UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Geophysics

2122-3-E3401Q051

Aims

The student should acquire a knowledge of the geophyisical phenomena that are most relevant for geo-environmental applications, with a specific emphasis on the shallow Earth's subsurface. The student should learn the basic knowledge needed to plan, execute and present a project focused on computational/analytical solutions of geophysical problems.

Contents

Earth rotation and its variations. Earth shape. Gravitational field of the Earth. Geoid. Tides. Gravimetric surveys. Magnetic field of the Earth and its temporal variations. Solar wind. Elettro-magnetic induction. Geomagnetic surveys. Electric resistivity and conductivity. Fundamentals of geoelettric prospects. Seismic surveys. Equations of the elastic waves (1D). Thermal properties of rocks. Thermal energy transfer in the soil. Geothermic surveys. Rock radioactivity. Equation of radioactive decay. Radioactive surveys. Seismology. Mechanisms for generation of earthquakes.

Laboratory time for addressing the main geophysical challenges illustrated during the theoretical lectures, thought the implementation of computational tools and shared computational resources.

Detailed program

Gravity and rotational motion: Universal gravitational law. Gravitational force and acceleration between bodies. Gravitational potential energy and work. Centripetal acceleration. Geopotential. Geoid. Satellite measurements of Earth gravity. Tides. Inertial moment. Angular momentum rotational energy conservation. Changes in the Earth rotation period. Chandler's oscillation. Gravimetric analysis. Absolute gravity measurements: pendulum, free fall method, push and free fall method. Relative gravity measurements: Gravimeter. Corrections to gravity measurements: latitudinal, tidal, free air correction, Bouguer plate correction, topographic correction. Gravity anomaly interpretation.

Magnetism: Magnetic force. Magnetic potential. Magnetic dipole field. Gauss method. Magnetic moment. Magnetization. Magnetic susceptivity. Lorentz force. Magnetic properties of materials. Diamagnetism. Paramagnetism. Ferromagnetism. Magnetic anisotropies. Single and multiple domains. Rock magnetization: induced and permanent (sedimentary and thermopermanent) magnetization. Geomagnetism. Inclination and declination. International geomagnetic reference field. Temporal variations of the magnetic field: secular variations, field inversions, diurnal variations. Models. Magnetic dynamo. Magnetic analysis. Magnetometer. Measurement corrections: temporal, latitudinal, altitudinal. Magnetic anomaly interpretation. Konigsberger ratio.

Geothermy: Thermal gradient. Adiabatic gradient, melting temperature gradient. Heat transport. Thermal conductivity. Heat flux equation. Heat fluxes into the soil. Convection. Basics of geodynamical modelling (continuity equation, Navier-Stokes equation, convection-diffusion heat equation). Geothermal measurements. Thermistors: thermocouples, thermistors. Transient regimes for the estimation of thermal conductivity.

Electricity: Coulomb force. Electric potential. Electric tension. Electric resistance. Electrical properties of materials. Geoelectricity. Electric analysis. Four electrod method.

Radioactivity: Atomic structure. Isotopes. Radioactive decay: alpha and beta. Decay constant. Half-life time. Radioactive datation: radiocarbon, rubidium-strontium, potassium-argon, lead-uranium. Mass spectrometer.

Seismicity: Elasticity. Hooke law. Stress tensor. Deformation matrix: longitudinal deformation and distortion. Young modulus. Rigidity modulus. Seismic waves. Pressure waves (P waves). One dimensional wave equation. Propagation velocity. Wave energy and damping. Shear waves (S waves). Surface waves (Love and Rayleigh waves). Wave propagation: refraction and reflection. Critical angle. Seismometer and seismogram. Measurement errors. Fundamentals of passive seismic analysis and internal structure of the Earth. Earthquakes. Intensity and magnitude. Parameter determination: direct and inverse method.

LABORATORY ACTIVITIES

Hands-on activities about the conception, realization and presentation of a scientific project related to a relevant themes in Solid Earth Geophysics. Hands-on activities for the solution of geophysical inverse problems through analytical and numerical methods, and their comparison. Use of shared computational resources. Hands-on activities for: (1) gravity anomalies; (2) Earth's rotation; (3) Heat flow; (4) Radioactivity and rock dating; (5) Seismic waves propagation; (6) Earth's structure; (7) Seismic event detection and localization.

Prerequisites

Physics

Teaching form

Frontal lectures (6 credits)

Laboratory (2 credits)

Textbook and teaching resource

William Lowrie *Fundamental of Geophysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Semester

Second

Assessment method

Examination type:

Written (project report and computational project) and oral (discussion on topics covered during class) examinations.

Candidates must submit the final report of a project and the project itself, as illustrated during the laboratory time, at least one week before the oral examination. To be admitted to the oral exam it is necessary to pass the written part with a minimum grade of 15/30. This will grant access to a maximum of two oral tests.

Office hours

Contact the instructors via email at claudia.pasquero@unimib.it, nicola.pianaagostinetti@unimib.it