UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Geography (blended)

2425-2-F0101R018

Course title

Sense of place: orientation and disorientation

Topics and course structure

The course, conducted in blended learning mode, aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of territorial practices. Some key terms of the contemporary geographical discourse (place, space, territory, environment, sustainability, landscape, heritage, gender, animal geography) will be examined from a critical point of view, with the aim of communicating the richness and variety of the discipline, of revealing its nature and the possibility of drawing interdisciplinary connections in relation to spatial planning. In line with the ‘spatial turn’ common to the social sciences and cultural studies, students will engage with the geographical view of environmental, cultural, social and political phenomena in the contemporary world. The sense of place and the geographies of disorientation, with particular reference to the Bicocca ‘place’, are the key themes of the course, in the framework of the MUSA (Multilayered Urban Sustainability Action) project in relation to the topic ‘Signs and wayfinding: supports for orientation and disorientation in the Bicocca district area’.
The 'sense of place' is to be understood as a fundamental category for understanding central aspects of the contemporary world. The dynamics of spatial orientation/disorientation concern, among other things, the complex open questions of our relationship with technology, as well as the understanding of spatial practices. The course will also introduce students to the basic elements of cartography, in their historical, political and methodological dimensions, with a particular emphasis on the concept of mental maps and the construction of the image of places.

Objectives

The main aim of the course is to introduce students to the theoretical and methodological specificities of human

geography in connection with other fields of knowledge. Through online and synchronous activities, students will learn to use the concepts and themes of human geography, to apply the models proposed to the study of socio-spatial processes and territory. The introduction to a first reading of the geographical map and the use of mental maps are proposed as useful tools also in view of the thesis work and as support to the research activities carried out by the students. The teaching content and syllabus are consistent with the training objectives of the Course of Studies.

Methodologies

The course will be delivered in blended mode, according to this distribution:
29 hours of classroom teaching;
27 hours of asynchronous online teaching and interactive activities.
Through the e-learning platform, students will be involved in the discussion of scientific articles, oral expositions and written papers, field activities, using the resources that will be prepared in the course page on the University platform https://elearning.unimib.it.

Online interaction will be used to manage activities with web-conferences, chats, forums, in order to promote active learning and develop skills in oral presentations with audio-video support and group discussions.

Online and offline teaching materials

D. Massey, 1991, "A global Sense of Place"

https://eclass.hua.gr/modules/document/file.php/GEO272/MASSEY%20-%20a%20global%20sense%20of%20place.pdf

Programme and references

Reference texts:

1. dell'Agnese E. (a cura di) "Geo-grafia. Strumenti e parole", Milano, Unicopli, 2009
2. Schmidt di Friedberg M., "Geographies of Disorientation", London, Routledge, 2017
3. Pezzoni N. "La città sradicata. L'idea di città attraverso lo sguardo e il segno dell'altro*, Milano, O barra O Edizioni, 2020
4. D. Massey, 1991, "A global Sense of Place", https://eclass.hua.gr/modules/document/file.php/GEO272/MASSEY%20-%20a%20global%20sense%20of%20place.pdf
5. M. Fantò, «Ma davvero? lo zoo? non l’avrei mai immaginato»
   Quel che resta dello zoo dei Giardini di via Palestro a Milano: gli animali, l’Impero e le memorie in città, Comunicare la storia, 2023

Although this course is held in Italian, for Erasmus students, course material can also be available in English, and students can take the exam in English if they wish to do so.

Assessment methods

For all students, final examination with oral interview, aimed at verifying the knowledge acquired through the critical study of the texts included in the syllabus and the work done in the classroom. Attending students are required to participate in synchronous and *blended learning* activities, group activities, and the creation and presentation of a group PPT and the individual oral presentation of a 3-4 page paper on The sense of place: orientation, disorientation.
For non-attendinfg students final examination with oral interview.
The oral exam is based on the verification of the knowledge of the materials in the bibliography in order to acquire competences on topics addressed by the professor through the lectures and classroom discussions, which can also be accessed through the PDFs of the lectures uploaded on the website. Erasmus incoming students will be provided with a bibliography in English (or other language) and will be given the opportunity, if they so wish, to take the exam in a language other than Italian.

Office hours

From Monday to Friday, by appointment by e-mail

marcella.schmidt@unimib.it

Programme validity

Programs are valid two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Course tutor:
Dott. Massimiliano Fanto'

Sustainable Development Goals

GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | CLIMATE ACTION