UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Economic History - 1

2425-1-E3303M007-T1

Learning objectives

The course aims at providing the students with the fundamental conceptual skills necessary for the examination and interpretation of the main phenomena in economic history. The ultimate goal is the acquisition of abilities related to learning, investigation and analysis, with particular reference to historical development of economic systems. Students will be able to address the specific issues of economic systems, demonstrating an understanding of their structural changes in the long run

Contents

The course provides the basic elements of historical-economic research, focusing on the reasons of devolopment in a long run perspective starting from the beginning of agricultural activity onward. In particular, the role played by the environment and the population will be addressed, to then use the cities, and in particular Milan, as an observation angle from which to observe the main transformations that have occurred from the pre-industrial age to today, with special attention to technological development from the first industrial revolution to the twentieth century, to the changes in the tertiary sector and to today's main economic problems

Detailed program

The course is divided into three parts

1. The first "building the foundations" includes ten lessons from the professor in traditional mode and is aimed at providing the basic information necessary to tackle the continuation of the course. It therefore initially deals with methodological issues, then the role of the environment, the evolution of the population, at the basis of man-environment interaction from the invention of agriculture onwards, to then conclude with the

invention of cities and their economic role in history
2. The second part, "a window on the world", aims to present the main transformations of economic systems starting from the pre-industrial age up to today using the city of Milan as a visual angle and includes 20 lessons in traditional and interactive mode with a first part carried out by the teacher and the rest working in the classroom with the students. At the end of this part there will be a period of interruption of the lessons for the intermediate tests where a verification test will be carried out on the first two parts of the course with multiple and open answers
3. The third and final part of the course is always in traditional and interactive mode and is dedicated, after having highlighted the reasons for Milan's peculiar resilience, to "history's gaze on today", presenting, in a historical-economic perspective , some major themes and problems of today's economy. At the end, an open question test will be carried out on this third part of the course

First part of the course
Building the foundation

1-3 Presentation of the course. Economic history and economics. Explaining the differences in development. The reasons for the adoption of an urban perspective

The role of the environment
4-5 Environmental conditioning. The turning point of agriculture. The burden of climate and disasters

Man changes everything: population and its evolution
6-8 Long-term trend, pre-industrial age, Malthus and the demographic transition, the twentieth century, the current situation, what prospects for the future?

An extraordinary engine: cities
9-10 Why cities are fundamental and how they evolve in the West and East. A new epidemic-proof city?

Second part of the course
A window on the world

Pre-industrial Milan
11-15 Supply cities with still fragile agriculture. The manufacturing heart of the cities: guilds but not only. The urban DNA: the exchange activity and related tools

The Milan of the industrial revolution: 1815-1882
16-20 An imported revolution that begins to change the world. The first transformations of agriculture. The arrival of factories and the energy problem. The transport revolution: railways, tunnels and commercial activities. Here comes the banking and financial systems (gold standard)

The Milan of the second industrial revolution: 1882-1973
21-25 A second industrial revolution that changes everything between new clusters of innovations and business transformations. Chemical agriculture and the end of hunger. The Milan of large factories and its attractiveness. The great changes in trade and consumption. The first advance of tertiary sector

The new post-industrial Milan: 1973-today
26-30 Milan changes face. Oil shock, population decline, demographic winter, sectoral metamorphosis. The disappearance of industries and the emergence of new sectors. Expo 2015 and the touristic boom. All that glitters is gold? The many current problems: high prices, pollution, aging, etc.

Third part of the course
History's gaze on today

Explain the resilience of Milan
31-35 Not only the environment and the economy but also culture, religion and institutions. Ambrosian Church and

urban welfare. The Milanese spirit and the role of the centre. A city without a guide?
The problems of today
36-40 The Anthropocene, the paradoxes of food, growing inequalities, regarding gender
41-45 The end of work?, Cultural changes, the role of institutions, at the roots of conflicts: Ukraine and the Middle East
46-48 Second written test

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of the historical and political events (XVIIIth-XXth centuries). Basic knowledge of economics

Teaching methods

Ten hours of lectures by the professor in traditional mode. Thirty-eight hours of frontal lessons in traditional and interactive modes involving students' classroom work. The recording of the lessons will be available on the e-learning website

Assessment methods

Students have two options: the first is to take the intermediate exam and the final exam

Intermediate test
Knowledge and understanding will be assessed with a test consisting of 10 multiple choice questions (correct answer 1, no answer 0, wrong answer -0.5) and 4 open questions, chosen from the 6 that will be proposed (up to 5 points each answer). The time available will be 50 minutes. This part of the exam will have a weight of 50% and will focus on the topics covered in the first and the second part of the course. The outline of the lessons (they are simple slides!) will gradually be uploaded to the course page on the university e-learning website: http://elearning.unimib.it/ in the statistical economic area

Final test
The test, which will take place at the end of the course, weighs 20% and is made up of 5 open questions (up to 6 points per answer) relating to the third part of the course. The time available is 50 minutes.
For those who have carried out the activity in the classroom, the remaining 30% is given by the grade assigned to the work carried out which includes an activity (questions, short writings, etc.) for each block of lessons and therefore 15 activities each evaluated up to two points
For those who have not carried out the classroom activity, the two written tests weigh 65% and 35% respectively.

The second possibility is to not take the intermediate test but take a full test which will take place in the first session in January. In this case the test will be worth 70% for those who have carried out the classroom activities and 100% for those who have not carried them out. The overall final test consisting of 12 multiple choice questions (correct answer 1, no answer 0, wrong answer -0.5) and 6 open questions (up to 3 points per answer). The time available will be 50 minutes

Important
The standard exam method is the written test with multiple choice and open answers, however those who prefer to take the oral test have the possibility of doing so in agreement with the teacher. Anyone wishing to take the oral

test to try to improve an unsatisfactory outcome of the written test has the possibility of doing so but must bear in mind that in that case the grade for the written test will be lost because it is clear that the outcome could be for the better but also for the worse. Said more clearly: if you take the oral test to improve an 18 and the result is negative, the 18 does not remain but you have to take the test again

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Suggested reading will be indicated during the course

Semester

First semester

Teaching language

Italian

Sustainable Development Goals

ZERO HUNGER | GENDER EQUALITY | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | LIFE ON LAND