

SUSTAINABILITY, FOOD AND LANDSCAPES IN THE ITALIAN ALPS

Dolomiti semester program:

ACTIVE LEARNING IN THE ITALIAN ALPS - SUSTAINABILITY, HERITAGE AND CREATIVITY

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“En montagna l’è tüt bon.”

“In the mountains everything tastes good.”

(Trentino saying)

Course description

A journey across time and space, from the traces of prehistoric peoples to the challenges of our globalized world. Food is the key to explore the complex interaction between humans and their environments, and its impact on culture, economy, identity, and landscapes. Issues of global concern such as sustainable practices, climate change and resource management are tackled from the unique perspective of the Italian Alps, a place renowned for its distinctive environment, rich agriculture and traditional food productions.

Course structure

The course is organized into:

- ✓ Eight class sessions (24 contact hours)
- ✓ Five guided visits (10 contact hours)
- ✓ Three laboratories (12 contact hours)

The course totals forty-six contact hours, corresponding to three semester credit hours.

Upon request, a supervised project can be added to the graded assignments in order to complete other fifteen contact hours, resulting in a total of four semester credit hours.

Evaluation

- 10% Attendance and active participation
- 30% Midterm exam
- 10% Laboratories
- 10% Presentation
- 40% Final paper

Introduction to the field of studies; definition of the course's key concepts; introduction to social sciences methodologies and research goals; focus on qualitative and ethnographic methods.

Class session #1 – Course presentation; definitions of sustainability, environment, food, landscape, and discussion on how they intersect; introduction to social sciences research methods, techniques and goals; differences between natural and social sciences in their approaches and methods.

- ✓ Eden, S. (2009). Environment. In R. Kitchin and N. Thrift (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography* (pp. 505-516). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- ✓ Marsden, T. (2009). Sustainability. In R. Kitchin and N. Thrift (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography* (pp. 103-108). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- ✓ Fischer, N. (2012). Europe landscape, landscape history, and landscape theory. In U. Kockel, M.N. Craith, and J. Frykman (Eds.), *A Companion to the Anthropology of Europe* (pp. 322-333). Chichester: Blackwell.
- ✓ Battacherjee, A. (2012). Introduction to research. In *Social science research: principles, methods, and practices*, (pp. 1-24), University of South Florida Scholar Commons.
- ✓ Given, L.M. (2008). Ethnography. In L.M. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (pp. 288-292). Los Angeles: Sage.

Visit #1 – Guided visit to the science museum “MuSe” in Trento.

Anthropological and archeological overview of consumption and production systems; history of food production; globalization, food chains and food ethics.

Class session #2 – Introduction to human evolution; passage from foraging to agriculture and its impact on human history; overview of food production and consumption systems across time and space, and their impact on human adaptation.

- ✓ Diamond, J. (1999). *The worst mistake in the history of human race*. Retrieved from <http://discovermagazine.com/1987/may/02-the-worst-mistake-in-the-history-of-the-human-race>.
- ✓ Fussel, G. E. (2015). *Origins of Agriculture*. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/topic/agriculture>.
- ✓ Lobb, R.L. (2003). Food production, history of. In S.H. Katz (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture. Volume 2* (pp. 1-3). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- ✓ Gibbons, A. (2013). *Evolution of Diet*. Retrieved from <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/evolution-of-diet/>.

Visit #2 – Meeting with experts at the 19th-century agrarian school and research institution “Fondazione Edmund Mach” in San Michele all’Adige.

Class session #3 – Comparative analysis of different agricultural systems and food industries in the contemporary era, and their impact in shaping landscapes and ways of life.

- ✓ Hawkins, R. (2013). Food ethics. In D. Sloan (Ed.), *Food and Drink, the Cultural Context* (pp. 72-97). Oxford: Goodfellow Publisher.
- ✓ Korthals, M. (2002). Globalization of the food production system. In M. Korthals and P.B. Thompson (Eds.), *Before Dinner. Philosophy and Ethics of Food* (pp. 135-148). Dordrecht (NL): Springer.
- ✓ Luger F. R. et al. (2011). Landscapes and wine production areas: a geomorphological heritage. *Geoheritage*, 3, 221-232.

Visit #3 – Guided visit to Val di Gresta, a valley entirely devoted to organic agriculture.

