UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

History of Nutrition : Food and Dietetics in The Past

2627-2-H4103D165

Aims

To analyse both the preventive and curative evolution of dietetics and its relationship with other medical branches. To acquire awareness of the historical link between dietetics and the general and methodological frameworks of medical knowledge. To understand the historical dimension of the notions of dietetics, healthy lifestyle and well-being. To know the historical, cultural and socio-economic implications of dietary dictates and food consumption. To learn about the technological and legal evolution of major foods (cereals, dairy, meats, sausage products, etc.) from antiquity to the new millennium.

Contents

The course presents the technological and legal evolution of major food and dietary knowledge from classical medicine to the current science of nutrition. The evolution of food norms and rules relating to the body and health as expressed in folk wisdom and Western medical tradition is analysed.

Detailed program

Dietetics in Hippocratic and Galenic medicine: the concept of dietae.
Medieval dietetics and Arab intermediation: the arithmeticisation of dietetic knowledge within humoral logic. Food in Avicenna's Canon and the Tacuina Sanitatis.
Renaissance dietetics: the popularisation of humoral dietetics and new approaches. Paracelsus. Impact of the medical revolution in the renewal of dietary models. Iatromechanics and Iatrochemistry in the interpretation of digestive processes.
The modern age: the first globalisation of consumption and the gradual emergence of non-European products. The medical debate on sugar consumption and colonial drinks. Medical knowledge and food crises.

Santorio and the role of basal metabolism. Van Helmont, Van de Boë and acid fermentation. The gradual introduction of chemistry in the interpretation of digestive mechanisms.
Scientific discoveries, medical opinions and food consumption in pre-industrial Europe. Major dietary developments in the Age of Enlightenment: clinical rationalisation in the 18th century.
The birth of modern nutrition science from the 19th century to the present day. Comparison of classical sources, medical manuals and food proverbs.
Technological and legal evolution of major foods (cereals, dairy, meats, sausage products, etc.): dietary imperatives and food consumption fads.

Prerequisites

To be enrolled in the second year or later

Teaching form

DE - 14 hours - Frontal lessons

Textbook and teaching resource

Papers and documents provided by the professor

Semester

Second semester

Assessment method

Active participation and final interview on the main concepts presented in the course

Office hours

Contact theprofessor by e-mail (paolo.tedeschi@unimib.it) for an online or in-office meeting

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION