UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Human Geography of Small Island Systems

2425-1-F7502Q016

Aims

Mainly referring to the general framework of the Island Studies, the course aims to provide a set of tools useful to the analysis of socio-spatial dynamics within island systems. Furthermore the course aims to provide tools and interpretative models useful to understand how, at local scale, human communities (privately, socially and politically) cope with socio-environmental changes, crises, conflicts and transitions by producing a set of resilient practices, knowledge and adjustments

Contents

Geography of Archipelagos and Island States; Human Geography of Islands; Human Ecology of Island Systems; Environmental challenges in Small Island States; Trans-scalar Spatial Analysis of Island Systems; Environmental Policies of Small Island States, Islands as Ecotones, Archipelago and Aquapelagos

Detailed program

The course will be structured in two parts:

I. The first part of the course will be dedicated to the study of the human geography of islands and archipelagic states. Students will apply, even by adopting a critical perspective, a set of patterns and paradigms (such as isolation, vulnerability, distribution, concentration, center-periphery relationship and spatial dispersion), in order to understand the role of spatial features in shaping socio-environmental processes Furthermore reading these socio-environmental processes by adopting a trans-scalar perspective helps students and researchers to stress the complexity of the human ecology of islands, coastal areas and archipelagic systems.

II. The second part of the course will be dedicated to the reading, at local scale, of the set of social, political and spatial measures and adjustments that human communities adopt to deal with the environmental challenges affecting island systems.

Lessons:

· Island Studies: an introduction

· Some interpretative categories

· Human ecology: an introduction

· The geography of islands and island states

· The human ecology of islands

· Small Island States: some environmental issues

· Small islands: geography

· Small islands: human geography

· Small islands: sustainability

· Small islands: resilience and social response to change

· Small Islands in the Mediterranean

- Italian Small island Geographies

· Environmental changes and challenges of the Maldivian Islands

Prerequisites

NONE

Teaching form

Classes will be provided by lessons, discussions of scientific papers, analysis of national and international reports, and reading of environmental assessments.

Students will be asked to work directly on a set of case studies, focusing on the geographical relevance of the environmental changes affecting small island systems in local, regional and supra-regional contexts.

The human geography of the Maldives will represent a reference for the understating of the interactions among human and environmental systems in small island states and archipelagos.

Oral classes + slides (weekly uploaded on moodle)

Teching will be organized as follow:

- 16 two-hour lectures, in person, Delivered Didactics
- 5 two-hour lecture, in person, interactive teaching

Readings, paper discussions and question time sessions will be included.

Lectures will be recorded, students may request to view them

Teacher and students will focus on the development of a set of scientific and soft skills and knowledge (see assessment method):

work on scientific literature,
oral presentation,
preparation of a presentation,
reading,
teamwork skills,
deal with research question,
literature review,
kowledge of topics and models provided during the lessons

Textbook and teaching resource

References will be uploaded by October 2024

Semester

FIRST YEAR, SECOND SEMESTER

Assessment method

ORAL EXAM.

Assessment is based on three assignment:

Chapter presentation (oral) (to assess: work on scientific literature, oral presentation, preparation of a presentation, reading)
Teamwork activity (to assess: work on scientific literature, teamwork skills, deal with research question, literature review)
Inyerview on an essay written by students (to assess: scientific writing, literature review, knowledge of topics and models provided during the lessons)

FINAL MARK: the average of the marks obtained in the three tasks

Please note: students are asked to work on paper, case studies and other documents according to the guidelines provided.

Office hours

Monday 10,30 am, (Agorà (U6) Room 4147, IV floor) please write to stefano.malatesta@unimib.it

Sustainable Development Goals

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION | CLIMATE ACTION | LIFE BELOW WATER