specific attention must be given to students with disabilities or SLD (DSA) to ensure access to materials.

10. Final Provisions

These Guidelines are an official document of the Master's Degree Course. They are approved by the Course Council and become effective from the following Academic Year. The document is subject to at least triennial periodic review.