Food, identity and heritage; how food production and consumption shape the Italian landscape; the organic food movements and the politics behind labeling and certifications; the case of the “Slow Food” movement.

Class session #4 – Food, identity and the role of agriculture in shaping Italian regional cultures and landscapes.

- ✓ Harper, D. and Faccioli, P. (2009). Regionalism and national identity. In *The Italian Way. Food & Social Life* (pp. 27-66), Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ✓ Helstosky, C. (2004). Epilogue: Food in Italy today. In *Garlic and Oil. Politics and Food in Italy* (pp. 155-165), Oxford: Berg.

Midterm exam

Visit #3 – visit to sustainable agricultural businesses in the Trento surroundings.

Class session #5 – Food and the economy; systems of food and agriculture certifications.

- ✓ Larsson, T. (2015). The rise of the organic foods movement as a transnational phenomenon. In R.J. Harring (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Food, Politics, and Society* (pp. 739-754). New York: Oxford University Press.
- ✓ Clough, E. (2015). The politics of food labeling and certification. In Ronald J. Harring (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Food, Politics, and Society* (pp. 615-638). New York: Oxford University Press.

Visit #5 – Guided visit to the “South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology” (home of Ötzi “the Iceman”) in Bolzano.

Class session #6 – The “Slow Food” movement, short food supply chains and tourism.

- ✓ Andrews, G. (2008). *The Slow Food Story: Politics and Pleasure*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- ✓ Buiatti S. (2011). Food and tourism: the role of the “Slow Food” association. In K.L. Sidali, A. Spiller and B. Schulzer (Eds.), *Food, agri-culture and tourism. Linking local gastronomies and rural tourism: interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 92-101). Berlin Heidelberg: Springer.

Laboratory # 1 – Two-day laboratory in Verona and Venice in collaboration with local organizations active in public history and heritage studies.

The specificities of the human and environmental context of the Alpine region; final project seminar, outline of the paper, group presentation and feedback.

Class session #7 – Human-environment historical interactions and the shaping of the Alps, Alpine civilization past and present.

- ✓ Cullen, B. (2003). Testimony from the Iceman. *Smithsonian Magazine*, 33, 11 (pp. 42-50).
- ✓ Carrer, F. (2016). Secondary Products Exploitation: Preliminary Ethnoarchaeological Insights from Alpine Cases Study. In Biagetti, S. and Lugli, F. (Eds.), *The Intangible Elements of Culture in Ethnoarchaeological Research* (pp. 115-124). Newcastle: Springer.
- ✓ Emanuelli, F. and Agnoletti, M. (2016). History and traditional management of Italian wood pastures. In F. Emanuelli and M. Agnoletti (Eds), *Biocultural Diversity in Europe* (pp. 141-153). Switzerland: Springer.
- ✓ Battaglin, L. et al. (2014). Environmental sustainability of Alpine livestock farms. *Italian Journal of Animal Science*, 13, 3155, (pp. 431-443).
- ✓ Grasseni, C. (2011). Reinventing food: Alpine cheese in the age of global heritage. *Anthropology of Food*, 8. Retrieved from <http://aof.revues.org/6819>.

Laboratory #2 – Final project seminar: this seminar aims at helping students to interpret the collected data, select the literature, and write their final paper.

Class session #8 – Future of agriculture in the Alps; impact of climate change on the environments and peoples of the Alps; conclusions.

- ✓ Flury, C., Huber R. and Tasser, E. (2013). Future of mountain agriculture in the Alps. In S. Mann (Ed.), *The Future of Mountain Agriculture* (pp. 105-123). Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.
- ✓ Bogataj, L. K. (2007). How will the Alps respond to climate change? Scenarios for the future of Alpine water. *Alpine Space - Man and the Environment*, 3 (pp. 43-50).
- ✓ Bourdeau, P. (2009). Mountain tourism in a climate of change. *Alpine Space - Man and the Environment*, 7 (pp. 39-52).
- ✓ Previtali, F. (2011). Mountain anthrosapes, the case of the Italian Alps. In S. Kapur et al. (Eds.), *Sustainable Land Management* (pp. 143-161), Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.

Laboratory #3 – Presentations: each student will prepare a presentation on the preliminary results of her/his research and an outline of the paper; every participant is expected to ask questions and give feedback to the presenter.